June 2023 **Assembly Newsletter** Volume 7, Issue 2

Kalra Capitol Report



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AD 25 Commemorates 48th Black April

April 30th marked the 48th Black April, or Tháng Tư Đen, in the County of Santa Clara, which is home to the second-largest Vietnamese overseas community in the United States. Across the 25th Assembly District, members of the Vietnamese community and their allies solemnly gathered to observe the raising ceremony of the yellow-and-red-striped flag of the Republic of Vietnam, paying tribute to the lives lost during the Fall of Saigon in 1975. At that time, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese refugees fled their homeland on small boats in search of freedom in unfamiliar lands, knowing that their rights would suffer under the new communist regime.

The Assemblymember began his day by attending the annual Black April Commemoration at the Viet Museum in History Park, where he honored the heroic service members who fought for democracy and human rights in Vietnam. Subsequently, he participated in the commemoration event hosted by the Vietnamese American Roundtable. Assemblymember Kalra's office presented a certificate of recognition to the County's Vietnamese American Service Center in acknowledgment of the Center's Black April Commemoration.

Kalra expressed his gratitude, saying, "I would like to extend my thanks to our community leaders and human rights activists for their ongoing commitment to commemorating Black April. It is crucial that younger generations are educat-



ed about the resilience of Vietnamese refugee communities and stand in solidarity, on the right side of history."

The following month, Kalra displayed his commitment to advocating for freedom and human rights for the oppressed people of Vietnam on the floor of the Assembly. He played a crucial role as a principal co-author of ACR 45, introduced by Assemblymember Tri Ta. This resolution, adopted by the California Legislature, establishes May 11th as Vietnam Human Rights Day in California.

A Message From Assemblymember Ash Kalra

Hello Friends and Constituents.

Warmest summer greetings to all of you! As we finally bid farewell to the seemingly endless rainy season, I hope each and every one of you is savoring this season of relaxation and joy. Whether you're out exploring our magnificent region, embarking on thrilling adventures, or simply unwinding in the enchanting surroundings of San José, I hope you're making the most of it.

I have been very busy in Sacramento over the past few months. My colleagues and I have diligently worked through a substantial number of bills to meet the House of Origin deadline for their initial passage by June 2nd. I am happy to share that 18 of the bills that I authored successfully passed out of the Assembly before this deadline. (Take a look at the next page for the specifics.) Additionally, in May, Governor Newsom presented his revised budget, which was subsequently approved by the Legislature and passed on June 27th. Now, I look forward to spending some quality time in the District as we head into Summer Recess next month!

As your representative here in Assembly District 25, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve such a vibrant and diverse community. Your voices and perspectives are invaluable to me, and I am always eager to listen to your priorities and concerns. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my dedicated staff at 408-286-2535 with any questions, suggestions, or issues you may have. Your input helps shape the work I do in the Legislature, and I am committed to being accessible and responsive to your needs. Together, we can continue working towards a better future for our community.

Let's make this summer a time of togetherness, compassion, and shared experiences that strengthen our community. Have a happy and safe Pride Month and 4^{th} of July!

Sincerely,

Assemblymember Ash Kalra

Ash Kal





18 KALRA BILLS PASS THE ASSEMBLY!

AB 57 - California Pocket Forests Initiative

AB 58 - Deferred Entry of Judgement Pilot Program

AB 96 - Transit Workers

AB 261 - CA State Mushroom - California Chanterelle

AB 486 - Nursing Home Citation Appeals

AB 522 - Administrative Subpoenas

AB 607 - Textbooks Transparency

AB 636 - H-2A Farmworker Notice of Rights

AB 943 - Breaking Down the "Other" Act

AB 1082 - Ending Poverty Tows

AB 1118 - Racial Justice Act 3.0

AB 1210 - Sodium Nitrite Labeling

AB 1266 - End Debtor's Prison Act

AB 1414 - Prohibiting Common Counts

AB 1469 - Santa Clara Valley Water Assisting the Unhoused

AB 1581 - Lake & Streambed Alteration Agreement

AB 1649 - Local Agency Public Constriction Act: Change Orders

AB 1726 - Vacatur Relief

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ANY OF THESE BILLS PLEASE VISIT WWW.LEGINFO.LEGISLATURE.CA.GOV

Silicon Valley Dental Clinic: Honoring Community with Care

On May 20th, Asm. Kalra was honored to tour the Silicon Valley Healthy Smiles (SVHS) Free Dental Clinic. The clinic took place at the San José Convention Center's South Hall and showcased a significant initiative organized by the Santa Clara County Dental Foundation (SCCDF) and SVHS Committee Chair, Dr. Ken Wallis, providing dental care to over 1,500 underserved members of the Silicon Valley Community.

Asm. Kalra observed the impressive scale of the 100-chair operation, capable of accommodating numerous patients simultaneously. The clinic offered a wide range of dental services, including cleanings, fillings, extractions, dentures, and assistance in finding long-term dental care. The collaboration between dental professionals and local community members who generously donated their time and assistance to support this noble cause was truly remarkable.

The SCCDF aims to establish the clinic as an annual or semi-annual event, having successfully raised approximately \$400,000 this year. However, the foundation is actively seeking additional donors to ensure the continuity of such clinics in the future. In addition to the dental clinic, the SCCDF provides various other services, including dental student scholarships and dental care. Moreover, the foundation partners with community

leaders and service organizations to offer access to restorative dental care and oral health services to hundreds of deserving individuals.



Kalra commented, "I am genuinely excited to continue supporting the SCCDF in their valuable mission of bringing healthier and happier smiles to San José and the greater South Bay region. During our tour, I couldn't help but feel grateful for the opportunity to represent such an engaged and cooperative community, dedicated to each other's well-being. It's truly an honor to work together towards a brighter and healthier future for all."

The SCCDF hosts and participates in fundraising events throughout the year, providing opportunities for individuals to donate or volunteer their time. Those interested in supporting the SCCDF's mission can visit their website at SCCDF.org.

Cinco de Mayo Salsa Fest: Vibrant Celebration in San José

On May 6th, the annual Cinco de Mayo Salsa Fest, hosted by Opening Doors 2020, made its triumphant return to South First Street and San Salvador in downtown San José. The festival boasted an impressive lineup of local performers, vendors, and resource booths, drawing in a diverse crowd. The celebration of Cinco de Mayo was alive and vibrant, featuring captivating music, live entertainment, and insightful speeches delving into the historical significance of the event. Undoubtedly, the festival was a resounding success, bringing together members of the community and visitors alike to partake in the rich traditions of San José.

Assemblymember Kalra attended the festival and took the opportunity to extend his heartfelt congratulations to the organizers for their unwavering dedication to promoting this cherished celebration. "I



would like to thank David Hernández and his amazing organization, Opening Doors 2020, as well as the volunteers for making sure our community here in the City of San José and County of Santa Clara continues to enjoy another meaningful Cinco de Mayo Salsa Fest."

AAPI Recognition: Honoring Leaders, Empowering Communities in AD 25

On May 19th, Assemblymember Ash Kalra hosted a warm gathering at 386 Lounge in Downtown San José to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of distinguished Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community leaders to the well-being of Assembly District 25 during the AAPI Heritage Month. This celebration is a recurring part of the Assemblymember's annual in-district events.

While honoring the remarkable advocates and leaders within the AAPI community in AD 25, Asm. Kalra emphasized the ongoing struggle for civil rights endured by the AAPI community throughout history. He expressed, "As a proud member of the AAPI community, I recognize the immense effort required to gain visibility and acknowledgment, despite the challenges posed by the prevailing system in this country, which often hinders our community's progress. It is crucial to share the AAPI experience in order to build a more inclusive society, fight against discrimination, and promote understanding, empathy, and social change."

At the event, Assemblymember Kalra honored three individuals and one organization for their dedicated advocacy that has empowered the AAPI community.

Norman Y. Mineta Legacy Award*: Mrs. Hee Shik Kim dedicated over four decades of her life and expertise to the Korean American Community Services, an organization she co-founded in 1979. From 1972 to 2012, she worked at the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, where she advocated tirelessly for children and families until her retirement.

Leadership in Community Empowerment: Jonathan Cam Leaupepetele has been involved in community work for over 10+ years with his nonprofit organization, CamCamp, which is a free workout, mentorship, & counseling service for the youth in San José. Since 2012, this program has served as an outlet for troubled youth in need of guidance and advice.

Leadership in Business – Japantown Business Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting San José's Japantown as a unique ethnic neighborhood. With over 150 members comprised of local businesses, associations, and community organizations, JBA has played an important role in Japantown's continuing vitality for 30 years.



Leader in the Arts – Hang Huynh is a contemporary artist who is interested in sculpture, photography, and oil painting. As a teaching artist and class coordinator for Chopsticks Alley Art, Hang advocated through her art for the depiction of the beauty of Southeast Asian cultures.

(*)Due to the passing of Norman Y. Mineta in 2022, former San José Mayor and 1st Asian American Cabinet Secretary, the Assemblymember's AAPI Legacy Award has been re-named to honor him.

Assemblymember Kalra's office would like to extend a special thank-you to 386 Lounge for the venue and food, and to Flora Haven for beautiful floral decorations. Both are AAPI-owned businesses in San José.

For more information about AAPI Heritage Month Celebration, please contact Tuan Nguyen at Tuan.Nguyen@asm.ca.gov

AD 25 Celebrates Women's History: Honoring Remarkable Leaders

Assembly District 25's Women's History Month Celebration on March 30th brought together a lively crowd to honor the achievements of remarkable women leaders in the community. The atmosphere at SP2 Communal Bar & Restaurant, was filled with excitement as the community joyfully reunited in person for the first time since 2019 to celebrate this event.

The evening kicked off with a warm welcome and heartfelt gratitude from Assembly Member Kalra, expressing appreciation to everyone in attendance. The event aimed to acknowledge the struggles and accomplishments of women while inspiring future generations to strive for progress and equality. Five exceptional women leaders were recognized for their remarkable contributions to San José and beyond.

First on the list of honorees was Ashley Merz, the owner of The Source Zero. Ashley, a proud UC Santa Cruz graduate, embodies leadership in the business world. Her store, located in San Pedro Square, serves as a judgment-free resource for individuals seeking to reduce their carbon footprint. The Source Zero offers soap refill bars and locally made, environmentally conscious daily essentials. Additionally, Ashley dedicates her store to promoting products from other women-owned small businesses. Her commitment to creating positive change extends even further, as she aspires to allocate a portion of her store's growth to building an animal sanctuary.

Mikelle Le, recognized for her exceptional leadership in community service, was the next honoree. Mikelle has dedicated over 23 years to Santa Clara County's behavioral health programs, demonstrating unwavering commitment to serving our community. As the Division Director of various wellness programs, she has overseen critical services such as mental health urgent care, crisis intervention, and cultural support. Mikelle's significant contributions have played a vital role in supporting those who are disproportionately affected during times of crisis, including the recent challenges brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The event took a poignant turn as Maria Marcelo, a beloved San José leader, was honored posthumously. Maria's selfless dedication to her community left a lasting impact. From establishing the Madre a Madre empowerment group to leading the Healing Grove Health Center, her legacy of compassion and service will forever be remembered.

In recognition of Susan Hammer, the former Councilmember and Mayor of San José, the Susan Hammer Legacy Award was presented to Sparky Harlan. After an illustrious 40-year tenure as CEO of Bill Wilson Center, Sparky has been an unwavering advocate for youth and families. Her visionary efforts to combat homelessness, including the establishment of a Downtown Drop-In Center and on-campus housing support for students, have garnered national acclaim. Sparky's exceptional leadership in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community serves as an inspiration to all.



The highlight of the evening arrived with the announcement of Tamara Alvarado as AD 25 Woman of the Year. Tamara's remarkable leadership in the arts, culture, and entertainment industries has made a lasting impact on our community and the State of California. Her involvement in Calpulli Tonalehqueh Danza Azteca and her work at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation highlight her commitment to empowering minorities. Tamara's achievements stand as a testament to her dedication to equity and inclusivity.

As the event drew to a close, the atmosphere was filled with gratitude for the honorees and their exceptional contributions. These remarkable women leaders exemplify the strength, unity, and resilience of our community.

Investing in Our Community: A Unifying Force of Resilience & Prosperity



At the heart of Assemblymember Ash Kalra's mission is the dedication to uplift and promote local enterprises. He is eternally grateful for the tireless efforts of key players whose visionary work keeps the pulse of our local economy thriving.

On April 8th, 2023, Assemblymember Kalra had the privilege of attending a presentation at La Esquina de Quetzal. This event, organized by the Latino Business Foundation Silicon Valley (LBFSV), SOMOS Mayfair, and Excite Credit Union, highlighted the extraordinary initiatives taking place to support our small businesses.

Following the insightful presentation, Assemblymember Kalra went on a business walk along the Alum Rock Corridor. During this walk, he visited local establishments and had the honor of being part of the grand opening of Red Rock Western Wear at 1640 Alum Rock Ave. There, Assemblymember Kalra presented a certificate of recognition to the dedicated owners of Red Rock Western Wear, acknowledging their invaluable contribution to the local economy and cultural richness. The event underscored the vital role of homegrown businesses in our community. Assemblymember Kalra thoroughly enjoyed meeting with the business owners and their families during his walk, extending his heartfelt best wishes for their entrepreneurial journey.

The work being carried out by Excite Credit Union, LBFSV, and SOMOS Mayfair at La Esquina de Quetzal serves as a testament to our community's fortitude. LBFSV's ceaseless efforts to foster economic growth and empower business leaders with vital resources are truly commendable. Through their collective efforts, Excite, LBFSV, and SOMOS provide resources, programs, and training tailored to support East San José families, offering language-accessible and culturally relevant services to residents and businesses.

Excite Credit Union's dedication to fulfilling the community's financial needs and facilitating entrepreneurship dreams underscores the strength of the Esquina de Quetzal community partnership. SOMOS's new offices will function as a hub, offering resources, leadership development workshops, and early learning programs to San José families.

La Esquina de Quetzal stands as a communal space, a "one-stop-shop" for local entrepreneurs. This first-of-its



-kind center will serve as a linchpin for East San José small businesses, especially women and immigrant-owned enterprises seeking accessible and relevant support.

In conclusion, Assemblymember Kalra acknowledges the invaluable collaborative efforts that form the backbone of our community. The steadfast support for local businesses and financial literacy initiatives underlines the resilience and strength of our district. We remain deeply appreciative and look forward to nurturing this ongoing growth in our community.

When we invest in our small businesses, we're not only putting our money to work but also nurturing the heart and soul of our community. Let's embrace this sense of unity, resilience, and prosperity that comes from supporting local enterprises.

Asm. Kalra Honors Juneteenth Festival's Culture & Community

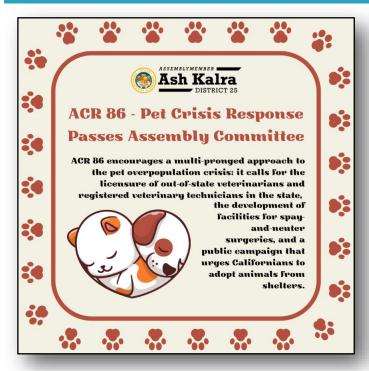


On June 17th, Asm. Kalra had the privilege of speaking at the 42nd Annual Juneteenth in the Streets Festival, hosted by the African American Community Service Agency (AACSA). Each year, this event serves as a showcase of the strength and resilience of the Black and African American community, celebrating its culture through community engagement, music, dance, cuisine, and educational activities. The festival adopted the theme "Juneteenth Homecoming: Our Culture, Our Freedom, Our Future," capturing the essence of the event. Kalra attended the festival and witnessed the rich expressions of Black culture and its enduring legacy.

When Asm. Kalra took the stage to deliver his speech, he felt a deep sense of pride and honor in front of the enthusi-

astic and attentive crowd. He extended heartfelt congratulations to AACSA and the Juneteenth in the Streets Festival for their continued success. He also commended AACSA for its unwavering dedication to honoring the dignity, culture, and heritage of the African American community in Santa Clara County and beyond. Kalra then presented a joint certificate on behalf of the California State Legislature, recognizing AACSA for its immensely impactful 42nd Annual Juneteenth in the Streets Festival.

The Juneteenth festival, along with other celebrations, serves as a platform to promote unity, inclusivity, and recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans, not only in the South Bay but throughout the United States. The festival's significance is amplified by the official recognition of Juneteenth as a national holiday, symbolizing a commitment to equality and justice and highlighting the importance of diversity and the ongoing pursuit of racial equity in America. Assembly Member Kalra eagerly anticipates future celebrations of AACSA's success and the festival's role in commemorating a milestone in America's journey towards freedom, justice, and equality for all.





Vietnamese American Roundtable Honored as Non-Profit of the Year

This year, Assemblymember Ash Kalra designated Vietnamese American Roundtable (VAR) as his 2023 Non-profit of the Year, acknowledging the organization's unwavering commitment to providing educational platforms for youth, fostering cultural celebration, promoting civic engagement, and empowering the community in California's 25th Assembly District.

VAR, a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, comprises young Vietnamese American professionals and representatives who collaborate diligently to research, promote, and support joint programs and projects. Their aim is to amplify and advocate for vital support services for the Vietnamese American community and the underserved.

In 2023, VAR achieved success by upholding the annual Black April commemoration—an event honoring the fallen heroes who bravely fought for democracy and human rights in Vietnam prior to 1975. Furthermore, VAR recently celebrated the successful launch of the sixth SEEDS Cohort (Student Engagement and Education for Development and Success), an impactful summer youth program that equips and nurtures future community leaders by providing hands-on programming experience to address social issues.

Heartfelt congratulations to VAR for being recognized as Assemblymember Kalra's 2023 Nonprofit of the Year!



Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Celebrates 30th Anniversary



Despite a light rain, environmental advocates and organizations gathered to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority with undiminished joy. This agency has been dedicated to creating long-term initiatives aimed at preserving open spaces, wildlife habitats, and natural and working lands in response to the challenges posed by climate change. The momentous occasion took place in May at the Tilton Ranch Headquarters.

To mark this milestone, Assemblymember Ash Kalra, along with his colleagues in the State Legislature, co-signed a Joint Resolution led by Senator John Laird. Assemblymember Kalra had the honor of addressing the audience and special guests at the event, where he discussed California's commitment to achieving the ambitious 30x30 initiative. This initiative strives to protect 30% of our lands and

waters by the year 2030. Assembly Bill 2278, which was recently signed into law by the Governor, stands as a significant legislative accomplishment in ensuring that both the Legislature and the public are kept informed about the progress and plans for implementing the 30x30 objective.

"By directing all state agencies to coordinate their departments and programs, California can ensure that its efforts in achieving the 30x30 goals are harmonized. This coordinated approach will enhance transparency and accountability in implementing the necessary measures to conserve our lands and waters," Kalra shared.

Worker Memorial Day: An Evening of Unity, Empowerment & Advocacy



April 28th is Worker Memorial Day, a day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, injured, or made unwell by their work, aiming to promote safety and health in the workplace and advocate for workers' rights. This year, Assemblymember Ash Kalra participated in a compelling and heartening Workers' Memorial Day event at the Laborers Union Local 270 hall. The event, which drew an audience of over 160 people, was a robust demonstration of solidarity and a testament to the power of unity in the workforce.

The evening was replete with inspiring speeches by an array of individuals, including everyday workers whose stories reverberated with resilience and determination. Their personal narratives not only shed light on the realities of working life but also underscored the importance of advocacy for workers' rights. Union leaders and members, Worksafe representatives, CalOSHA and FedOSHA officers all spoke fervently about the critical role that labor plays in shaping our society. With such a diverse range of speakers, the event served as a remarkable confluence of voices echoing the same clarion call for justice and fair treatment for all workers.

The event was not just about speeches and serious discussions, however. There was a real sense of community intensified by the mouth-watering Filipino food by the members of

PAWIS South Bay.

Musicians filled the hall with soulful renditions of labor songs, encapsulating the struggle, victories, and unity of the workforce in their melodies. The emcees for the evening, Maria Marroquin and Jora Trang, skillfully guided the attendees through this emotional journey, enhancing the spirit of camaraderie.

In the face of the challenges and uncertainties that workers often encounter, such events are a crucial reminder of our shared mission. Assemblymember Kalra extends his deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this empowering Workers' Memorial Day event. We continue to strive for a fairer, more equitable future for all workers, inspired by your stories, your courage, and your relentless pursuit of justice.





Photos from Around the Capitol, the District & Beyond



























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



Meet Bonnie (A1292171)! She's a four year old, black and brown special needs German Shepard, who has been at the shelter since March. She suffers from dermatitis and food allergies but don't let that scare you off. Looking for a very special furever family, Bonnie is described by shelter staff as spunky, great in the car and on a leash.

It may sound daunting, but adopting a special needs pet offers numerous advantages. It saves a life by providing a home to an animal that might otherwise struggle to find one. Despite their disabilities or conditions, special needs pets offer unconditional love and form deep bonds with their owners. Caring for them fosters empathy, compassion, and personal growth. The unique challenges involved in their care lead to a stronger bond and provide an opportunity to educate and inspire others. However, it is crucial to research and ensure you can meet their specific needs before making the decision to adopt.

Want to learn more about Bonnie and the many other adoptable 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.



Calling all vegan and eco-conscious vendors!

Join us at San Jose VeggieFest, where hundreds of Bay Area residents gather for a day filled with mouthwatering vegan cuisine, environmentally conscious vendors, drinks, and captivating local talent. Reserve your free vending booth space today by scanning the QR code and be part of this extraordinary celebration of healthy living!





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Gain experience working with kids in K-8th grade after-school programs!

- No experience necessary
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Minimum Qualifications:

- Age 18 to 30 years old
- Livina in San José, CA
- Must be available to work after school hours Monday-Friday from 2 PM-6 PM

Questions?

email us at RC@sjplf.org

For More Info:



Application for part-time positions for the 2023-2024 academic school year

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We've moved!



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