

Ami Chen Mills amichenmills@gmail.com

1. Elected office sought:

Mayor

2. Length of residence in the district you seek to represent:

Since 1998, with a stints in SF, and Palo Alto, but 20+ years here

3. Your occupation or avocation:

Activist/Coach/Trainer and Lecturer at UCSC

4. Significant memberships and affiliations (political, labor union, public service, etc.)

UC-AFT, formerly UAW 4811; Board of Directors, Conflict Resolution Center (past); Elected member, Westlake School Site Council; Co-founder, Extinction Rebellion, Santa Cruz; Citizens Climate Lobby (brief); City Advisory Committee on Homelessness; Elected Member, SC DCC (District 3), Cal Dem Delegate, Founder, Get the Flock Out (GTFO), Santa Cruz County, KSQD host and podcaster, Moment of Truth with Ami Chen Mills and co-founder, Moment of Truth Dispatch on Substack

5. In what political campaigns, organizations, and movements have you been active, and what role did you play?

Author, CIA Off Campus; tour w/ Phil Agee; 2019 climate strikes, protests; one founder of AAPI SC. KSQD show: transgender issues, tech takeover of SF, Starhawk, Angela Davis, Jess Craven. Helped lead several groups (Diversity Center, PV Pride, Safe Schools) to write op ed signed by 44 orgs against Moms for Liberty coming here. Founded LUV-BIPOC group for my professional community. Organized the Get the Flock Out campaign across the county. SC Council voted 6 - 1 to cancel Flock contract.

6. If you were eligible, did you vote for Bernie Sanders in the Primary Election 2016 or 2020?

Yes in 2016, Yes in 2020

7. Which of Bernie Sanders' policy proposals are you most passionate about?

Most recently, his increasingly urgent calls for a moratorium on AI data centers and AI rapid deployment. AI is embedded the surveillance technologies we are now subject to, as with Ring cameras, Waymos and Flock ALPRs, along with mass personal surveillance, as in the form of ChatGPT (now seeking to share personal data with government). Overall, end the corporate oligarchy. The tech bro oligarchy is even worse, and we must stop the tech/fascist takeover of our nation.

8. How can these policies you care about be implemented at the local level?

Emmanuel Navaro, Chair of the County Latino Affairs Commission, has brought forward city-based legislation to ban data broker and mass surveillance companies from doing business with and in the city. This has been implemented in other California cities, and I'd like to implement it here. Emmanuel and I work on the Get the Flock Out campaign together.

9. What are your key goals and, if elected, how will you achieve them?

Protect: from surveillance & tech oligarchy overreach. Organize for federal/ICE/natural disasters. Build neighborhood networks w/ micro-grid power & alt. communications. Housing & Ecology: Affordable housing first, housing stabilization, tenant protections. Will protect wild lands & support re-wilding, rights of nature, land back. (Protect Benchlands & Indigenous stewardship, as I lobbied for). Dialogue/Transparency: Will meet w/ public ahead of council meetings to review agenda. Will educate public about the issues we face, and seek input.

10. If elected, what is one concrete step you would take in your first year to rebuild trust with communities that feel ignored or excluded from local decision making?

I will be assembling a team of trusted progressive voices to meet with me, weekly, and help me navigate the Mayorship and bring real progressive concerns to the fore. My open meetings ahead of council meetings will help draw folks in who have not been given a seat at the table. I will go out from chambers to listen to the unhoused in various locations.

11. Give an example of when you spoke truth to power. Who were the players, what were the stakes, and what did you do?

Recently, I have been speaking up at the DCC to help organize a conversation (with Rick Longinotti and others) about serious issues Democrats and progressives have with Jimmy Panetta. I am sure I've been annoying to some on the DCC, and even running for Mayor at this time feels like challenging very embedded political power structures, with even Panetta and Pellerin weighing in on this race. I challenged Keeley during the GTFO campaign when he wanted us to settle for "amending the contract."

12. Why should members of Santa Cruz for Bernie vote for you to be their elected representative?

My values are the same as Bernie Sanders' and other progressives in Congress, and elsewhere across the country. Most recently, I traveled to Folsom with Lani Faulkner and my daughter to the Stop the Oligarchy tour with Sanders and AOC. I am an excellent listener and also very pragmatic. We will need 4 votes on the council to get anything done, and I am very good at working with folks who may initially disagree with me. I asked Renee Golder to help set up the first Flock meetings when everyone said she would not even vote to cancel. In the end, she did. These are the kind of strategic and relationship building skills we need for the Mayorship.