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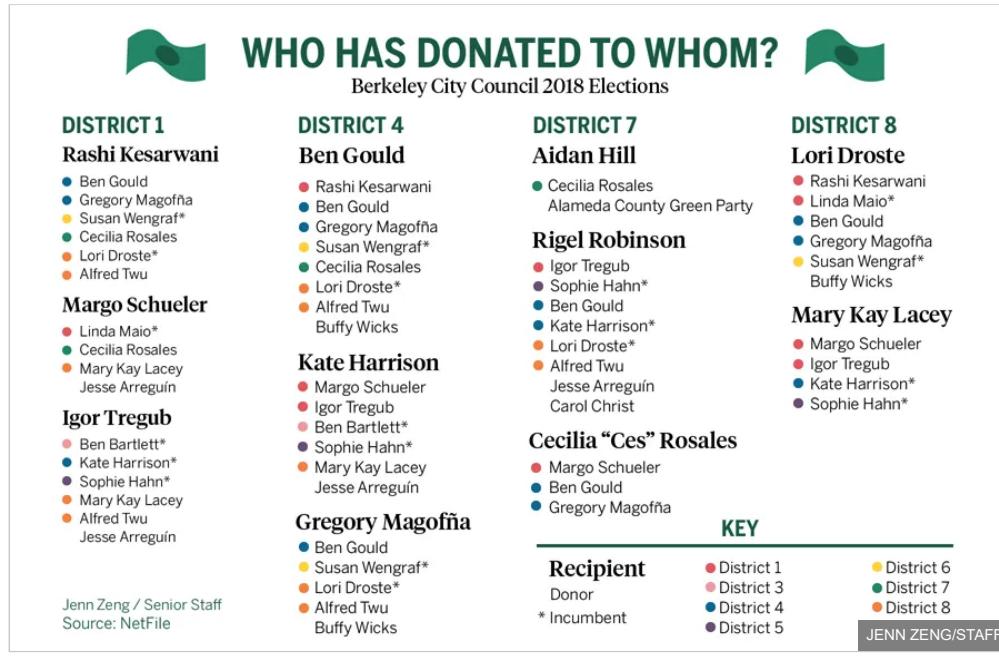
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ELECTION 2018

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2018

Campaign finance documents reveal contributions to City Council candidates from other candidates, city officials



BY ALYSSA BERNARDINO | STAFF

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This midterm election season, many Berkeley City Council candidates and city officials made contributions to other candidates' campaigns, according to documents obtained through NetFile.

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Under newly instated campaign finance laws in Berkeley, City Council candidates may participate in a public funding program in which they are eligible to receive a 6-to-1 match from the city on donations no greater than \$50. This means that for participating candidates, a donation of \$50 becomes \$300.

Of the candidates running for office who received contributions from fellow candidates and from former and current city officials, many are receiving public money.

"I think it's important to follow the money and see ... what brings (people) to support that candidate," said District 1 candidate Igor Tregub. "You can draw a lot of inferences and conclusions based on who has contributed to them."

District 1

Of the District 1 candidates receiving contributions from fellow candidates, Tregub is the only one not participating in the city's public finance program.

Tregub said he wanted to participate in the city's public finance program, but he was unable to for logistical reasons. He added, however, that he felt "honored" to be running a grassroots campaign, raising more than \$50,000 in contributions from individuals and labor movement members.

"I have not accepted a dime from developers doing business in Berkeley, and that was conscientious on my part," Tregub said. "I think it's important to be completely devoid of the perception of a conflict of interest."

District 1 candidate Rashi Kesarwani received \$27 from District 8 candidate Alfred Twu and the maximum \$50 contribution for publicly funded candidates from fellow City Council race candidates Ben Gould, Cecilia "Ces" Rosales and Greg Magoffia. Kesarwani also received donations from Councilmember Susan Wengraf and former City Council member Laurie Capitelli.

District 1 candidate Margo Schueler received the maximum contribution from fellow candidates Mary Kay Lacey and Rosales. Schueler also received donations from current District 1 Councilmember Linda Maio, Mayor Jesse Arreguín and former City Council member Gordon Wozniak.

Maio said she donates to capable people who reflect her values. She added that Schueler is "smart," "dedicated," and broke into several male-dominated fields during her career.

Tregub received more than \$200 each from District 8 candidates Twu and Lacey. He also received \$250 each from Councilmember Sophie Hahn, Councilmember Kate Harrison, Wozniak, Arreguín, as well as \$150 from Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board chair John Selawsky and Councilmember Ben Bartlett.

Twu, who uses they/them pronouns, said they donated to both Kesarwani and Tregub because Twu would be content with the election of either.

District 4

Unlike District 1, all District 4 candidates are participating in the public finance program.

District 4 candidate Gould received \$27 from Twu, \$30 from Rosales and the maximum public contribution of \$50 from Droste and Magoffia. Gould also received donations from Capitelli, Wengraf, and California Assembly District 15 candidate Buffy Wicks.

District 4 candidate Magoffia also received \$27 from Twu and the maximum contribution from Droste and Gould. Additionally, he received donations from former Berkeley mayor Tom Bates, Wicks and Wengraf.

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Incumbent Harrison received the maximum contribution for public funds from Tregub, Schueler and Lacey. She also received contributions from rent board commissioners James Chang and Alejandro Soto-Vigil, Police Review Commissioner George Perezvelez, Arreguín, Wozniak, Selawsky and Bartlett.

Tregub said he supported Harrison because she is the “real deal” and leads with “progressive values.”

District 7

Candidate Aidan Hill received \$100 from Rosales, their opponent for the District 7 seat.

Rosales received the maximum donation from Gould, Schueler and Magofña. She also received contributions from Capitelli, Perezvelez and Wozniak.

District 7 candidate Rigel Robinson received \$28 from Twu and the maximum contribution from Tregub, Gould, Droste and Harrison. He also received donations from Arreguín, Hahn and Wozniak.

Many students donated to Robinson’s campaign. Twu said the new public finance system enables people who generally do not have large sums of money — such as students — to donate and have similar impacts as people who can donate hundreds of dollars.

District 8

District 1 candidate Tregub donated to two candidates in the District 8 race: Lacey and Twu.

Tregub said he has worked with both Twu and Lacey, adding that he donated to Twu because Twu is in favor of rent stabilization and other anti-displacement policies in the city. He said he donated to Lacey for her “deep commitment to saving Alta Bates Hospital” and her “ability to bring people together to achieve consensus.”

Incumbent Droste received the maximum public funding contribution from candidates Gould, Keswani and Magofña. She also received donations from Capitelli, Wicks, Maio, Perezvelez, Bates, Wozniak and Wengraf.

Maio said she donated to Droste because Maio sees Droste as “very smart” and “a hard worker.” Maio added that while working with Droste on the City Council, they supported many of the same bills.

Twu received the maximum contribution for public funds from Tregub.

Lacey received the maximum contribution from Harrison, Tregub and Schueler. She also received donations from Hahn, Chang and Selawsky.

“It takes money to run a campaign,” Twu said. “Now, with Berkeley’s public financing system, small donations make a big difference.”

Alyssa Bernardino is the lead city government reporter. Contact her at abernardino@dailyca.org and follow her on Twitter at [@alybernardino](#).