



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Mya Whitaker

Age: 27

Family: Yes, one child

Hometown: Oakland

Lived in Oakland since: 1996

Education: Skyline High School; San Francisco State University.

Occupation: Program Director

Employer: Bay Area Urban Debate League (BAUDL)

Political experience: For the last 10 years I have worked tirelessly with our community to amplify our voices and bring policy solutions to our issues. I have hosted round tables bringing all types of decision makers forward. In 2017 I sat on a commission to select the Oakland police chief. As the Program Director for BAUDL, I invest in teaching youth how to argue and defend the same policies that affect their everyday life. My experience as a debater and now leader has enabled me with complex tools to analyze and push for policy that has the greatest impact.

Notable affiliations:

EMERGE CA 2017 Cohort graduate + IGNITE CA

1. **What do you see as the greatest challenges when it comes to providing residents with a livable, affordable and safe community?**

When we champion 21st century jobs, equitable education, and affordable housing, we present a challenge to years of resource misappropriation and lack of accountability from the same decision makers year after year. We know that our grassroots advocacy to fight for job training programs and inclusion are already challenging leadership that have become too comfortable and complacent. In this way, the biggest challenge is solving the complexity of housing and a booming market but this is what excites us -- East Oakland is no stranger to adversity.

2. What is the biggest opportunity for your district or city during the next four years?

We must be willing to invest in our community to enable skills for the 21st century. Dedicating community incubators for job training, development, and pipelines ensures that our community takes advantage of a bay area market responding to a tech boom. However, we must be able to keep and incentive's housing for East Oakland residents through stronger regulations and programs. Oakland must treat housing as a non-negotiable factor when dealing with developers and corporations.

3. Describe your commitment to your district or city leading up to your bid for office.

Our campaign is constantly active in our community -- we get people registered to vote and educated about the political process. Together, we will keep registering people to vote at every one of our events. We are each other neighbors and we have to take care of each other. This means sharing knowledge about issues that impact us the most. Thus far we have registered over 100 people and that number is quickly growing. It's inspiring to see people brighten with hope when they find out how much impact their vote has.

4. Silicon Valley and the Bay Area are at the center of global, technological advancement. How do you see technology's role in changing the lives of both longtime residents and transplants?

A better model for allowing our community to benefit from a booming tech industry is to bring resources, knowledge, and expertise in building pipelines for East Oakland. Companies interested in Oakland must hire, train, and invest in Oakland. Plain and simple. Right now there is no standard for how the industry will invest in Oakland while it tries to set roots.

Though we often associate technology with advancement, in East Oakland this has meant rolling back progress for people of color. We will not allow selling out our community to tech companies that are not interested in our well-being.