

# Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club November 2024 Endorsement Questionnaire (April)

## PART 1: Required Information

1. **Full name and pronouns:** Aliya Chisti (she/her)
2. **Office running for:** City College Board
3. **Campaign consultant / primary point of contact:** Aliya Chisti
4. **Campaign address:** N/A
5. **Campaign phone number:** 415-805-6881
6. **Campaign email address:** aliyachisti2024@gmail.com
7. **Campaign website:** N/A
8. **Political party:** Democratic Party
9. **Are or were you a member of the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club? If so, please provide timeframe.** Yes
10. **Do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and / or queer (LGBTQ)?** No

## **PART 2: Short-Answer Questions**

*(Please limit responses to 150 words or less.)*

### **General Questions**

#### **1. Describe your qualifications for the office you are seeking.**

For the past three years, I have elevated the voices of students, teachers, and staff and represented my community in the leadership of CCSF. Community Colleges, like CCSF, serve a large proportion of low-income and historically underrepresented student populations compared to CSUs and UCs.

I have over a decade of experience working in education as an educator or on policies that impact schools. I have an MA in Education Policy, and my thesis focused on the burden of student debt. I have served as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in North Macedonia.

As the former Free City College Program Analyst at the Department of Children Youth and Their Families, I successfully implemented the ten-year MOU for the Free City Program. As a former legislative aide on the Board of Supervisors, I drafted the "Ban the Box" legislation to prohibit the use of criminal justice information on applications for private colleges in San Francisco.

I am running for re-election to the City College Board because I would like to continue my work on identifying funding sources to alleviate student debt for students, lead the process to ensure CCSF remains accredited, and continue to ensure that our elected seats continue to hold space for women of color.

#### **2. Specify key endorsements you have and why they are meaningful to you.**

I am proud to have the endorsement of CA State Controller Malia Cohen and I will be seeking additional endorsements over the next several weeks.

#### **3. What will you do to end homelessness in your jurisdiction (short- and long-term)?**

Long-term solutions include investing in our educational systems so that underrepresented students can ultimately become self-sufficient. I also believe we must create more housing and other strategic partnerships to support students in accessing rental subsidies and eliminating red tape.

In the short term, my priority is to address basic needs of our students, which includes addressing housing insecurity.

I authored a student housing resolution to apply for the state's Affordable Student Housing Grant Program in the next round of grant awards offered to California Community Colleges. In 2019, 60% of community college students experienced housing insecurity. I am also a strong advocate of the Homeless At Risk Transitional Students (HARTS) program at CCSF and am actively working on identifying strategic funding and strengthening partnerships for HARTS, our basic needs center, and Larkin Street Youth Services.

I have also connected nonprofits with our faculty for educator housing efforts.

**4. What work have you done to address economic inequality and housing unaffordability? If elected, what will you do to address them?**

It is believed that educational equality is crucial to fighting economic inequality. However, higher education institutions can perpetuate economic inequality because they are not entirely free. My training in education policy has provided me with the skillset to strategically fight for additional financial resources for our community college students.

Last year, I led the effort to eliminate student debt for over 13,000 Free City students, eliminating \$2.1 million tuition-related fees.

During the pandemic, I led the effort for an additional \$1 million to be provided to students through emergency grants and for the college to identify additional markers for financial need since undocumented students do not qualify for pell grant funding.

I also advocated that COVID-19 block grant money be used to eliminate student debt, so that students who dropped classes during the pandemic could re-enroll.

**5. How have you addressed racial injustice and police brutality? How will you work to ensure Limited English Proficient (LEP) community members have access to government services?.**

As a teacher, a policymaker, and an advocate, I center racial and economic justice, and believe deeply that police brutality is just one of the many manifestations of criminalization that I am committed to disrupting through my work in education

I am proud to support CCSF's partnership with the Public Defender's office to make it easier for current and former Public Defender clients to attend college. I've also facilitated partnerships between the Department of Police Accountability and CCSF students for internship programs. I am a strong advocate for New Directions, an academic support program for formerly incarcerated and justice impacted students and have also called for frequent updates on how to better support this program.

I have been continuing the work of previous trustees with the siblings of Sean Monterrosa, who was fatally shot by the police in 2020 and to establish a scholarship in his honor.

I am also committed to improving access and the registration process to our noncredit ESL programs.

**6. How have you supported LGBTQ residents, and how will you if elected?**

As a practicing Muslim, I am often approached by other young Muslims who have informed me that my support for LGBTQ students as a public figure has helped them build courage to also learn how to better show up for their LGBTQ friends since there is still a level of stigma in Muslim communities.

I was proud to lead the drafting of the Pride Resolution in collaboration with our Queer Resource Center. I am currently working on organizing a Pride Flag-raising ceremony. I am excited to support the renaming of our MUB 140 to Harry Britt.

Last year, I called for a special meeting related to the monkeypox outbreak to make it a priority to guide our college to work with public health officials on providing accurate information and addressing misconceptions about the virus and our community.

I am also a strong proponent of mental health services for our students as well.

**7. Describe your work addressing the climate crisis, and what specific steps you will take to confront climate change and environmental injustice.**

I have supported efforts by our students to obtain low cost transportation passes .Additionally, I will continue to ensure that projects funded through the \$845 million passed bond are environmentally sound.

**8. Describe a time when you worked against an established power structure or entrenched authority to achieve a change. How was this change accomplished?**

Growing up as a low-income, Muslim woman of color, I have spent my entire life navigating and working against racist and classist power structures. When I first ran in 2020 it was my priority to ensure that every person had a seat at the table in the decision-making process. Over the past four years, I have prioritized that goal and will continue to do so if re-elected.

**9. Among San Franciscans with HIV, overdose is the #1 cause of death, 1/6 are homeless (or at-risk), and new infections are increasing. 50% of HIV-related federal funding is at-risk. How will you address this and involve HIV communities directly in your decision making? Will you support housing subsidies, fully funded HIV programming, and decriminalization of substance use? Why / why not?**

Yes, I will support housing subsidies, fully funded HIV programming, and the decriminalization of substance use. These measures are essential for addressing the root causes of HIV disparities, promoting health equity, and empowering individuals living with HIV to lead healthier lives.

**10. How long have you lived in your jurisdiction? Explain any effects of redistricting.**

I was born and raised in District 11 and redistricting has not significantly impacted our neighborhood.

**11. See the Club's platform at [milkclub.org/platform](http://milkclub.org/platform). Any disagreements?**

I support Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club's platform to ensure that the voices of folks from the LGBTQ community are elevated and to create a better society for historically underrepresented groups.

## **Only District Attorney Candidates**

*(Please limit responses to 150 words or less.)*

**1. What is your vision of a successful public safety system in San Francisco? How will you be a leader in ensuring that all of our communities are safe?**

**2. Do you think San Francisco's drug overdose crisis is best solved through a public health lens or a criminal justice lens? Please explain your top policy proposals?**

**3. What have you done to support victims of crime, and victim services?**

**4. The Office of the District Attorney has faced operational challenges. What are your proposals for addressing this?**

**5. How have you supported marginalized communities that have been disproportionately impacted by violence in San Francisco, such as the Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and LGBTQ+ communities?**

**6. In what ways will restorative justice play a role in your office?**

**7. Describe your relationship with the San Francisco Police Department. Are there things you wish they would do or approach differently?**

**Only Supervisorial Candidates**  
*(Please limit responses to 150 words or less.)*

1. What are your top three legislative priorities if elected?
2. What should be increased / decreased to balance the City budget?
3. How should the Board of Supervisors create more transparency from and accountability within the public health department?
4. Do you support expanding transit-only and protected bike lanes in your district?
5. How will you preserve and expand affordable housing in your district?
6. Do you support a navigation center in your district?
7. Who do you support for Mayor in 2024? How will you work with the Mayor to address constituents' issues?
8. Who do you currently see as your closest allies on the Board of Supervisors? How will you work with other supervisors when disagreements arise?
9. If add-back funds were available, how would you allocate them in your district?
10. Which of the local governmental bureaucracies is most in need of an audit? Why?

**Only District 9 candidates:**

11. What is your stance on the Valencia Street bike lanes? What will be your solutions to addressing the concerns of cyclists, residents, and small businesses?
12. What is your stance on the future of street vendors on Mission Street? How will you balance supporting vendors and ensuring public safety?

# **Only City College Board Candidates**

*(Please limit responses to 150 words or less.)*

## **1. What specific experience do you have with the City College of San Francisco?**

My entire family, including myself, have taken classes at CCSF. I grew up a few blocks away from City College's Ocean campus, in lakeview, and see CCSF as a critical component of the San Francisco community. In 2020, I ran a grassroots campaign and became the first Muslim elected in the history of San Francisco. Since becoming elected, I have prioritized attending college events, such as Frisco Day, CCSF connect, football and basketball games, and other events hosted by our college community.

As the former lead Analyst for the Free City College Program, I ensured this program was successful so that San Francisco residents could take classes at CCSF for free.

## **2. What is your plan to address the bullying of LGBTQ students, as well as students of traditionally marginalized communities?**

I will continue to take a strong stance against any bullying of LGBTQ students or traditionally marginalized communities. I will also continue to take seriously any complaints on bullying and fight to ensure concerns are addressed and students and staff are humanely treated when having the courage to speak up. I will continue to contribute to a responsive culture at CCSF where students who are LGBTQ or other marginalized communities feel they will be heard and valued. I am also a strong proponent of mental health services for our students as well.

As a practicing Muslim, I am often approached by other young Muslims who have informed me that my support for LGBTQ students as a public figure has helped them build courage to also learn how to better show up for their LGBTQ friends since there is still a level of stigma in Muslim communities.

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## **3. How will you address the needs of homeless students?**

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In the short term, my priority is to address basic needs of our students, which includes addressing housing insecurity.

I authored a student housing resolution to apply for the state's Affordable Student Housing Grant Program in the next round of grant awards offered to California Community Colleges. In 2019, 60% of community college students experienced housing insecurity. I am also a strong advocate of the Homeless At Risk Transitional Students (HARTS) program at CCSF and am actively working on identifying strategic funding and strengthening partnerships for HARTS, our basic needs center, and Larkin Street Youth Services.

I have also connected nonprofits with our faculty for educator housing efforts.

**4. What are your plans to protect undocumented students and their families?**

I am currently gathering information on how to expand Free City to undocumented students who do not qualify for AB 540 and homeless students that do not need the SF residency requirements. I am also a strong supporter of the Dream Center at CCSF.

During the pandemic, I successfully advocated that staff identify ways to provide emergency grants to undocumented students that were not eligible for pell grants.

**5. Did you support the recent City College staff layoff? What is your stance on future faculty and staff layoffs?**

Yes. It was an incredibly difficult decision, and ultimately, I decided to support the layoffs. In 2022, CCSF was on continued enhanced fiscal monitoring and ACCJC requested updates on how the situation was going to be addressed. Their upcoming visit was scheduled for 2023. We also had 7 audit findings year after year about the District as a going concern, related to the fund balance, declining student enrollment, and turnover at the executive level. The 2012 accreditation was detrimental to our college, I am concerned about the risk because our student enrollment has never recovered since the crisis.

The college recently experienced its first clean audit in 25 years and balanced budgets to become fiscally stable and sustainable. Last month, ACCJC issued a warning to CCSF, and one of the reasons was related to long-range fiscal implications when making financial decisions to assure financial stability.

When I was running for office in 2020, I thought Prop 15 would have passed, and its failure was a major setback for educational institutions. I strongly supported Prop O and worked in community with our labor partners on the San Francisco Workforce Education and Reinvestment in Community Success Act and was very disheartened when it also failed.

I have called for a discussion on how the board can identify additional revenue sources. I also played an active role in moving negotiations forward, alongside Trustee Solomon and Chancellor Martin to provide an overdue increase in pay of 14% across three years to all of our labor groups.

**6. Do you support the current chancellor? How would you describe their tenure?**

Yes. CCSF needs stability, the college has had nine chancellors in eight years. In the transition process, a lot of institutional knowledge is lost. I understand that board members can have differing views, but we need this cycle to stop and the CCSF board needs to work on improving the CEO-Board relationship. Chancellor Martin has areas of growth and the Board should continue to hold him accountable. He was recommended by all major constituent groups at the college and was the strongest candidate after a difficult search process.

**7. Do you support the Workforce Education and Recovery Fund that dedicates permanent funding for non-credit classes at City College?**

Yes, I supported Proposition O and collaborated with our labor partners in developing language and also led the effort to build consensus on the Board to support the measure through a resolution. I am currently in the process of calling for a study for additional revenue measures.

**8. Who do you currently see as your closest allies on the City College Board?**

I have and always will collaboratively with my colleagues, even if we disagree on issues. I recently drafted a ceasefire and student parent resolution with Trustee Solomon and have also drafted a Pride Resolution with Trustee Chung.

### **PART 3: Yes or No Questions**

*(Please "X" Yes or No for each question.)*

<b>GENERAL</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Have you ever sought elected office before?	x	
Have you previously sought a Milk Club endorsement?	x	

<b>LGBTQ ISSUES &amp; SEXUAL LIBERATION</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you support codifying various relationship structures as a protected class; e.g., a law that would prohibit discrimination against people in consensual non-monogamous relationships in employment, housing, education, and healthcare?	x	
Do you support public funding for workforce programs, specifically for transgender job-seekers?	x	
Do you support public funding to expand access to PrEP?	x	
Do you support decriminalizing sex work?	x	

<b>TENANTS, HOUSING, AND HOMELESSNESS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you support independent oversight of your jurisdiction's agency that is responsible for services to the homeless?	x	
Do you support the split-role repeal of Proposition 13?	x	
Do you support the repeal of the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act?	x	
Do you support the repeal of the Ellis Act?	x	
Have you ever evicted a tenant?		x
Do you support requiring the consent of homeless encampment residents prior to their displacement by your jurisdiction's city government(s)?		
Do you support the public acquisition of hotel rooms for permanent shelter and / or supportive housing for the homeless?	x	
Did you support Measure D, the vacant property tax, in 2020 (or would you have, had you been a San Francisco voter)?	x	
Would you support a licensing system for landlords in your jurisdiction?		
Do you support a public municipal bank in your jurisdiction?	x	
Did you support the proposed real estate transfer tax in 2020 for properties valued at or over \$10 million (or would you have, had you been a San Francisco voter)?	x	

<b>IMMIGRATION JUSTICE ISSUES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Should the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement be abolished?	x	
Do you support sanctuary cities?	x	
Do you support due process protections for immigrant youth accused of crimes?	x	
Do you support allowing the undocumented to serve on city / state boards and commissions?	x	
Do you support increased funds for immigrant defense services?	x	

<b>RACIAL &amp; SOCIAL JUSTICE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you support the death penalty?		x
Do you support the use of tasers by law enforcement?		x
Do you support requiring an independent investigation of all police officer-related shootings?	x	
Does your campaign accept contributions from law enforcement associations, unions, or organizations?		x
Should your local Police Officers Association be disbanded / have its political influence severely curtailed?	x	
Do you support qualified immunity for police officers?		x
Do you support reparations for Black people?	x	
Do you support the implementation of overdose prevention sites?	x	
Do you support extending voting rights in local / state elections to currently and formerly incarcerated people?	x	
Have you ever crossed a union picket line or ignored a union boycott?		x
Do you support the right for public sector employees to go on strike?	x	
Do you support repealing California Proposition 209?	x	
Did you support California Proposition 22 (App-Based Drivers Regulations Initiative)?		X

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you support dissolving Pacific, Gas, & Electric and replacing it with a publicly-owned utility agency?	x	
If you have a local clean power program partnered with your local utility provider, do you support its expansion?	x	

Would you support a plan to provide free public transportation in your jurisdiction?	x	
Would you support a national ban on fossil fuel extraction?	x	

<b>PUBLIC CORRUPTION &amp; POLITICAL TRANSPARENCY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Did you support the Sunlight on Dark Money measure (Proposition F) on the November 2019 ballot (or would you have, had you been a San Francisco voter)?	x	
Do you support expanding your jurisdiction's public financing program to all elected offices?	x	

## **PART 4: Support of Other Candidates / Propositions**

*(Please fill in who you supported, or whether or not you supported the indicated proposition. If you made a ranked endorsement or voted for more than one candidate using IRV, please indicate the rankings.)*

	<b>2024</b>
U.S. Senate	Barbara Lee
State Assembly, District 19	Catherine Stefani
Superior Court Judge, Seat 1	Judge Michael Berger
Superior Court Judge, Seat 13	Judge Patrick Thompson
Democratic County Central Committee (if applicable, can indicate slate name)	AD-19: Stefani, Chan, Mar, LaCroix, Fewer, Gee, Raju AD-17: Tung, Kim, Avalos, Heiken, Berry
California Propositions	
1 - Behavioral health services	Yes
San Francisco Propositions	
A - Affordable housing bond	Yes
B - Police officer staffing levels	No
C - Transfer tax exemption	No
D - Changes to local ethics laws	Yes
E - Police Department procedures	No
F - Substance dependence screening	No
G - 8th grade algebra	Yes
	<b>2022</b>
CA State Assembly, District 17	Matt Haney
San Francisco District 2 Supervisor	Catherine Stefani
San Francisco District 4 Supervisor	No endorsement
San Francisco District 6 Supervisor	No endorsement
San Francisco District 8 Supervisor	Rafael Mandelman
San Francisco District 10 Supervisor	Shamann Walton
San Francisco Board of Education (up to 3 names)	Lainie, Lisa, Alida

San Francisco Community College Board (up to 4 names)	Murrell Green, John Rizzo, Brigette Davila, Thea Selby, Anita Martinez
San Francisco District Attorney	Brooke Jenkins
San Francisco Public Defender	Mano Raju
San Francisco Propositions	
H (June) - Chesa Boudin recall	No
D (Nov.) - Affordable Homes Now	No
E (Nov.) - Affordable Housing Production Act	No
I (Nov.) - Access for All	No
J (Nov.) - Safe Parks for All	Yes
M (Nov.) - Vacant residential unit tax	Yes
O (Nov.) - City College funding	Yes
	<b>2020</b>
Democratic Presidential Primary	Bernie Sanders
CA State Senate, District 11	Jackie Fielder
San Francisco District 1 Supervisor	Connie Chan
San Francisco District 3 Supervisor	Aaron Peskin
San Francisco District 5 Supervisor	Dean Preston
San Francisco District 7 Supervisor	Myrna Melgar
San Francisco District 11 Supervisor	Ahsha Safai
	<b>2019</b>
San Francisco District 5 Supervisor	Vallie Brown
San Francisco District Attorney	Suzy Loftus
	<b>2018</b>
San Francisco Mayor	London Breed (1) and Jane Kim (2)
San Francisco District 4 Supervisor	Gordon Mar
San Francisco District 6 Supervisor	Matt Haney
San Francisco District 8 Supervisor	Rafael Mandelman
San Francisco District 10 Supervisor	Shamann Walton