

REVIEWED

By City Clerk's Office at 8:53 am, Jul 23, 2021

Commission on the Status of Women Applicant

Alexis M Hemphill-Elsea

Application Date: 07/22/21

Reside in Santa Monica: yes

If yes, number of years: 21

INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE

Current or prior service on city boards/commissions:

While I have not had any prior formal experience on a City Board or Commission, other than the Northeast Neighborhood organization, I have been very interested in serving on a local board whose purpose and mission were aligned with my own. A few months ago, I attended an informational webinar with Assemblyman Bloom on how to get appointed to a state board or commission and was specifically interested in applying for the Commission on the Status of Women; I consider it serendipity when I saw this very position was vacant in our local government.

Community activities:

Throughout the past 6 years, I was heavily involved with my daughter's school and the SMMUSD district from a variety of official and unofficial roles. I spent most of my time on campus, wearing multiple hats, but always working on behalf of the PTA and children. I served on the PTA executive Board for 5 years and was Executive Vice President for 2. I was also Room Parent for all 5 years and during COVID helped our class work with the Letters for Isolation campaign to bring art and personal letters to the at-risk seniors in nursing homes across the nation. During this time, I also took an active part in the safety of all school aged children and neighbors as Safety VP and worked hard to advocate for new safety regulations in our school zone. In the end, we secured two new stop signs on Washington Ave. at 23rd and 24th and received an additional crossing guard stationed at 24th. I am also involved within my close neighborhood and am in the process of starting a Save the Monarch Club, which became a very fun COVID-time hobby for our family and has grown into quite the passion project for us all. Prior to this, I was a member of the Junior League of Los Angeles and volunteered at OPCC/ The People's Concern and with Sojourn. I am committed to volunteer work and service learning. My daughter and I play tennis at Reed Park weekly and look after our 99-year-old neighbor and adopted "great grandma." I am very much looking forward to being an active part at my daughter's new school (Archer School for Girls) this fall.

Qualifications, experience, education, and technical or professional requirements:

Prior to my time as a stay-at-home parent, I was a Marketing & Business Executive with over 16 years' experience managing global brand franchises within the corporate entertainment divisions at Fortune 500 companies such as 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros., Paramount, and Disney. Throughout my time in corporate, I was responsible for hiring and training at all levels. I was keenly aware of just how important it was to develop opportunities for women with leadership roles and to find meaningful ways to achieve growth within their careers. A personal advocate for the status of women at work, I would personally mentor and train several female interns knowing how valuable it was for me to have similar mentors during my career. I also was part of corporate social groups such as Women of Warner. From a business

perspective, I was also passionate about elevating projects by female directors and writers given that there are so few, even today. I received a B.A. from Wheaton College in Massachusetts and a M.S in Communications, Advertising & Public Relations. During college, I was a volunteer at our 24-hour crisis hotline center for women. I was also a member of the Junior League of Los Angeles in which my main project was with OPCC/ The People's Concern and Sojourn where I volunteered weekly for 6 months. All the education and professional experience aside, I would say that my greatest qualification is in my role as mother to my 11-year-old daughter. Having gone through a divorce and working as a single mother to a toddler I gained considerable understanding the variety of challenges that working mothers face day-to-day, and personally experienced some of the barriers women face as they return to work. My daughter has helped me see the true depth of issues that continue to affect girls and women today such as body related issues and eating disorders, gender related violence, sexuality, and exploitation. Being a mother has truly given me insight to the importance of working as an advocate for women and girls of all ages because the most important change truly does start small.

Areas of demonstrated expertise:

Throughout my life, I have volunteered extensively within various environments such as hospitals/ ER, at risk school's in DTLA, convalescent homes, as well as supportive housing for women (Sojourn/ The People's Concern) and have worked closely with women, children, and seniors. I am very familiar with Social Services and understand the role they play in the protection of these at-risk groups, and I have personally experienced their involvement for a variety of cases whether it be for children or adults. As a parent, I was heavily involved within my daughter's school (Franklin) and served on the Executive Board 5 years and helps a variety of elected positions during her time at elementary which helped me fully understand the power of advocacy and fundraising. While at Franklin, I was elected as Executive Vice President for 2 years and was Chair of our Financial Spend Down Committee for 4 during which I personally oversaw a great number of major building enhancement projects such as repaving our kinder yard, installing new fencing and gate doors, installation of our two sunshades. This all necessitated a great understanding of public funding and project management at a district level. I was also Fundraising and Sponsorship Co-Chair responsible for all the community outreach for our school's funds and activities. I was also Vice President of Safety and Chair of Room Parents responsible for the training of all volunteers. Throughout all of this, I was Room Parent for my daughter's class every year and never lost sight of how important it was to interact with children and to be a part of working within programs such as Art Cart that would help young children find confidence and outlets to express their individuality.

Goals:

My goals are:

1. To aid in discovering and implementing real-world solutions that would positively impact the role of women and young girls in the City of Santa Monica.
2. To help identify some of the barriers that working mothers face and work to provide recommendations on ways to make it possible for working mothers to have access to childcare and programs that will enable them to: grow within their jobs and careers, re-enter the workforce after maternity leave or other leave, and feel confident about returning to work after being a stay-at-home parent.
3. To help to amplify young girls' voices by advocating for special school programs that could help them feel secure and confident in a co-ed environment and navigate issues such as body image, social media, and personal relationships.

4. To continue to find an avenue by which we can actively pursue ways that the girls and women of Santa Monica can feel heard, strong, safe and healthy.

Vision:

I am passionately committed to the mission of this board, and my vision is to take an active part in any way I can and to help us accomplish the board's goals as a team. I see multiple opportunities for us to really come together to make a positive impact within our community in a variety of ways - small or large. I would like there to be greater visibility of the resources available to women in our community that they can leverage in a variety of ways.

Personal Qualities:

As a Marketing Brand Executive, I was tasked with being the brand and creative lead for major brand franchises such as Lord of the Rings, Star Wars and Batman. My role required that me to be a strategic thinker, a creative problem solver and lead numerous collaborative cross-functional and inter-departmental teams. I was responsible for directing the creative on all of our films' packaging, TV and online ads as well as any in-store print materials and also worked with all internal teams to launch our films which necessitated me to wear many hats and speak the languages of our creative teams, production, retail marketing, promotions and sales. I received the Disney NOVA Award for Professional Excellence, and a number of industry awards such as Hollywood Reporter Key Art Awards 2012 for Gold Award Best Key Art (Catalog Release), Blade Runner 30th Anniversary, Home Theater Forums 2011 for "Best Boxed Set/Collection", The Lord of the Rings, Home Media Magazine 2009 for "Best Catalog Title Release", The Wizard of Oz 70th Anniversary Ultimate Collector's Edition.

Will you be able to commit the necessary time to perform your duties if appointed to the board?

yes

How did you learn about the vacancy in this board or commission? (select all that apply)

On the City's website (smgov.net or santamonica.gov)

BUSINESS INFORMATION

Occupation: (recent) Stay-at-home parent

Business name: (prior) 20th Century Fox

Business address: 2121 Avenue of the Stars

Century City, CA 90067

Business phone: n/a