

# Hues of Blue

Asian American Pacific  
Islander Heritage Month 2024

**Maneuvering obstacles  
and leading with passion**

Former Iowa Senator and Ambassador  
Swati Dandekar

**Leading locally and positively  
each and every day**

Polk County Recorder  
Julie Haggerty

**Celebrate Trailblazers and  
Leaders for Asian American  
Pacific Islander Month**

**Major Political Dates 2024**

**Get Involved!  
Volunteer Today!**

**Let's celebrate  
May birthdays!**



# Publisher’s Note

by June Owens

Greetings!

Welcome to the Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2024 Edition. I am honored to share this edition with all of you.

Read on as you will hear from two wonderful women – Former Iowa Senator and Ambassador Swati Dandekar and Polk County (Iowa) Recorder Julie Haggerty. Both of these leaders will share with you a bit about their journey and impart words of wisdom.



Former Iowa Senator and Ambassador Swati Dandekar is a historical first. As the first Asian American to be elected to the Iowa Legislature, Swati will share with you about her lived experiences and provide advice for navigating obstacles.

Polk County Recorder Julie Haggerty, who humbly and faithfully serves at the County level, leads an office that leaves a positive impact every day. Julie will share her journey and will offer important words to live by.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Democratic Parties and Democratic Campaigns and there is a plethora of ways to get involved this election cycle. Please read the “Get Involved! Volunteer Today!” section, as well as look into progressive organizations you are passionate about, to discover ways to volunteer.

You and your friends, family, neighbors and others in your network have such an important part to play in each and every election. Your vote is your voice. Be sure to visit the “Major Political Dates 2024” Page for important election dates, share the same with others and make a plan to vote.

Happy Birthday May Celebrants! Happy Birthday to our Federal Democratic Elected Officials who are celebrating birthdays in the Magnificent Month of May!

Please share this edition with others, give us a like on Facebook ([facebook.com/huesofblue1](https://facebook.com/huesofblue1)) and follow us on X (@HuesofBlue2019).

Did you miss an edition of Hues of Blue? No worries, feel free to visit our website to read past editions at <https://huesofblue.org>

Do you know of Democrats we should consider including in future publications? Do you have content ideas? We are listening! We love hearing from Hues of Blues readers so please reach out and let us know.

A huge THANK YOU to Former State Senator Swati Dandekar and Polk County Recorder Julie Haggerty for participating in this month’s edition. Your thoughtfulness and kindness are blessings.

Many thanks to Lanon Baccam and the Lanon Baccam for Congress Campaign for their ad celebrating Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2024. I am grateful.

To my Family and friends, love you and thanks!

Hues of Blue Readers, thank you! We have a few things we are working on and ways to support the same, so stay tuned. I hope you enjoy this edition and continue to discover ways to turn communities beautiful hues of blue.

Happy Reading!

June



Former Iowa Senator  
and Ambassador  
**Swati Dandekar**

**Maneuvering  
obstacles  
and leading  
with passion**

You are the first Indian American to be elected to the Iowa Legislature. What does that mean to you and what is the historical meaning to the community?

I did not run to be the first Indian American legislator. It did not even cross my mind. My friends encouraged me to run because they knew that I cared for the district citizens and loved Iowa.

Being the first at anything is never easy. What did you do and what do you do to find inspiration, motivation and encouragement?

It was not easy to be the first Asian American to win Iowa Legislature position in 2002. I had a lot of bumps in the road. My colleagues did not know how to react to my win and how to treat me. However, I was blessed to have great Democrat and Republican mentors like Senator Harkin, Dick Myers, Mike Gronstal, Patty Judge, Suki Cell, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Wally Horn, Senator Grassley, Ambassador Branstad, Clarence Hoffman, Ron Corbett, Christopher Rants, and Elizabeth Jacobs. Since I had from support both sides of the aisle it was very easy for me to jump over the hurdles and shrug off the obstacles.

What led you to get involved in politics? What advice would you have for those who may wish to get more involved in politics or run for office?

My passion for education, women’s rights and my love for Iowa were very obvious to my district citizens. I was encouraged by my friends to run for the state office. My advice to those who have passion for their community should get involved and run for local/state/national office.

What things are you doing in your post public servant life?

During my public servant life I have made friendship with several Democratic and Republican Party members. Two years back my Republican friend Gentry Collins and I formed the LLC called “Bright Future Iowa (BFI)”. Gentry Collins and I are working in a bipartisan way to make Iowa Number 1 in Renewable Energy.

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“My advice to those who have passion for their community should get involved and run for local/state/national office”



# Leading locally and positively each and every day

Growing up on the Southside of Des Moines was a wonderfully diverse experience. Our family lived right in the middle of families with Italian, Irish, Asian and Latino heritages. My mother was an immigrant from the Philippines who fled to Hawaii during WWII and my father, an airforce WWII veteran, had solid roots planted in Des Moines, Iowa. They met on a college campus in Colorado, so I always consider my existence a result of a very serendipitous chance meeting.

The early 60's was a nostalgic time, when there was a 'grandma' living in every other home, the front doors were always open, kids played in the streets, and the biggest fight you had was over rules to a kick-ball game. I grew up in a loving family with lovely neighbors.

However, it was also a time when women did not always work outside the home, and if they did, were not always respected in the workplace. Racism was alive and well, but starting to be labeled as 'bad behavior'. I did not know

A close-up portrait of Julie Haggerty, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a black turtleneck sweater and a thin gold necklace. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light gray.

**Polk County Recorder  
Julie Haggerty**

then how politics and war would change the opportunities I would enjoy in later life as a young woman.

Politics was the farthest thing from my mind when I campaigned in the mid 70’s for a family friend. Katie Shinstine Holschuh, a single mom of 3 boys, who was a strong, capable woman running for Polk County Recorder. She brought me out of my shyness, and in typical “Katie” form, encouraged me to knock on stranger’s doors, engage in conversation and get involved in the community. Women holding public office, what a novel idea! The seed had been planted!!

I started working in the Polk County Recorder’s Office the summer after graduating from

high school, and returned full time after a short year at Arizona State University. Katie became my mentor for all things ‘politics’. I worked on local and a few presidential campaigns. The Polk County Courthouse and our office would always be a campaign stop for presidential candidates, and I was always invited to meet them. One of those candidates was former President Jimmy Carter. I helped work the polls, wrote post cards, made contact lists and knocked on doors.

As I watched the peaceful transfer of power on television, it occurred to me that I had met our new president, sitting in Katie’s office, sipping coffee, while he asked for her endorsement. Similarly, I have had the honor to meet candidates Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and Joe Biden at small gatherings in someone’s home. Those one-on-one opportunities left a lasting impression

of bike trails, taxes, assessments, school funding, school programs, weed control , access to mental health resources, or any other community issues. It is important that we take the time to meet the candidates and vote in ALL local races as well as state and federal elections.

I love my job as Polk County Recorder because I can make a positive impact every day on people who need our assistance by creating a helpful atmosphere and knowledgeable staff. Public service is honorable, rewarding and humbling work. I encourage anyone seeking a political office to stay committed to serve others with kindness, listen to constituents, even those with issues on which you may disagree, and when there are decisions to make, always do the RIGHT thing.

I leave you with my favorite quote and words to live by from Lao-Tze, an ancient Chinese philosopher:

“Watch your thoughts, for they become words; Watch your words, for they become actions; Watch your actions, for they become character; Watch your character, for it becomes destiny.” Lao - Tze

“I encourage anyone seeking a political office to stay committed to serve others with kindness, listen to constituents, even those with issues on which you may disagree, and when there are decisions to make, always do the right thing”

on me, and to this day, I truly believe success is made if you talk with people at the grass roots level.

I have always felt that county government is the best form of governance, because you are voting for a person from your district, your church or your school. A person who lives in your community and in most cases is someone you know personally, or a friend knows

and endorses. My experience tells me that in most cases, you can get an elected county official on the phone to answer questions or concerns.

Interest in local and county races has evolved because citizens are beginning to understand the importance of choosing people who create public policies that affect the neighborhood where you live. Whether it be the creation



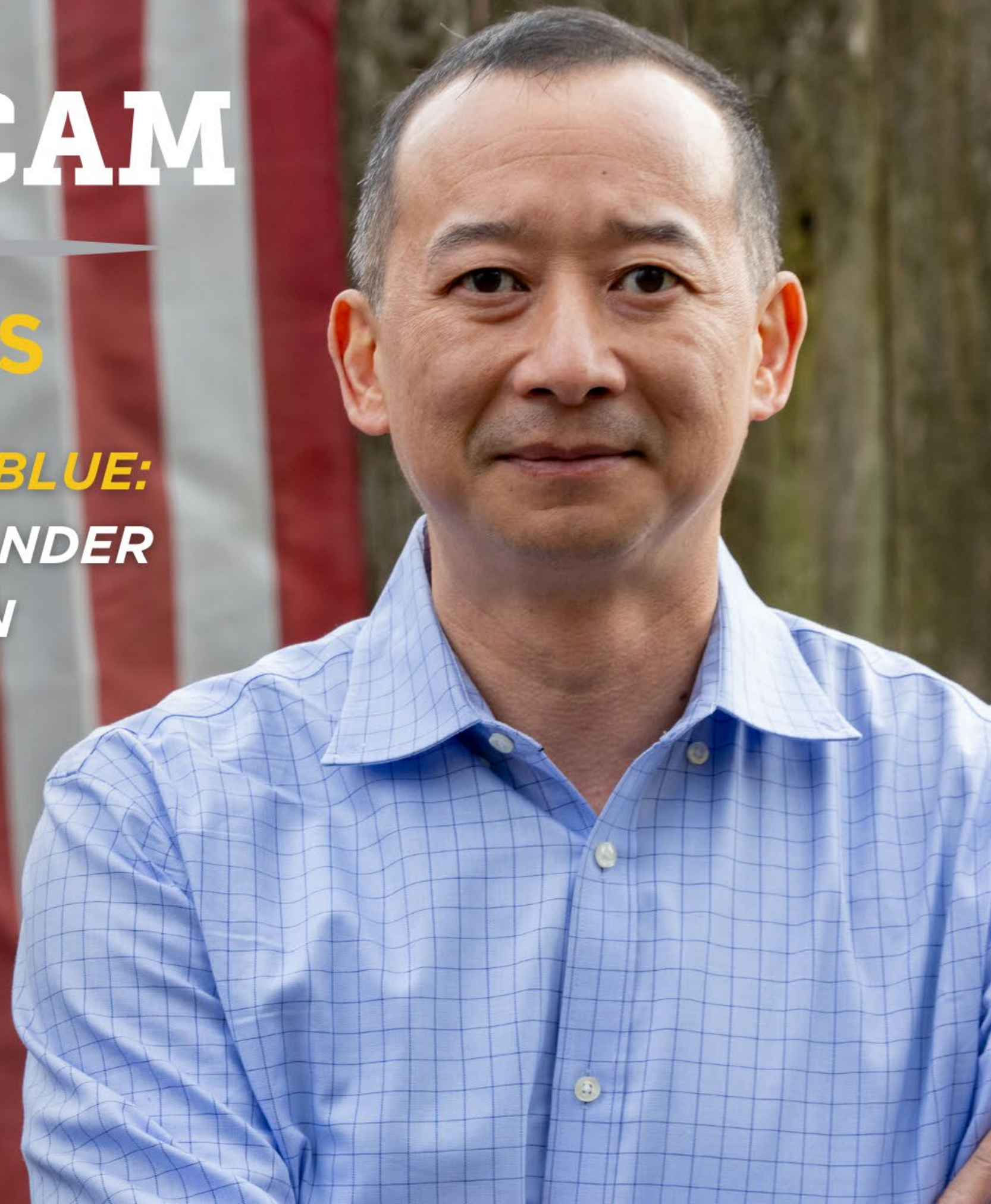
# LANON BACCAM



## FOR CONGRESS

***PROUD SPONSOR OF **HUES OF BLUE:**  
ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER  
HERITAGE MONTH EDITION***

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# Celebrate Trailblazers and Leaders for Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

**Celebrate Democratic Firsts!**





**Mazie Hirono**  
Senator

First Asian American Women to serve in the United States Senate.



**Tammy Duckworth**  
Senator

First Thai American Woman elected to Congress and Second Asian American Woman elected to serve in the United States Senate.



**Ro Khanna**  
Congressman



**Raja Krishnamoorthi**  
Congressman

First Indian-American or person of South Asian descent to serve as a Ranking Member or Chair of any full committee in the U.S. Congress.



**Shri Thanedar**  
Congressman



**Andy Kim**  
Congressman

First person of Korean descent elected to Congress.



**Grace Meng**  
Congresswoman



**Doris Matsui**  
Congresswoman



**Judy Chu**  
Congresswoman

First Chinese American Woman elected to Congress



**Ami Bera**  
Congressman



**Pramila Jayapal**  
Congresswoman

First Indian American Woman to serve in the United States House of Representatives.



**Betty Yee**  
Former California State Controller - Vice Chair

California Democratic Party



**Ted Lieu**  
Congressman



**Jill Tokuda**  
Congresswoman



**Mark Takano**  
Congressman

First gay person of Asian Descent elected to Congress.



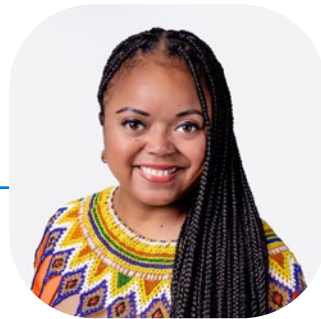
**Jonathan Cabrera**  
Chair

Northern Mariana Islands Democratic Party



**Luella Marciano**  
Vice Chair

Northern Mariana Islands Democratic Party



**Nola Hix**  
Executive Director

Northern Mariana Islands Democratic Party





**Patrick Ti'a Reid**  
Chair

American Samoa  
Democratic Party



**Tiana Trepanier**  
Executive Director

American Samoa  
Democratic Party



**Tony Babauta**  
Chair

Guam Democratic Party



**Michelle Wu**  
Mayor

First Woman and First Person  
of Color elected Mayor,  
Boston



**Tina Sablan**  
First Female  
Governor Candidate

Northern Mariana Islands



**Leila Staffler**  
First Female Lieutenant  
Governor Candidate

Northern Mariana Islands



**Shasti Conrad**  
Chair

Washington State  
Democratic Party



**Adrian Tam**  
Interim Chair

Hawaii Democratic Party



**Donna Domingo**  
Vice Chair

Hawaii Democratic Party



**Erynn Fernandez**  
Executive Director

Hawaii Democratic Party



**Lily Mei**  
Mayor

First Woman and First Asian  
American Woman elected  
Mayor, Fremont, California



**Sheng Thao**  
Mayor

First Hmong American  
Woman elected to serve  
as Mayor of a Major City,  
Oakland, California



# Major Political Dates 2024

(as of May 1, 2024)

Date	State or Territory
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Indiana
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Maryland, Nebraska and West Virginia
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Kentucky, Georgia and Oregon
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Idaho
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	District of Columbia, Iowa, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico and South Dakota
June 8 <sup>th</sup>	Guam and US Virgin Islands
August 19 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup>	Democratic National Convention (Chicago)
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Presidential Debate (Texas State University -San Marcos, Texas)
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	Vice Presidential Debate (Lafayette University -Easton, Pennsylvania)
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Presidential Debate (Virginia State University - Petersburg, Virginia)
October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Presidential Debate (University of Utah - Salt Lake City, Utah)
November 5 <sup>th</sup>	Election Day
December 17 <sup>th</sup>	Presidential Electors Cast Their Ballots



# Get involved! Volunteer today!



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You can make the difference!












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States and Territories		Party Website
	Alabama	<a href="http://aldemocrats.org">aldemocrats.org</a>
	Alaska	<a href="http://alaskademocrats.org">alaskademocrats.org</a>
	American Samoa	<a href="https://facebook.com/asdems">facebook.com/asdems</a>
	Arizona	<a href="http://azdems.org">azdems.org</a>
	Arkansas	<a href="http://arkdems.org">arkdems.org</a>
	California	<a href="http://cadem.org">cadem.org</a>
	Colorado	<a href="http://coloradodems.org">coloradodems.org</a>
	Connecticut	<a href="http://ctdems.org">ctdems.org</a>
	Delaware	<a href="http://deldems.org">deldems.org</a>
	Democrats Abroad	<a href="http://democratsabroad.org">democratsabroad.org</a>
	District of Columbia	<a href="http://dcdemocraticparty.org">dcdemocraticparty.org</a>
	Florida	<a href="http://floridadems.org">floridadems.org</a>
	Georgia	<a href="http://georgiademocrat.org">georgiademocrat.org</a>
	Guam	<a href="https://facebook.com/guamdemocrats">facebook.com/ guamdemocrats</a>

States and Territories		Party Website
	Hawaii	<a href="http://hawaiiidemocrats.org">hawaiiidemocrats.org</a>
	Idaho	<a href="http://idahodems.org">idahodems.org</a>
	Illinois	<a href="http://ildems.com">ildems.com</a>
	Indiana	<a href="http://indems.org">indems.org</a>
	Iowa	<a href="http://iowademocrats.org">iowademocrats.org</a>
	Kansas	<a href="http://kansasdems.org">kansasdems.org</a>
	Kentucky	<a href="http://kydemocrats.org">kydemocrats.org</a>
	Louisiana	<a href="http://louisianademocrats.org">louisianademocrats.org</a>
	Maine	<a href="http://mainedems.org">mainedems.org</a>
	Maryland	<a href="http://mddems.org">mddems.org</a>
	Massachusetts	<a href="http://massdems.org">massdems.org</a>
	Michigan	<a href="http://michigandems.com">michigandems.com</a>
	Minnesota	<a href="http://dfi.org">dfi.org</a>
	Mississippi	<a href="http://mississippidemocrats.com">mississippidemocrats.com</a>

States and Territories		Party Website
	Missouri	<a href="https://missouridemocrats.org">missouridemocrats.org</a>
	Montana	<a href="https://montanademocrats.org">montanademocrats.org</a>
	Nebraska	<a href="https://nebraskademocrats.org">nebraskademocrats.org</a>
	Nevada	<a href="https://nvdems.com">nvdems.com</a>
	New Hampshire	<a href="https://nhdp.org">nhdp.org</a>
	New Jersey	<a href="https://njdems.org">njdems.org</a>
	New Mexico	<a href="https://nmdemocrats.org">nmdemocrats.org</a>
	New York	<a href="https://nydems.org">nydems.org</a>
	North Carolina	<a href="https://ncdp.org">ncdp.org</a>
	North Dakota	<a href="https://demnpl.com">demnpl.com</a>
	North Mariana Islands	<a href="https://nmidems.org">nmidems.org</a>
	Ohio	<a href="https://ohiodems.org">ohiodems.org</a>
	Oklahoma	<a href="https://okdemocrats.org">okdemocrats.org</a>
	Oregon	<a href="https://dpo.org">dpo.org</a>
	Pennsylvania	<a href="https://padems.org">padems.org</a>

States and Territories		Party Website
	Puerto Rico	<a href="https://prdems.org">prdems.org</a>
	Rhode Island	<a href="https://ridemocrats.org">ridemocrats.org</a>
	South Carolina	<a href="https://scdp.org">scdp.org</a>
	South Dakota	<a href="https://sddp.org">sddp.org</a>
	Tennessee	<a href="https://tndp.org">tndp.org</a>
	Texas	<a href="https://txdemocrats.org">txdemocrats.org</a>
	U.S. Virgin Islands	<a href="https://facebook.com/democratsvi">facebook.com/democratsvi</a>
	Utah	<a href="https://utahdemocrats.org">utahdemocrats.org</a>
	Vermont	<a href="https://vtdemocrats.org">vtdemocrats.org</a>
	Virginia	<a href="https://vademocrats.org">vademocrats.org</a>
	Washington	<a href="https://wa-democrats.org">wa-democrats.org</a>
	West Virginia	<a href="https://wvdems.org">wvdems.org</a>
	Wisconsin	<a href="https://wisdems.org">wisdems.org</a>
	Wyoming	<a href="https://wyodems.org">wyodems.org</a>



# Let's Celebrate May Birthdays!



## United States Senators

Peter Welch	May 2nd
Ron Wyden	May 3rd
Laphonza Butler	May 11th
Amy Klobuchar	May 25th

## United States House of Representatives

Matt Carwright	May 1st	Lois Frankel	May 16th
Becca Balint	May 4th	Sharice Davids	May 22nd
Greg Casar	May 4th	John Sarbanes	May 22nd
Valerie Foushee	May 7th	Dina Titus	May 23rd
Jonathan Jackson	May 11th	Jan Schakowsky	May 26th
Joseph Neguse	May 13th	Alma Adams	May 27th
Stacey Plaskett	May 13th	Jennifer Wexton	May 27th





# Hues of Blue

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2024

May 2024