

Democratic Party of Sacramento County

Questionnaire: City Council Candidates

NOTE: The answers you provide on this questionnaire will be made available to DPSC members and will become public. Questions that are underlined are yes/no questions and do not require an explanation unless your response is “no.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Candidate Name	Les Simmons
Office Sought	Sacramento City Council District 8
FPPC ID	1419705
Occupation	Community Center Executive Director/Pastor
Employer	Simmons Community Center/South Sacramento Christian Center
Campaign Email	info@simmonsforsacramento.com
Campaign Phone	(916) 245-0260
Campaign Website & Social Media	Simmonsforsacramento.com Facebook/Twitter/Instagram: @Simmons4Sac
Campaign Manager or Contact Person	Lisa Gasperoni, LG Campaigns (916) 803-0433 Lisa@LGCampaigns.com
Campaign Consultants (list all)	Lisa Gasperoni, LG Campaigns (General Consultant) Amber Wannell, AMW Consulting (Fundraiser)
Anticipated Budget & Funds Raised	Approximately \$100,000. I have raised over \$13,000 in the first few weeks since announcing my candidacy.
Are you a dues-paying DPSC member?	No.

Optional demographic questions:

Racial/Ethnic Identity	African-American
Gender Identity/Pronouns	He/Him/His
LGBTQ+?	No
Veteran?	No
Young Democrat (35 or under)?	No
Union Member?	No

Please list all offices you have held or organizations to which you belong or in which you have held a leadership position, and what position you held:

Office/Organization	Position Held	Duration
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Simmons Community Center	Executive Director	2016 to Present
Sacramento Area Congregations Together (Sacramento ACT)	Previous Board Member	Approximately 5 years.
Mack Road Partnership	Current Board Member	Approximately 5 years.

You may attach your biography, a list of current endorsements, and any campaign literature as a single file. Please name your file: lastname/office sought.

Please see attached biography and campaign prospectus. Please visit simmonsforsacramento.com/endorsements for a current list of endorsements.

ISSUE QUESTIONS

Section 1 – Viability & Campaign

1. Do you plan to purchase a ballot statement?

Yes.

2. Will all your campaign materials be printed by a union printer?

Yes.

3. Have you always been a registered Democrat? If no, please state what else you were registered as, when, for how long, and why.

Yes.

4. What will your ballot designation be?

Community Center Director.

5. What are your primary sources for fundraising? Please list your top three campaign contributors.

I will be raising funds from a broad coalition of community leaders, organizations representing working men and women, small businesses, and others. Thus far, 98% of my contributions have come from individuals.

6. Do you voluntarily decline contributions from any particular contributor or class of contributors? If so, list who and why.

I will not accept contributions from Wal-Mart, tobacco or gun interests.

7. Have you ever endorsed, contributed to, campaigned for, or otherwise supported a candidate for election or appointment to a partisan or nonpartisan office that was not a member of the Democratic Party? If so, list who, for which office, and why? Please be specific.

No.

8. Have you ever been investigated (by a governmental agency or private entity) for allegations that you engaged in discrimination, harassment, abuse, or retaliation? If so, what was the result of the investigation?

No.

9. Is there anything in your history on the subject of discrimination, harassment, abuse, or retaliation, which, if revealed, would bring you, your proposed office, or the Democratic Party into disrepute?

No.

10. How long have you lived in the district and community you seek to represent?

My parents moved my family here when I was in the 2nd grade and began the work to found the South Sacramento Christian Center. I have lived in the district for the majority of my life moving briefly to Wilton, CA but finding my heart, work and place of worship being in District 8 and ultimately moving back to my current home.

11. Out of the last five elections, how many have you voted in?

I have voted in 5 out of the last 5 elections.

12. Why did you decide to run for this office and what do you plan to accomplish during your tenure?

For the last 20 years, I have worked hard to help reduce child mortality, prevent gang violence, and provide our youth with educational, recreational, mentorship and employment programs. I want to continue serving our South Sacramento communities by ensuring everyone, especially our children, has equal opportunities and is able to live their lives in safe, thriving communities. I decided to run for City Council to advance these priorities and to be a strong advocate for District 8, ensuring that our neighborhoods benefit from the economic renaissance underway in Sacramento.

13. What sets you apart from the other candidates for this?

For more than two decades I have been on the front lines of the battle for equality, justice and inclusion. My roots in the community are deep and I have strong support across District 8 due to my work running the Simmons Community Center and as Senior Pastor of the South Sacramento Christian Center. On the first day I announced my candidacy over 100 friends and supporters signed up to volunteer in my campaign. I will have a robust field operation that includes walking precincts and phoning voters.

14. If you are an incumbent, what have you accomplished during your tenure? If you are a non-incumbent, what have you accomplished in the community prior to running?

This is my first time running for elected office. I am running for City Council to ensure the South Sacramento community benefits from the economic renaissance currently underway in Sacramento, and that all residents are offered the city services and opportunities they deserve. I want to bring my experience as a grassroots community leader, advocate and pastor and continue our efforts toward equality, justice and inclusion for all Sacramento communities.

I have worked closely with local leaders and state legislators in advancing policies for racial and social justice, including working with Assemblywoman Shirley Weber on her efforts surrounding police use of force. I have also worked tirelessly in spearheading programs to reduce child mortality, prevent gang violence, provide our youth with educational, recreational, mentorship and employment programs, parenting classes, and events such as family fun nights and skate nights through the Simmons Community Center (formerly Cal Skate). The Simmons Community Center, founded in 2016 and named for my parents, serves more than 1,000 youth and adults every month and reflects the full racial and ethnic diversity of South Sacramento.

Section 2 - District & Governance

15. Are you familiar with the budget(s) for which you will be responsible, if elected? If so, state how large it is, what its principal revenue sources are, and what its largest expenditure categories are.

As a non-incumbent, I am continuing to learn about our city's budget and how its revenues are raised and where expenditures are spent. I believe it is important to protect funding for essential services and for our public employees, including retirement security. I was proud to support Sacramento Measure U in 2018 to ensure our city has the revenue it needs to support a

variety of critical programs and services. On the City Council, I will make essential services, retirement security, and funding for our youth and their needs budget priorities.

16. Does your city conduct its elections by-district (rather than at-large)? If not, would you support moving its elections to by-district?

Sacramento conducts its city council elections by district. I support by-district elections as I believe they allow for more equal representation for diverse communities.

17. How will you work with community advocates? What will you do to be accessible to community members and other stakeholders?

As a community advocate myself, I understand how important it is to have access to those who make the decisions and introduce the policies that impact our communities. As a Councilmember, I will have an open-door policy and look forward to regularly engaging with all of Sacramento's communities and ensure they have a voice and seat at the table.

18. What will you do to promote transparency and ethics at city hall?

To me, public service is a public trust. That's why I believe public servants have a fundamental obligation to be as transparent as possible and comport themselves to the highest standard of ethics. I supported Mayor Steinberg's efforts to establish an independent ethics commission and bolster the city's Sunshine Ordinance. I believe city employees, elected officials and others should be able to report alleged misconduct without fear of retaliation and support an independent whistleblower hotline. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss more ideas and proposals for transparency and ethics with the Democratic Party of Sacramento and other interested groups and individuals.

19. What whistle-blower protections should there be for public employees who expose corruption, sexual harassment, or other illegal/unethical activity?

As stated above, I believe those who report alleged illegal or unethical activity, including corruption and sexual harassment, should be able to do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation. I strongly support enhancing protections for these individuals and making the process easier for reporting and investigation.

20. Does your city have contribution limits, public financing for campaigns, or any other campaign finance reform? Do you support adopting any such measures or changing the current measures that your city has in place?

Yes. Individuals are limited to contributing no more than \$1,750 per election. I am open to exploring changes that help make our campaign finance regulations and procedures more transparent and empower more Sacramentans.

21. What is the most disadvantaged area or constituency in your city or district? What is your plan for ensuring that that area or constituency receives the representation and services it needs?

As stated previously, Sacramento is currently enjoying an economic renaissance, but that renaissance hasn't reached all of our communities. In my district, there are many youth and families that are still experiencing unacceptable levels of poverty, unemployment and crime. I believe we need to expand economic opportunity for all of our communities, and work to ensure our youth get to and from school safely and away from gang violence. We need to expand educational and job training programs while improving access to healthcare and social services for our families, including undocumented families. I have worked on advancing policies and programs that positively impact these issues for much of my career as a pastor and grassroots leader, and am looking forward to doing even more on the City Council.

Section 3 – Civil Rights

22. Do you support a woman's right to comprehensive healthcare, including the right to choose and access contraception, and the right to obtain a medically safe, legal abortion?

Yes.

23. Do you support giving undocumented immigrants living in the United States a path towards citizenship?

Yes.

24. Do you believe that LGBTQ people should have equal rights in employment, housing, education, and to marry?

Yes.

25. Do you support background checks for all firearm and ammunition sales?

Yes.

26. Do you believe that capital punishment should be abolished?

Yes.

27. What will you do to advance LGBTQ rights?

As a pastor, I believe one of the greatest gifts God has bestowed on humankind is love. That's why I believe in the fundamental right of LGBTQ people to live without fear of violence, discrimination or bigotry because of who they love or how they identify. On the City Council, I will partner with LGBTQ organizations and leaders to ensure LGBTQ people have the protections they need to live their lives free from fear and with dignity and respect. I fully support expanding workplace protections for LGBTQ people in city employment and would like to work with LGBTQ organizations and leaders in expanding reporting and whistleblower protections for LGBTQ people. I support policies that expand and standardize the use of preferred pronouns, and believe we need to strengthen anti-discrimination measures to ensure those who discriminate against LGBTQ people are held accountable and that we deter and reverse discrimination. I also want to explore additional ways to support LGBTQ people and am open to additional ideas in this area.

28. What will you do to end discrimination in employment and housing?

At a time when affordable housing is becoming even more out of reach and a record number of our fellow Sacramentans are experiencing homelessness, it is critical that we enforce and expand policies to deter discrimination in both housing and employment. On the City Council, I will work to strengthen our relationship with the County's Fair Housing enforcement entities, and partner with our local non-profits and community advocates to establish greater fair housing protections for tenants in the City of Sacramento. With respect to employment, I support making it easier for employees to report allegations of discrimination and be connected with resources to hold bad actors accountable. I believe closing the gender and ethnic wage gap is critical to this mission.

29. What will you do to close the pay gap?

I support gender and ethnic pay parity and will make this a top priority as a Councilmember. I have supported pay parity legislation in the past, including Senator Hannah Beth Jackson's bill to increase gender representation on corporate boards. I will stand with workers and organizations to advocate for pay parity before the Legislature and Congress.

30. What will you do to protect immigrant communities?

Through my work with ACT and as a Senior Pastor and Executive Director of the Simmons Community Center, I have worked hard to connect

immigrant communities, including undocumented immigrants, with services to protect their rights in the wake of the federal administration's anti-immigrant policies. I support Sacramento being a safe sanctuary for immigrants. On the City Council, I will continue to partner with community organizations and nonprofits to increase services for our immigrant communities and will support policies that stand up to the federal government's hate-filled agenda.

31. Do you support placing limits on free speech or assembly in public places, such as protesting, picketing, or panhandling? If so, how would you decide what those limits should be?

As someone who has engaged in my fair share of civil disobedience on various social justice causes, I oppose limiting the peaceful exercise of free speech.

32. Do you believe that the criminal justice system is just and fair to everyone, particularly black and brown communities? If not, what reforms do you publicly support?

Having been active in the social justice sphere for many years now, I believe there are critical improvements that need to be made to ensure justice is truly equal for all communities. From arrests to sentencing, the research shows that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by our criminal justice system. I believe in expanding culturally sensitive training for our officers, an effort I have spearheaded for years, as well as investing in our public legal defense system for those who do not have the resources to navigate the criminal justice system.

33. What are the issues affecting black and brown communities in your district and will you do to address those issues?

As stated previously, Sacramento's economic renaissance has not reached all of our communities. We need to expand economic opportunity and ensure all communities have access to good paying jobs, affordable housing and safer neighborhoods. I believe these issues require a collaborative approach where we partner with leaders and organizations that are active in these spaces, while investing in programs that connect underserved communities with the resources they need to own a home, work a good paying job and raise their families in the safest neighborhoods possible.

34. How will you work toward greater police accountability in your city? What role would the community play in that?

It is important for our community and law enforcement to work collaboratively to prevent the kinds of tragedies that continue to impact

communities of color at a disproportionate rate. We also need to recognize that greater accountability is also needed to prevent these tragedies. I have a track record of working toward greater accountability. With community leaders like Chet Hewitt, we founded Build Black. I served on the board for Sacramento Area Congregations Together and worked with social justice organizations to call on the city to create a civilian police oversight committee after having served on the Police Accountability Commission, from which I resigned due to the lack of power to truly provide oversight. I will work to establish a civilian police oversight committee with the power to provide oversight as a member of the City Council.

35. Do you support the universal use of police body cameras? When is it appropriate to release police body camera footage?

Yes. In instances of police-involved shootings, I believe police body camera footage should be made public at the earliest opportunity to ensure full transparency.

36. What will you do to make your community more accessible to people with disabilities?

I would like to work with our local disability rights groups to ensure we expand access for Sacramentans with disabilities. I also want to promote health and wellness programs that connect those with disabilities with tools and resources to make their everyday lives easier.

37. What will you do to ensure that non-English speakers can fully participate in public meetings and access public services?

I support translation and interpretation services at City Council meetings and for City materials of interest to the public. At our church, SSCC, we conduct two services every Sunday in Spanish due to the amount of Spanish speaking community members that attend SSCC weekly.

Section 4 – Healthcare

38. Do you support Medicare-for-All?

Yes.

39. What is your position on parental notification prior to a minor terminating a pregnancy?

I believe parental notification can present a real danger to minors who come from volatile and violent family situations, including instances where the

minor is a survivor of rape or incest. I believe parental notification laws are pushed by anti-choice groups to make reproductive healthcare decisions more difficult to make. I oppose parental notification.

40. What measures would you support to ensure adequate mental health services for all?

I support our Mayor Darrell Steinberg as a leader in the effort to expand mental health awareness and care for all communities. On the City Council, I look forward to partnering with the Mayor, community organizations, and healthcare organizations to bring critically needed mental health services to our communities through free clinics and outreach events. I support greater investment in mental healthcare initiatives and would like to work to bring even more state and federal funding through grants and other opportunities to addressing mental health needs in our communities.

41. What will you do to help address high child mortality rates in the Black community in Sacramento County?

This is a very important issue to me. As the director of the Black Child Legacy Campaign for the Valley Hi Community, a citywide effort to reduce African American child deaths, we work daily to reduce child mortality rates and combat gang violence in 4 focus areas that include Perinatal conditions, Infant Sleep Related Deaths, Child abuse and Neglect and third party homicide. Our efforts in working collaboratively with County services and CBO's led to a 45% decrease in infant mortality as well as a 62% decrease in the disparity.

Section 5 – Good Jobs for All

42. Do you support the right of workers to unionize by card check?

Yes.

43. Have you attended the Sacramento Central Labor Council Candidate Academy?

Yes.

44. Describe your relationship with organized labor.

As with all groups representing working men and women, small businesses, and nonprofits, I have an open-door policy with organized labor and am eager to build upon this relationship. I support and will defend the right of working men and women to organize, form a labor organization and collectively bargain.

45. Will you support the adoption of project labor agreements or community workforce training agreements for your city?

Yes. I believe PLAs and community workforce training agreements are important for wage security and in protecting the rights of working people.

46. Which labor unions will you be interacting with in your role? What is your plan for building collaborative relationships with both union and nonunion employees?

I am looking forward to developing a broad coalition of groups representing workers in both the public and private sector and advocating for the issues of importance to working families, students and teachers. As stated above, I will have an open-door policy with working people, whether they presently are, or have yet to be, unionized. I will always advocate for making it easier for working people to join a labor organization.

47. What is the role of the office that you seek in promoting good jobs for our region?

I believe it is important for the City Council to advance policies that make it easier for high wage employers and industries to relocate to, and remain in, Sacramento. On the City Council, I will work to continue to ensure Sacramento is an incubator for innovation, small businesses, and good paying jobs.

48. What solutions would you propose to solve budget shortfalls and how would you prioritize the needs of your constituents in deciding what to cut first?

I believe it is important for our city to save during good economic times in order to be prepared for lean economic years. I oppose cuts to essential public services and will not vote to cut pensions or benefits if there were to be a budget deficit.

49. Is income inequality an issue in your community? If so, what steps would you take to address it?

Yes, definitely. On the City Council, I want to expand economic opportunity for all of our communities and bring more good paying jobs to Sacramento. I believe this begins with ensuring we train our workforce to be able to compete for those jobs, and expanding Sacramento's renaissance to every community in our city.

Section 6 - Local Economy & Public Resources

50. Under what circumstances would you support raising revenues to support public services?

I believe we need to protect essential public services and would support proposals to raise revenues if our revenue stream was unable to meet increased demands, or in poor economic times. I supported Sacramento Measure U (2018).

51. Under what conditions would you support the privatization of public or natural resources (e.g., water, publicly-owned buildings, park lands, parking facilities)?

I oppose the privatization of public and natural resources.

52. What is your position on "public/private partnerships"?

While I believe there is a role for public/private partnerships in advancing our shared goals of economic opportunity, I oppose the use of such partnerships in instances where they are used to undercut wages, benefits and retirement security.

53. When is it appropriate to use public money or tax incentives to subsidize private business?

I support strict transparency and oversight in instances where public money benefits private entities. I believe private entities who receive public funds should be subject to the same rigorous standards, including fair wage and benefit requirements, as public entities.

54. What is your plan to support and encourage local small business development?

As stated previously, I want Sacramento to continue to be an incubator for small businesses and innovation, and a place where we create good paying jobs. I believe we need to form partnerships with industries that fall within these parameters, while helping build the workforce to compete for these jobs. I serve on the Board of the Mack Road Partnership, where we focus on providing local small business owners with the resources to grow and thrive. On the City Council, I will work to bring more state and federal resources to our communities by working with our state and federal partners to ensure we can create and sustain programs to build the workforce of tomorrow and provide the type of support necessary for our small businesses to thrive and create good paying jobs.

Section 7 – Environment

55. Do you support the construction of the Delta tunnels?

Governor Newsom has proposed a single tunnel in contrast to his predecessor, Governor Brown. This project remains in flux as the Department of Water of Resources continues to work on the environmental planning and permitting process. I am open to learning more about the scaled back project and its impact on our region.

56. Do you support the construction of the Southeast Connector?

I believe construction of the Southeast Connector represents an important piece of infrastructure improvement for our region and support its construction so long as it is done in an environmentally safe way, and with union labor/prevaling wage requirements in place.

57. When would it be appropriate to expand the urban growth boundary?

With our region and state facing a homelessness and affordable housing crisis, I believe any decision concerning expanding our region's urban growth boundary needs to be reached by weighing the environmental impacts with the need for more affordable housing.

58. Please describe your position on regional habitat and working lands conservation.

I support working lands conservation to help restore our precious natural resources and wildlife, particularly with climate change impacting the long-term viability of our environment.

59. What will you do to address climate change in your role?

Climate change is the most pressing and dangerous existential threat to our world in our species' – and likely our planet's – history. On the City Council, I will work to advocate for responsible climate policies with our state and federal leaders, and support policies on the local level that mitigate the impacts of climate change and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. For example, I support increasing solar power and electric vehicle charging stations on the local level. I will work to secure state and federal resources for efforts such as these, and others.

60. Please describe your education and/or experience with land use planning.

The work I have done with land use planning has been primarily within the urban areas of District 8. I recognize that different parts of our city have unique challenges when it comes to growth and planning and look forward to working with my Council colleagues and community organizations to prepare for and plan quality projects for Sacramento that will provide economic benefits throughout the city.

61. Have you read the general plan and do you agree with its vision of future development? If not, what changes would you propose?

I share many of the goals of increased affordable housing, expanding economic opportunity and improving education and recreation opportunities for our communities that are contained in the 2035 General Plan. I would like to spend more time speaking with city staff, community organizations, local leaders, and the general public to better understand where we can better execute and/or improve upon the general plan.

62. If you are seated on the board of LAFCO, SAFCA, or SMAQMD, how will you use your role to promote environmental sustainability?

Given the existential threat posed by climate change, responsible stewardship of our environment will always be one of my top priorities.

Section 8 – Education

63. Do you believe that public adult education, colleges, and universities should be tuition free?

Yes.

64. Do you support Restorative Justice and funding such programs?

Yes. I believe these programs are critical to ensuring we reduce recidivism. I support investing in these programs.

65. What role do you believe charter schools should play in public education?

I oppose the expansion of charter schools and believe charters that receive public funds need to be held to the same wage, employment, transparency and accountability standards as public schools.

Section 9 – Housing

66. Do you support the adoption of rent control and just cause eviction protections for your city?

Yes.

67. Do you support the adoption of an inclusionary housing ordinance for your city?

Yes.

68. Do you support the adoption of a local ordinance to end Housing Choice Voucher discrimination (Section 8) for your city?

Yes.

69. What is your plan to relieve the rental housing crisis?

I believe solving the rental housing crisis comes down to a combination of building more affordable housing, increasing protections for renters, and establishing mechanisms for renters and landlords to resolve disputes in a timely and fair manner.

70. What is your plan for funding affordable housing construction?

I want to work with all of our communities to ensure everyone can put a roof over their head. On the local level, I support increased investment in affordable housing and infill development to increase the supply of affordable housing. I also support affordable housing construction near public transit to help families not only afford their home but also be able to afford to go to work.

71. What is your plan to ensure that working class people have opportunities for home ownership?

It is clear that home ownership is the furthest out of reach now than it has been in recent memory, perhaps even in history. I believe we need to work closely with our state and federal partners to identify funding mechanisms that get working families into affordable housing and keep them there. We need to crackdown on predatory lending schemes and hold those lenders accountable for preying on working people. Combined with expanded economic opportunity, we also need to end Housing Choice Voucher discrimination as described above to ensure low income families can stay off the streets and build the type of rental history and credit to eventually buy a home.

Section 10 – Transportation and Public Transit

72. Would you support a local tax measure to fund transportation and public transit?
If so, which specific form of local taxation would you support?

Yes, and I would also fight to ensure our region receives our fair share of state and federal transportation infrastructure funding.

73. If you are seated on the board of SACOG, STA, or Regional Transit, how would you use your role and what would you prioritize?

If seated on any of these boards, my top priority would be ensuring we expand access to affordable and clean public transportation options for Sacramentans.

74. What is your plan to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled in the region?

I believe expanding access to public transportation is critical in reducing VMT in the Sacramento region.

75. What is your plan to improve local and regional public transit? Please describe a priority project.

I believe there is room to explore expanding intercity and commuter rail options for our region, as well as improving access to intra-city transportation options. Developing and passing a transportation bond is critical for our region to make long overdue improvements in our public transit system.

Signature: /s/ Les Simmons

Date: September 26, 2019



BIOGRAPHY

For the past twenty years, Les Simmons has been a grass roots community leader, advocate and pastor who has been on the front lines of the battle for equality, justice and inclusion. He is committed to ensuring that the South Sacramento community benefits from the economic renaissance currently underway in Sacramento, and that all residents are offered the City services and opportunities they deserve.

Les Simmons currently serves as Senior Pastor at the South Sacramento Christian Center (SSCC). In addition to being a faith home for many, SSCC has established itself as an organization committed to the well-being and healthy development of all South Sacramento residents, especially our youth.

Under Les' leadership, SSCC has served as the hub for efforts to improve the community. At SSCC, Les has worked tirelessly in spearheading programs to reduce child mortality, prevent gang violence, provide our youth with educational, recreational, mentorship and employment programs, parenting classes, and events such as family fun nights and skate nights through the Simmons Community Center (formerly Cal Skate). The Simmons Community Center, founded in 2016 and named for Les' parents, serves more than 1,000 youth and adults every month and reflects the full racial and ethnic diversity of South Sacramento.

Les is also a well-respected leader in the fight for racial, social and economic justice in Sacramento, throughout California and nationally. He is a former board member for Sacramento ACT, a multi-racial and multi-faith organization advocating for the transformation of Sacramento based on shared values of justice and equity. He currently serves on the board for the Mack Road Partnership.

Les grew up in South Sacramento, graduated from Valley High School and returned home after college. Les and Katrina Simmons (also a native of Valley Hi) have been married for 18 years and have three children, Lesley, Jr., 17, Ania, 14, and Cadence, 10.



Candidate Prospectus

City Council District 8 – Demographics

Sacramento City Council District 8 includes Meadowview, Parkway, North Laguna Creek and Jacinto Creek in South Sacramento. Of the 12,262 voters likely to cast ballots in March, the ethnic breakdown is as follows:

Latino Voters	2,605
African American Voters	1,785
API Voters	1,698*

* Of all API voters, 781 are Southeast Asian or Vietnamese, 215 are Chinese, and 59 are Japanese.

Deep Roots

Les Simmons grew up in South Sacramento. He is the son of Bishop Esley Simmons, Sr. and Dr. Deborah Simmons, who founded the South Sacramento Christian Center in 1988. SSCC is an inclusive and diverse congregation which offers five services every Sunday, two of which are in Spanish. Through his constant presence, involvement, activism and leadership, Les has become a well-known pillar of the south Sacramento community.

Les is the Senior Pastor at SSCC and also serves as Executive Director of the Simmons Community Center (formerly Cal Skate and named for his parents) and the Valley Hi Black Child Legacy Campaign. He and his wife Katrina has been married for 18 years and have three children, Lesley, Jr., 17, Ania, 14, and Cadence, 10.

Community Activism

Les Simmons has spent his career advocating for youth and families in the south Sacramento neighborhoods of City Council District 8. As the Executive Director of the Simmons Community Center, Les has been on the frontlines to provide meaningful programs that mentor youth, prevent gang violence, keep neighborhoods safe and provide education and job training opportunities.

Les was named one of California's top statewide influencers by McClatchy News service, which publishes local papers across the state, including the Sacramento Bee. He previously served on the Board of Directors for Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT) where he worked to help immigrant communities in the fight for equal opportunity and social justice. Les also serves on the Board of Directors for the Mack Road Partnership, helping local businesses grow and thrive.

Strong Base of Support

On the first day that Les Simmons announced his candidacy, more than 100 friends and community members signed up to help with his campaign. Les also has won endorsements from City Councilmembers Rick Jennings and Steve Hansen as well as Jackie Rose from the Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center* and Bill Knowlton, Executive Director, Mack Road Property & Business Improvement District*.

Not only is Les Simmons a respected leader in the African American community, he has worked closely with the Latino community through his work with ACT and has strong ties to neighborhood leaders throughout the district who he has worked with on gang violence prevention, neighborhood improvement and youth programming.

Les Simmons will have a robust volunteer operation that includes precinct walks, phone banking, house parties and community fundraising events.

*Titles for identification purposes only