

REVIEWED

By City Clerk's Office at 11:04 am, Jun 11, 2021

Commission on the Status of Women Applicant

Jenny Vazquez-Newsum

Application Date: 06/11/21

Reside in Santa Monica: yes

If yes, number of years: 10

INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE

Current or prior service on city boards/commissions:

I am currently completing my first, partial term with COSW after joining in February 2019.

Community activities:

With young children at home and in this unique year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, my most recent community involvements have primarily revolved around the virtual community events that the City has hosted and enjoying our local parks.

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

My professional career has been in education and program development, starting out building new programs at a college access organization for students from under-resourced communities, leading student engagement and career development programs at USC's School of Engineering-- including its Women in Engineering program-- and currently serving as the Vice President of Leadership Programs and Training of a nonpartisan, nonprofit civic leadership organization. In my current role, I have designed and launched leadership development programs for mid-career professionals, including a Women in Leadership program that has trained close to 200 women from across sectors and across the Los Angeles and Southern California region. My roles have required large-scale event management, program design, execution and evaluation, and team management. I believe that this experience positions me to collaborate effectively and move the work of the Commission forward.

Areas of demonstrated expertise:

I hold a Doctorate in Education from UCLA's Educational Leadership Program where my research focused on the social cognitive factors that influenced women of color to leave the engineering discipline at the college level. Researching the disparate representation of women and students of color in engineering and computer science exposed the very real challenge these groups face when navigating such environments, even with dedicated support. I hope to bring my qualitative research experience and expertise in the factors that affect women's educational and career attainment to the Commission.

Goals:

While the COVID-19 pandemic halted some progress on COSW's strategic priorities, I am looking forward to digging back into the work if re-appointed. As we know, the impact the pandemic has had on women's employment and ability to balance childcare against other demands has exposed some deeper societal challenges for women. I hope to continue the important work we were doing with research/reporting, celebrating women's accomplishments, and activating civic engagement for our city's girls and women, while also looking closely on the impact of COVID-19 has had on our community.

Vision:

My vision for the Commission of the Status of Women remains the same as when I first joined. I hope COSW elevates and celebrates the voices, experiences, and contributions women and girls have to our city. As a woman of color, I envision a Commission deeply committed to inclusivity and equity, keenly aware of the often-layered intersectionality of women's identities and its impact on their quest for educational, professional, and economic opportunity. I envision a Commission that continues to lean on data, both quantitative and qualitative, to recommend policy, tell the story of our City's women, and develop meaningful engagement opportunities for our communities. I envision a Commission with a pulse on the efforts put forth by the LA County Commission for Women for added guideposts on policy and research relevant to the women and girls of Santa Monica. My vision for the Commission is for its work to continue to champion women as unique contributors to Santa Monica's businesses, families, and homes.

Personal Qualities:

The nature of my work requires me to lead with empathy, creativity, and strategy. In this tumultuous year, I have led a team of 5 through remote work and countless pivots where innovation was required for the organization to sustain. I also led 6 cohorts of our Women in Leadership program during the pandemic, responding to the real-time challenges of women leaders as they navigated the same uncertainty in their workplaces and homes. Supporting the leadership growth of diverse groups calls for me to respond effectively in real-time, maintaining an acute awareness of group development and dynamics and the impact that high stress situations can have on progress.

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)

Other

BUSINESS INFORMATION

Occupation: Nonprofit VP

Business name:

Business address:

Business phone: