



ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

2019 Trailblazer Awards

The California Democratic Party Asian Pacific Islander Caucus Trailblazer Awards honor extraordinary California Democrats for their excellence in leadership and outstanding public service to the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community and the people of California. In essence, these individuals are trailblazers in expanding political empowerment, civic engagement, and electoral representation for the AAPI community. Their unwavering commitment and dedication to fighting for the AAPI community set the standard for political leadership and service for generations to come. Award nominations are submitted by Caucus Members and Democratic activists from across the state each year.

Jeff Adachi, Former San Francisco Public Defender (In Memoriam)



Jeff Adachi was a dedicated public servant and filmmaker who was proud of his heritage. He was a tireless advocate for equal justice and passed away suddenly on Feb. 22, 2019 at 59 years old. He was the elected public defender of San Francisco, a filmmaker and author, and a beloved husband, father, son, brother and friend. Jeff was born Aug. 29, 1959. His parents and grandparents were among the nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans forced into internment camps during World War II. Learning of their ordeal would cement Jeff's lifelong commitment to due process and the right to counsel.

Jeff earned his Bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley in 1981 and his Juris Doctorate from UC Hastings in 1985. He was hired as a deputy public defender at the San Francisco Public Defender's Office in 1986 and served as the office's chief attorney from 1998 to 2001.

He was elected Public Defender of the City and County of San Francisco in 2002 and took office on Jan. 8, 2003 following two years in private practice. He tried more than 150 jury trials and handled more than 3,000 criminal matters in his career, including some of the Bay Area's highest profile cases.

Honorable Juslyn Manalo, Daly City Council



Honorable Juslyn Manalo has an innate passion to help others. She worked as a Community Service Worker providing direct service to Filipino World War II veterans and nationally advocated for equity legislation. Manalo also managed the Bill Sorro Housing Program, an affordable housing program for low-moderate income individuals and families.

In 2016, Manalo was elected to Daly City Council and appointed Vice Mayor in her first year. Then in December of 2017, Manalo became the first Asian Pacific Islander American woman to become Mayor in the City of Daly City and to also give birth during her mayoral term. Some policies and initiatives she advocated for were raising the minimum wage prior to the state, the passage of three local ballot initiatives, enhanced the local Inclusionary housing ordinance, and an anti-harassment policy within the city.

Manalo is a Community Engagement Associate for the 5M project, a mixed-use development in SoMa San Francisco. She volunteers for Senior & Disability Action as a Board Member, South of Market Business Association, President for the Filipino Community Development Corporation and President of the Filipino American Democratic Club of San Mateo County. Manalo also serves as a Board of Director for the Bay Area Water Supply Conservation Agency and serves on the Skyline College President's Council and the North County Fire Authority Board. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Asian American Studies and a Master's in Public Administration at San Francisco State University's School of Public Affairs and Civic Engagement.

2019 Rising Star Award

Established in 2015, the California Democratic Party Asian Pacific Islander Caucus Rising Star Awards recognize outstanding emerging leaders in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community whose courage, service, and leadership demonstrate strong commitment to empowering the AAPI community in California. Award nominations are submitted by Caucus Members and Democratic activists from across the state each year.

Catherina "Cat" Nou, Chief Consultant, Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus



Catherina "Cat" Nou has been a public policy leader for over a decade. Cat currently serves as the Chief Consultant for the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus. She previously served as Chief of Staff for a California State Assemblymember. Prior to joining the California State Assembly, Cat worked as the California Policy Advocate for a national civil rights organization where she focused on policies impacting Southeast Asian Americans in California.

Cat is the daughter and sister of refugees from Cambodia and was recognized for her work advancing the human rights of Cambodian women and girls with the Courage and Leadership Award by Devata Giving Circle. She graduated from UC Davis and obtained a Master of Arts in Higher Education at Sacramento State.

Honorable Aisha Wahab, Hayward City Council



Honorable Aisha Wahab is a community leader committed to ensuring equal access to opportunity. She was the first Afghan-American woman to be elected to public office in the United States after receiving the highest number of votes to become a member of the Hayward City Council. She has served as an advocate for seniors, immigrant communities, women, affordable housing, civic engagement, education and access to opportunity. Her professional experience as a businesswoman in the tech industry includes overseeing contracts with many technology companies including Amazon, Adobe, and Microsoft.

Aisha has served as the Alameda County Chair of the Human Relations Commission and served as a Board Member for the non-profit Afghan Coalition, Abode Services, and Tri-City Volunteers. She also served on the Alameda County Public Health Commission. Aisha's community work has received national and local recognition. Aisha received her Master's in Business Administration from CSU East Bay, and has a Bachelor's in Political Science from San Jose State University.

Honorable Jocelyn Yow, Eastvale City Council



Honorable Jocelyn Yow was elected to Eastvale City Council in Riverside County with a 40-point margin in November 2018 at the age of 23. She is the first Asian American elected to Eastvale City Council. Aside from serving her city, she has recently joined the office of Congressman Gil Cisneros as the Constituent Services Manager and the Asian American Pacific Islander Director.

Yow previously worked for Speaker Nancy Pelosi and for California State Senate, where she helped immigrants, seniors, families, and children access valuable government services as they navigated through the complexities of our government.

Her background as a first generation Asian-American and the daughter of a Chinese-Malaysian immigrant and a Vietnamese refugee help inform her deep empathy for immigration issues and for the AAPI community. Yow is an alumna of Norco College and UC Berkeley and is currently pursuing her Master's degree in government at Harvard Extension.