

Kalra Capitol Report



ASSEMBLYMEMBER
Ash Kalra
DISTRICT 25



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Assemblymember Kalra Sworn in for Fourth Term



On December 5th Assemblymember Ash Kalra was sworn in for his fourth term in the California State Assembly with his father, brother, sister-in-law, and nephew by his side.

Due to recent redistricting after the 2020 Census, the Assemblymember is now representing California's 25th Assembly District. This newly drawn district continues to cover almost half of San Jose, including all of downtown, in addition to a wide swath of open space along the eastern portion of Santa Clara County. Previously, he represented the San Jose community in the former 27th District.

Assemblymember Kalra remains committed to authoring and supporting policies that address inequities Californians are facing. In his fourth term, the Assemblymember will continue to lead on issues ranging from criminal justice reform to environmental protection, health care reform and sustainability, housing affordability, transportation infrastructure, and expanding economic opportunity for all.



Assemblymember Kalra emotionally shared, "I am grateful to the voters for allowing me to prevail in eleven elections spanning two San Jose City Council terms and now my fourth term in the California State Assembly! Representing you has been the honor of a lifetime."

Wondering if you live in Asm. Kalra's new district? Please check at this site: <https://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>

End of Year Message from Assemblymember Ash Kalra

As this year comes to a close and I complete my third term as your State Assemblymember in California's 27th Assembly District, I am so thankful for the support of my constituents and community partners. It has been the honor of my life to represent the San José community in which I grew up in the State Legislature. As you may know, due to the 2022 redistricting and election, I am now representing the newly drawn Assembly District 25, which encompasses the majority of San José, including downtown, in addition to a wide swath of open space located along the eastern portion of Santa Clara County. I am excited to greet my current and new friends and neighbors and get back to work!

Needless to say, the once-in-a-century COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the devastating results of perennial issues, especially economic, healthcare, and social inequities for our most underserved communities. I recognize the pain our community has suffered, and that we are still healing, fiscally, mentally, and physically. I am forever grateful to our first responders, emergency service workers, health professionals, business owners, and community members for stepping up and protecting one another during such a challenging time.

For the 2021-2022 legislative session, I am proud of the fact that fourteen of my bills were signed into law by Governor Newsom. A highlight for me was passing AB 256 which will ensure that all Californians with prior, racially-biased convictions and sentences can now pursue equal justice under the Racial Justice for All Act. AB 2208 is another step in the right direction for our environmental goals and will phase out the sale of toxic fluorescent bulbs and encourage the shift towards better alternatives. I'm also thrilled to have secured millions of dollars in funding for our district, including \$9M for San Jose State University's Speed City Legacy Project and \$10M in funding to improve traffic safety for the Vision Zero Project.

Please know that I appreciate every opportunity to listen to your concerns while authoring and supporting legislation to improve the quality of life for Californians. I look forward to continuing our great work together as a community in creating equitable, transformative, and progressive policies that work for all Californians.

If you would like to learn more about the list of my recent legislative accomplishments or need assistance with a state agency, please do not hesitate to reach out to my District Office staff at (408) 277-1220.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,



Assemblymember Ash Kalra



VeggieFest Makes Triumphant In-Person Return in 2022



Hundreds of community members came together on Saturday, September 17th, at Discovery Meadow Park in Downtown San Jose, to enjoy a day filled with amazing live entertainment, delicious food, a beer garden, and local small businesses. The best part of all? Everything was VEGAN! This year's San Jose VeggieFest was extra special because it returned to an in-person format after two years of virtual programming due to the pandemic. Although COVID-19 is far from gone, thanks to everyone's preventative measures and high vaccine rates, San Jose VeggieFest was able to make a great come-back!

Of course, amazing vegan food always take center stage at VeggieFest and this year we featured two very different taco vendors! Blacko Taco is a black owned taco truck inspired by African cuisine while De La Tierra Mexican Food offered the more traditional "meats" of al pastor, asada and chicken. We were also able to bring one of San Francisco's hidden gems, Mi Casita Vegana SF, which offers a variety of Latin inspired espresso drinks, smoothies, pastries, sandwiches, and tamales. Many of the plant-based foods took some visitors by surprise and some attendees chose to enjoy their food from our beer garden. Amazing all-vegan pastries are hard to find but Giving Pies and Green Flour Bakery didn't disappoint. La Michoacana Las Delicias, the Lemonade Bar, and Pepitos Paletas, and Flor de Pineapple kept everyone cool with delicious aguas frescas as, fresh squeezed lemonade, frozen fruit paletas, and piña coladas.



VeggieFest is also known for its fun lineup of multicultural performances which we love to showcase. This year did not disappoint with the return of Aztec dancing by Callpulli Tonalequeh, creative songs with important messages by Martin with the Green Guitar, and energizing Zumba with Marissa Hemstreet. First time in-person performers included Folklorico Colibri, lion dancing by Vivonam, and singing and storytelling by Tabia African American Theatre Ensemble. At the end of the day we all jammed out to Japanese Pop with Ikumi Band!

Finally, attendees were able to shop amongst the dozens of small businesses selling a variety of products ranging from hand-painted coffee art to handmade ceramics, jewelry, sculptures, keychains, plants and more. All products were curated with veganism and our planet in mind. Now you know that San Jose VeggieFest is the place to be if you are looking to buy the perfect artisan gift for a loved one. There were also several government and non-profit vendors distributing information on how residents can embrace a healthier and more sustainable way of life.



Thank you to our many VeggieFest sponsors for making this fantastic event possible with their generous contributions. See you in 2023!

Kalra Celebrates Diwali at the Capitol & in the District



Diwali is one of the world's oldest religious holidays, observed annually by Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains. The word "Diwali" is a version of the Sanskrit term "Deepavali, which means "a row of lamps." For this reason, Diwali is also known as a festival of lights that unites families, friends, and communities in goodwill, peace, and a shared sense of renewal. In the United States, Diwali is an important celebration to Indian Americans, Indian diaspora, and South Asian communities.

This year, Assemblymember Ash Kalra introduced the House Resolution 122 for the California State Assembly to recognize the 2022 Diwali festival on October 24th. He is the first Indian American to serve in the California Legislature in state history.

On October 25th, the Assemblymember joined his colleagues in the California Legislature in celebrating Diwali organized by BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha at the State Capitol in Sacramento. Back in the district, Kalra attended Evergreen Community Center's Annual Diwali Celebration in San Jose on October 28th and greeted community members and leaders at this event.

Kalra shared, "I am so grateful to see the return of the in-person Diwali celebration. As the Festival of Diwali symbolizes the light of truth that celebrates the triumph of good over evil, may the light chase out the darkness in the years to come for you and your family. Happy Diwali to everyone!"

Kalra & Teachers Discuss Diversity in the Workforce



On October 12th, Assemblymember Ash Kalra moderated a panel at the Silicon Valley Leadership Group's Teacher Diversity Forum. This public forum, held at the Hammer Theater, was a collaboration between SVLG, IBM, and SJSU's Lurie College of Education.

Kalra's panel featured three teachers and SJSU alumni, Erin Enguero, Kaitlyn Chang, and Alberto Camacho, who shared the challenges and frustrations that they faced throughout their credentialing programs and teaching careers. All three voiced their ideas and recommendations regarding how California public schools can eliminate unfair profiling and explicit and implicit bias against teachers and teacher candidates, especially those who are members of underserved and underrepresented communities. Kalra ended the panel with a reminder that the important work of fostering a positive and equity-centered environment for a diverse teaching workforce is just beginning and must be continued.

"This forum provided an important dialogue about how we can better recruit and retain a diverse teaching force, which is essential for the future of education," said Assemblymember Ash Kalra. "I was honored to moderate a discussion with extraordinary teachers who shared their personal experiences with earning degrees and teaching credentials at San José State University."

Latino Heritage Month Celebration Honors Outstanding Community Leaders

September is Latino Heritage Month. To recognize and honor the amazing leaders of Assembly District 27, Assemblymember Ash Kalra hosted an intimate gathering for honorees and their guests at Mezcal Restaurant in Downtown San Jose. Five distinguished individuals and organizations were recognized and awarded for their leadership and service to the community.

First, Gabriela Chavez-Lopez received the *Leadership in Community Empowerment Award* for uplifting and championing voices around challenging issues in our community — particularly those that disproportionately impact Latinas & people of color. She is dedicated to empowering and cultivating Latina leaders prepared to make a collective impact now and into the future.

Next up was Jorge Anthony Gomez, a multimedia creative and creative director of his own production and marketing company, who received the *Leadership in Community Engagement Award*. In 2019 Gomez started San Jose Foos as an outlet for fun jokes and viewpoints on the city we live in. Ultimately, he has amassed 100,000 followers, millions of monthly views, and created a platform that has been able to positively impact his community, small businesses, and locals.

Recipient of the *Leadership in the Arts Award*, MACLA/Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana is an inclusive contemporary arts space grounded in the Chicano/Latino experience that incubates new visual, literary and performance art in order to engage people in civic dialogue and community transformation. Founded in 1989 as the result of community mobilization in San Jose and nationwide on behalf of multicultural arts, MACLA is at the intersection of innovation, contemporary art, and Latinx culture.

The *Leadership in Business Award* was presented to Yacanex, a San Jose native and community leader with over a decade of experience working closely with Latino entrepreneurs in the community with an emphasis on undocumented entrepreneurs. Yacanex is an SJSU alum, runs Yacanex Business Group LLC and his non-profit, Yacanex Community. He also co-teaches at Santa Clara University Business School through the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative (NPI) and provides strategic consulting for SCU's My Own Business Institute (MOBI).



Former San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales earned the well-deserved *Legacy Award* after dedicating forty-five years technology, public policy, and non-profit work, with a guiding philosophy of wanting to help improve the quality of life for others. His achievements included nationally recognized initiatives for strong neighborhoods, improved public education, and effective solutions to affordable housing and regional transportation projects. Gonzales may be best known for championing the extension of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) to San Jose and Silicon Valley.

Community Celebrates Native American Heritage Month in November



The month of November is recognized nationally as a time to celebrate and acknowledge the first people of the Americas. On November 29, 2022, Assemblymember Ash Kalra hosted his annual Native American Heritage Month Celebration. The event took place at the Mexican Heritage Plaza in East Side San Jose. Throughout the night, honorees and their guests were able to enjoy delicious enchiladas and aguas frescas from Pre-Hispanic Mexican Cuisine.

The celebration began with a traditional land acknowledgement from Julie Dominguez and Isabella Gomez with the Muwekma Ohlone Nation, the original stewards of the San Francisco Bay Area. Shortly after, Assemblymember Kalra began the awards presentation.

The first honoree of the night was Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Charlene Nijmeh who was recognized with the *Leadership in Advocacy Award* for her tireless efforts to get the federal government to recognize the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. Charlene began her engagement in Tribal affairs at the early age of eight when her mother (the previous Chairwoman) exposed her to her Tribe's efforts to repatriate ancestral remains. In 2018, Charlene was elected as Tribal Chairwoman to help lead over 600 tribal members who comprise the ten lineages of the previously recognized, never terminated Verona Band of Alameda County.

The *Community Spirit Award* went to Chris Wondowloski from the Kiowa tribe in Oklahoma. Chris is a former SJ Earthquakes captain and United States Men's National Soccer Team striker. Chris has been a vocal advocate of many meaningful causes. In 2018, Chris hosted a soccer camp at Pleasant Valley High School in Chico, benefiting victims of the destructive Camp Fire. In 2017, Chris joined a celebrity soccer game between former NBA stars and former U.S. internationals in Houston, Texas, as part of the "Kick in for Houston" event to raise a quarter of a million dollars to support those affected by Hurricane Harvey.

Last but not least, Rose Amador received the *Legacy Award* for all she has done to serve her community and amplify Native American voices. Rose is the President and Chief Executive Officer of ConXión to Community, and hosted an award winning community television program, Native Voice TV for over seventeen years. Rose also fundraised and provided several thousand dollars' worth of supplies for Standing Rock Reservation, opposing the pipeline. Rose is co-founder of La Raza Roundtable de California, and has represented the National Council of La Raza (now Unidos US) at the state and national levels. Rose has also sat on various community and civic boards.

Assemblymember Kalra ended the event with the following statement: "Indigenous communities have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is more important than ever to honor the unsung heroes who continue to serve our community during these trying times. The Native American Community who continues to heal from the deep wounds of colonialism this is why hosting the Native American Heritage Month Celebration is particularly close to my heart as it provides the opportunity to highlight the continuing contributions of our indigenous community."

Caltrain's First Electric Train Event Excites Locals



Caltrain electrification began in 2017 but the first train in the fleet was finally unveiled in mid-September. The Assemblymember visited San Francisco, along with dozens of others, to preview the greener option, expected to be operational and ready for fare service in less than two years.

Kalra addressed the crowd, stating: "Reaching our state's ambitious climate goals will require changing how we move through our region and our state. That's because the transportation sector accounts for roughly half all of the state's greenhouse gas emissions." He added, "The environmental benefits of electrification aren't just the reduced greenhouse emissions from the train. They also include the increased reliability and capacity that will accommodate more and more people taking Caltrain instead of 101. That means fewer cars on the road and the additional reduced emissions that come as a result."

Assembly District 27 Cheers For Children's Moon Festival

There are many versions of the Festival of Mid-Autumn or Tết Trung Thu, also known as the Moon Festival, celebrated annually by AAPI communities around the world. This festival is widely associated with tasty, round mooncakes and colorful lanterns of every imaginable design. Traditionally, children gather for parades to sing songs and showcase their star or animal-shaped lanterns.

Not one to miss out on a celebration, Kalra joined in on the fun with Vietnamese American community leaders in AD 27. On September 10th, the Assemblymember celebrated the 31st Annual Children's Moon Festival hosted by the Mid-Autumn Festival Organizing Committee at the Yerba Buena High School. Kalra applauded the Committee, Yerba Buena Vietnamese Student Association, and other partnerships that help continue the tradition.



Then, on September 16th, as the Vietnamese American Cultural Center celebrated both the Moon Festival and their own 6th anniversary of providing much needed social services for underserved communities, Kalra sang a happy birthday song to the Center with other elected officials and VACC staff.

Kalra shared, "The continued celebration of the Moon Festival promotes a positive message of a hopeful future! It's a community gathering for not only our children, but also our wider San José community. I look forward to celebrating this meaningful tradition again, and please feel free to share new and trending designs of lanterns with me."

Asm. Kalra Secures \$9M in State Budget for Speed City



Assemblymember Ash Kalra was able to secure \$9 million in state funding in the 2023 state budget for San José State University's Speed City Legacy Project. Envisioned to be a joint-use project with Santa Clara County, it will be located at the county fairgrounds and will include a track and field facility, a Legacy Center, and community facilities. Dozens gathered to mark the important announcement this October with a press conference falling on the 54th anniversary of the Olympic victory and Black Power protest by SJSU alums and track stars, Tommie Smith and John Carlos.

"I am proud we were able to secure \$9 million in the state budget toward building a state-of-the-art joint-use track and community center honoring the legacy of SJSU alumni and Speed City," said Assemblymember Kalra. "It is important that we celebrate the heroism of John Carlos and Tommie Smith who shined a light on injustices happening at home while in

the spotlight of the Olympic stage at great personal sacrifice to themselves. The Speed City Legacy Center will be a testament to their sacrifice and an opportunity for future generations to learn from the important stand they took for human rights."

Silicon Valley De-Bug Time Saved Anniversary Celebration

In August Asm. Kalra had the honor of attending the Silicon Valley De-Bug Time Saved Anniversary Celebration. Silicon Valley De-Bug has proven to be a major contributor and advocate for justice reform for twenty years. One of their greatest contributions to justice reform has been the development of Participatory Defense, a legal defense strategy that allows the community to hold its government accountable for injustice through community organizing and advocacy. This legal defense strategy gives more than a name to a case and makes each person's story known. Local community organizations like Debug show that the power of family and community should not be underestimated and can act as agents for change. De-Bug and their Time Saved Initiative are responsible for saving over 6,500 years of incarceration.



Kalra said: "I was so happy to be able to collaborate with Silicon Valley De-Bug and the Albert Cobarrubias Justice Project on AB 256 this year and look forward to working with them more in the future."

COVID-19

TEST TO TREAT



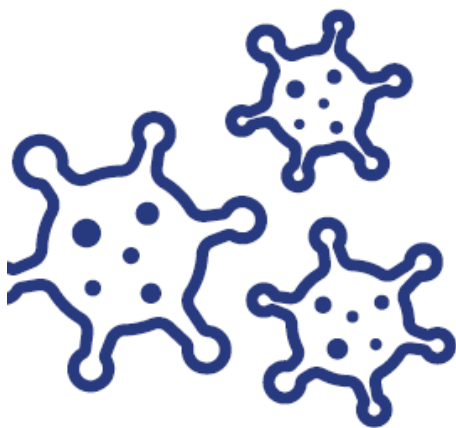
WHERE CAN I GET TREATED?



Visit <https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>



Call 1-800-232-0233 to find a test to treat location near you.



WHAT IS TEST TO TREAT?

"One-Stop Test to Treat" sites can provide faster, easier access to lifesaving COVID-19 treatments. Individuals are able to get tested for COVID-19 and - if they are positive and treatments are appropriate for them - receive a prescription from a health care provider and have their prescription filled all at one location.

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

COVID-19 treatments include two oral antiviral pills - Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Lagevrio (molnupiravir) - that can help prevent severe illness and hospitalization when taken soon after symptom onset. To be eligible, you must test positive and have symptoms that started within five days or fewer. You must also be at increased risk of developing severe COVID-19.

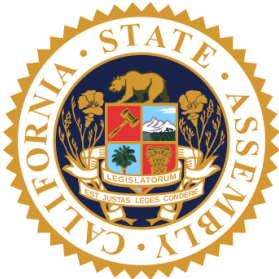


VISIT [MYTURN.CA.GOV](https://myturn.ca.gov) TO FIND A VACCINATION LOCATION NEAR YOU.

Photos from Around the Capitol, the District & Beyond



Swearing In



San Jose Veteran's Day Parade



SJSU Transforming Communities



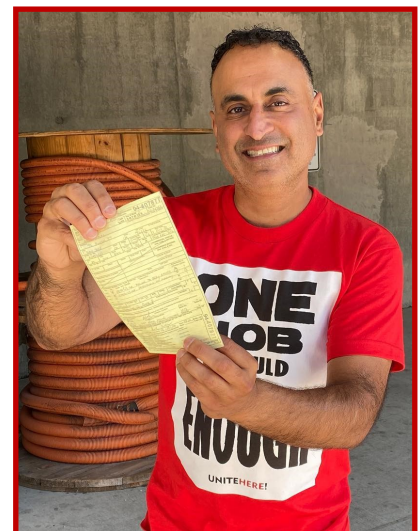
New District, Who Dis?



Montreal for COP15



Team Retreat in Sacramento



Good Trouble

Make a Friend for Life at San José Animal Care Center!

Meet **Sally** (A1280062)! She's a three year old, gray and white Alaskan Husky, who has been at the San José Animal Care Center since mid-November. She is described by shelter staff as being medium sized with a "gentle and dainty" play style. Look at that sweet face!

Maybe a cat is more your style? Meet **Kellyanna** (A1269748) a domestic, medium hair tortoiseshell. She's about nine years old, spayed, and looking to snuggle in her forever home soon.

Gypsy (brown & white) (A1271238) & **Celeste** (black & white) (A1271239) are looking for a new home too! These two sweet Guinea pigs are besties and looking to stay together. They love playtime time when they can come out to explore and do zoomies.

Want to learn more about these adorable pets and make yourself a new best friend for life? For adoption inquiries and more information about this sweet pup, please call 408-794-PAWS (7297) and leave a message. Or visit the San José Animal Care Center website at www.sanjoseanimals.com. Adoptions are conducted Tuesday through Sunday between 9am and 4pm, on a FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS. If you are interested in adopting, please write down the I.D. number of the pet you would like to meet.



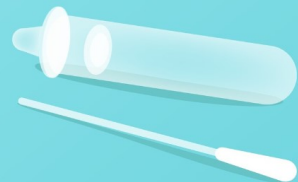
Do you know a California homeowner who is struggling financially?

If that person is a senior, is blind, or has a disability, the State Controller's Property Tax Postponement Program may help.

Apply by February 10!

Applications and eligibility details are at www.sco.ca.gov

Questions?
Call (800) 952-5661



**Get FREE
at-home
COVID-19 tests!**

Order yours at
covid.gov/tests.





Contact Us!

Want to sign up for the newsletter?

Please email Celeste Walker at celeste.walker@asm.ca.gov.



Capitol Office

State Capitol, Room 4610
P.O Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
P: (916) 319-2025
F: (916) 319-2125

Please note, new room!

District Office

100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 319
San José, CA 95113
P: (408) 277-1220
F: (408) 277-1036

Moving soon, stay tuned!

State Agencies Contact Information

Administrative Law	(916) 323-6225
Aging	(916) 419-7500
Alcoholic Beverage Control	(916) 419-2500
Board of Equalization	(800) 400-7115
Bureau of Automotive Repair	(800) 952-5210
California Courts	(415) 865-4200
California Highway Patrol	(800) 835-5247
Caltrans	(916) 654-2852
Child Supportive Services	(866) 901-3212
Civil Rights Department	(800) 884-1684
Consumer Affairs	(800) 952-5210
Controller's Office	(916) 445-3028
Developmental Services	(916) 654-1690
Employment Development	(800) 300-5616
Fair Political Practices Commission	(916) 322-5660
Fish & Wildlife	(916) 445-0411
Food & Agriculture	(916) 654-0466
Health Care Services	(916) 445-1248
High Speed Rail Authority	(916) 324-1541
Insurance	(800) 927-4357
Motor Vehicles	(800) 777-0133
Parks & Recreation	(800) 777-0369
Public Health	(916) 558-1784
Rehabilitation	(916) 324-1313
Secretary of State	(916) 653-6814
Social Services	(916) 651-8848
Toxic Substances Control	(800) 728-6942
Veterans Affairs	(800) 952-5626

