

Newsletter: January 2013

Next Dinner Meeting: Thursday, January 24: Lamar Thorpe- Director of Development, College of Education, San Jose State University

TOPIC: Women's Incarceration: My Life

Lamar Thorpe was born in prison and he will tell you his story. He is a proud United States Navy veteran and a two time graduate of The George Washington University in Washington, DC. Lamar served for a total of eight years. His service introduced him to diverse cultures as he traveled to countries such as East Timor, the Philippines, China, Japan, and South Korea. As he progressed from an "undesignated sailor" to his final rank of Legalman, 2nd class, he earned several medals, including the Global War on Terrorism Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal for his service in the Global War on Terror following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

In 2007, Lamar graduated from George Washington University and was selected from a large pool of highly accomplished graduating scholars as one of seven Presidential Administrative Fellows at the University. He concurrently worked towards his Master of Arts degree in Women's Studies.

As part of his fellowship, he was appointed to be at the forefront of university development, raising over a million dollars annually in leadership annual giving gifts. In his roles, Lamar also managed the Luther Rice Society, GW's oldest and now largest giving society; founded the GW African American Alumni Advisory Board for philanthropic priorities; and traveled the country on behalf of the University. In 2009, he earned his Master of Arts degree in Women's Studies focusing on women's global migration, domestic work and incarceration. Lamar and his wife moved to the Bay area about six months ago and were instrumental in helping Monica Wilson get elected to the Antioch City Council. Last weekend he was elected as a CDP Delegate from representing AD-11.

We look forward to seeing many of you there.

Social Get together	6:00 PM
Dinner	6:45 PM
Program	7:15 PM

Members & Invited Guests; \$25

Non-members: **\$30** (\$25 for dinner and \$5 requested donation to help offset program costs)

Presentation only **\$5** (requested donation)

Please RSVP to me, via email or telephone (925) 570-9289, as early as possible for this event and **no later than Monday, January 21**. **Make checks out to James Donnelly** and mail them to the address below or bring them with you to the dinner.

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Presidents Corner

Well an election is over; we have survived the holidays and now it is off to another great year for everyone, at least that is my hope. However, the fight goes on, our congress is just as divided as it was before the election and we can already see what lies ahead, continued gridlock in Washington and a very right wing faction of the republican party who is ready to put the country into insolvency to get there way. There will be continued attempts by them to find ways to cut social security and Medicare. As to any meaningful gun control legislation, don't bet on it.

As a former Marine and a gun owner I am appalled at how crazy so many people are behaving over the issue of some meaningful gun control legislation. Reading the blogs out there is frightening; people talking about going out and killing people if controls are tightened. They claim that Obama is violating the 2nd Amendment with his executive orders and a number of states have introduced or passed legislation threatening to arrest any federal official trying to enforce these regulations. The talk in the right wing blogs borders on insanity. I expect we will see violence before it all settles down, if it does. It is another example of where we as a country have allowed ourselves to sink when we no longer seem to be able to agree to disagree while accepting that we have different viewpoints.

On a positive note Democrats now have a super majority in both the State Assembly & State Senate. Perhaps we can now get some meaningful reform accomplished in Sacramento. Now is a good time to contact Assembly woman Joan Buchanan and/or State Senator Mark DeSaulnier to let them know what you would like to see come out of the legislature this year.

We have some interesting meetings planned for this year and hope to see many of your at our dinner meetings. Also please remember to renew your memberships.

Have a good month!

Jim Donnelly- President SRVDC

Membership Drive

It is that time of year again; time to renew your membership in the San Ramon Valley Democratic club. Dues are only \$25/person or \$40/family. These dues support us in presenting our programs throughout the year. Also, as this year is an election year we need your dues to help our local candidates in their efforts to get re-elected. The primary goal of the SRVDC is to aid in informing voters and concerned citizens about issues of the day and how they may impact our lives. The SRVDC serves the communities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville and San Ramon. We provide a vehicle for persons interested in your communities to come together for interesting and informative meetings about issues facing all of us. We provide a voter registration and information table at the Danville Farmer's Market and other venues. We also send out a monthly newsletter presenting updates from our elected officials and provide a forum for our members to express their views.

We need your continued support for these efforts. Dues are \$25/ person and \$40 per family. Please complete the form below and mail it to address below:

Renewal or New Membership

Singly or Family Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell phone _____

Please indicate the activities that interest you

____ Voter Registration

____ Get-out-the-vote activities

____ Fundraising

____ Publicity

____ Local Government

____ Newsletter

____ Hospitality

____ Programs & Functions

Make checks payable to: San Ramon Valley Democratic Club
P.O. Box 1218
Danville, CA 94526

Thanks.

Jim Donnelly

California Democratic Party Delegate Caucus

The caucus to elect delegates from Assembly District 15 was held on Saturday, January 12, 2013 at the IBEW 595 Hall, 6250 Village Pkwy, Dublin. Twelve delegates (6 men & 6 women)

were selected to represent our Assembly District at the CDP Convention and one person was selected to represent us on the CDP Executive Board. Thank you to those of you that came out to support our club members who were running for these seats. The delegates elected by the caucus are:

Cheryl Cook-Kallio
Sharon Goldberg
Roberta Kreitz
Joan Laursen
Debbie Look
Tanya Ludden

Jack Bastida
Greg Bonato
Jeff Bowser
Jim Donnelly
Ellis Goldberg
John Roe

Congratulations to our 3 club members who were elected as delegates. Jim Donnelly was elected to be the E-Board delegate fro AD-16.

February 2013 Dinner Meeting

Our January dinner meeting will be held at the Crow Canyon Country Club on Thursday, February 28, 2013. Our speaker will be Doug Offenhartz, Former Danville City Councilman. More details to follow.

Member Editorials

Each month we invite you to present your views on about any subject you wish to discuss. This is an important way to understand what are major concerns for our members. Surely there are things going on that make your blood boil. Let it out, express your opinions here.

Reports about/from our Elected Officials

Congressman George Miller

Rep. Miller Leads House Democrats in Calling for an End to “Too Big to Jail”

Jan 14, 2013 Issues: [Labor and Jobs](#), [Federal Budget and the Economy](#)

WASHINGTON, DC – Following news last month that HSBC – Europe’s largest bank – has evaded U.S. criminal prosecution despite directly facilitating activities of drug traffickers, money launderers, and governments supporting terrorist organizations, Rep. George Miller (D-CA) and 23 other congressional Democrats blasted the Justice Department’s decision to “defer prosecution” of bank officials as symptomatic of an unacceptable lack of accountability for large financial institutions.

“We believe that the Department of Justice owes a greater duty of diligence to the American people in prosecuting the responsible HSBC officials to the fullest extent of the law for their criminal activities,” Miller and his colleagues [wrote in a letter today](#) to

Attorney General Eric Holder expressing their strong disagreement with the decision that indictments will not be brought against the HSBC officers and employees responsible for abetting laundering actions. The Justice Department based its decision to not pursue criminal charges on what it called the “collateral consequences” a prosecution could have on the financial system.

After sending the letter, Miller said the American people have been let down by the Department’s position in this case. “It’s unconscionable that bank employees will not be held responsible for laundering upwards of a billion dollars in drug money and funds for dangerous foreign regimes that are known to support terrorist organizations,” he said. “HSBC employees’ actions have helped to facilitate violence on the streets of our communities and the efforts of America’s enemies to attack American troops on the front lines.”

Recent reports have noted that Colombian drug traffickers who utilized HSBC’s lax regulations on money laundering have in fact been charged in U.S. courts and face over a decade in prison. However, no HSBC staff that facilitated those same traffickers’ work will face jail time.

“There has been a chronic lack of accountability for financial institutions for a number of years. Not only has this played a major role in the reckless behavior which collapsed our economy, but it now manifests itself in blatantly criminal activity,” Miller added. “The Justice Department’s decision to ‘defer prosecution’ is irresponsible. It broadcasts a clear message to financial institutions: if you’re big enough, you’re held to a separate set of standards with respect to our nation’s laws. No bank, no matter how large or important to our financial system, should be too big to jail.”

The lawmakers’ letter notes that, “Violations of anti-money laundering statutes in support of drug traffickers and America’s enemies are beyond the pale and must consistently be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and even banks that are very large and systemically important cannot be too big to jail.”

Full text of the letter to U.S. Attorney General Holder is below and attached:

January 14, 2013

Hon. Eric Holder
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

We are writing you in support of the concerns expressed in the attached letter sent to you on December 13th by Senator Jeff Merkley regarding the deferred prosecution agreement with HSBC. We are committed to achieving needed accountability in the financial sector, particularly for large financial institutions that played a significant role in bringing about the 2008 financial crisis that has caused great pain and suffering over the last several years.

As you know, the case against HSBC details a number of serious offenses involving clear and blatant violations of anti-money laundering statutes, which facilitated the

activities of drug traffickers, banks doing business in sanctioned countries such as Iran, and others. It is inconceivable to us that indictments would not be brought against those HSBC officers and employees that were responsible for these laundering violations. Money laundering was carried out on behalf of the Mexican drug cartels that are responsible for significant crime, violence and death in the communities that we represent.

Money laundering was also conducted on behalf of governments that are supporting terrorist organizations that are attacking and killing American troops and citizens around the world. All of us have had the heartbreaking experience of attending the funerals of our fallen heroes. It is unacceptable to us that indictments have not been pursued against those who have engaged in offenses that have supported the criminal drug activities on our streets and terrorist activities against our country, our military and our citizens.

We believe that the Department of Justice owes a greater duty of diligence to the American people in prosecuting the responsible HSBC officials to the fullest extent of the law for their criminal activities. We are particularly shocked by recent reports that Colombian drug traffickers who utilized HSBC's lax regulations on money laundering have in fact been charged in U.S. courts and face over a decade in prison, yet the HSBC employees who made such laundering possible have not faced criminal prosecution. Violations of anti-money laundering statutes in support of drug traffickers and America's enemies are beyond the pale and must consistently be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and even banks that are very large and systemically important cannot be too big to jail.

We join Sen. Merkley in urging your immediate attention to this issue and look forward to your response to his inquiry.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Reps. Miller, DeLauro, Blumenauer, Bonamici, Brownley, Carson, Cicilline, Cohen, Ellison, Eshoo, Farr, Hank Johnson, Kaptur, McDermott, McGovern, Pingree, Schakowsky, Speier, Tierney, Tonko, Tsongas, Welch, Grijalva, Michaud

Congressman Eric Swalwell

Swalwell Supports Obama's Gun Safety Plan

Jan 16, 2013

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Eric Swalwell (D-CA) announced his support for President Obama's gun safety plan to protect our communities and called for immediate action to reduce gun violence.

"President Obama said, 'Now is the Time' for gun safety, and I could not agree more," said Swalwell. "The President has put together a bold plan to reduce gun violence and Congress needs to enact the legislation called for, like the ban on assault weapons, without delay. We cannot just sit on the sidelines and wait for another tragedy to

happen. It is long overdue for Members of both parties to rise above partisan differences and do what is right to protect the American people,” concluded Swalwell. President Obama unveiled a multi-point gun safety plan that includes both executive orders and a call for congressional action. The President will take action to close important loopholes to strengthen background checks, while giving law enforcement and healthcare providers additional tools to keep our schools safe and prevent gun violence. Additionally, the President requested Congress pass legislation to ban military-style assault weapons and high capacity magazines.

Congressman Jerry McNerney

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Congressman McNerney's Bipartisan Bill to Support Local Fire Departments Signed into Law

Will Give Local Firefighters and First Responders the Resources They Need for Five Years

Washington, D.C. –Congressman Jerry McNerney’s (D-Stockton) bipartisan bill, the United States Fire Administration Act of 2012, was signed into law on Jan. 1, 2013. On Dec. 20, 2012, the bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives with broad bipartisan support as a part of the fiscal year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). McNerney introduced the bill in July to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration (USFA) for five years, allowing the USFA to continue administering grants, creating good-paying and critical jobs at fire departments across the country. The bill will also allow the USFA to continue to provide resources to train and educate the public about fire safety, prevention and preparedness.

“The USFA provides our nation’s firefighters with the tools they need to keep the public safe and reduce the damages caused by fire and other emergency situations. Not only is this legislation critical for public safety, it will ensure that we preserve and create family-wage jobs in communities across America,” said Congressman McNerney.

On Dec. 5, 2012, Congressman McNerney wrote to Rep. Buck McKeon, Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, to encourage the committee to include the text of his legislation in the NDAA. Upon passage in the House, the NDAA was sent to the Senate for consideration before traveling to the president to be signed into law.

Over the last decade, nearly \$5 million has been awarded to the region encompassing Congressman McNerney’s district through programs administered by the USFA, improving public safety and education. For example, the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants program created or saved the jobs of over 1200 firefighters across the country in 2009. The program allowed 566 workers who had been laid off to be rehired, prevented an additional 139 workers from being laid off, and created nearly 400 new jobs in our nation’s fire departments.

“The USFA provides important public safety information that helps prevent costly and dangerous fires. Increasing preparedness and keeping our friends and neighbors safe is a responsibility we all share. I am glad that this important legislation has been signed into law, moving us one step closer to making sure our first responders have the tools

and resources they need,” said McNerney.

The USFA was created in 1974 with the goal of reducing the number of fire-related deaths by half. This goal was met in 1988. According to the National Fire Protection Association, in 2010 there were 1,331,500 fires reported in the United States. These fires caused 3,120 civilian deaths – down from 12,000 per year in 1973 – as well as 17,720 civilian injuries and \$11.6 billion in property damage.

The United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2012, H.R. 6229, was originally co-introduced by Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL). President Obama personally signed the NDAA into law on Jan. 1, 2013.

State Senator Mark DeSaulnier

DeSaulnier Statement on Governor Brown’s Budget Proposal

January 10, 2013

“Governor Brown’s announcement today of a budget with a surplus and increases in public education spending is a welcome sign of our state’s improving fiscal status,” Senator Mark DeSaulnier said. “I have seen firsthand as Democratic legislators have voted to make tough cuts to restore fiscal order. With our budget deficit closed, it is time to begin reinvesting in the most vital programs in our state, paying down our debt, and continuing to rebuild a stronger post-recession California. As we begin to pay down our debt and reinvest in critical programs, we must do so in a strategic and thoughtful manner. Governmental oversight and keeping a vigilant eye on spending must remain top priorities. I agree with the Governor’s view that 2013 should be a year of fiscal discipline and living within our means.”

DeSaulnier to Serve on Six Senate Committees

January 07, 2013

Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord) today was named to six critical legislative committees, including: Budget & Fiscal Review; Budget Subcommittee 3 – Health and Human Services; Energy, Utilities and Communications; Governance and Finance; and Health. DeSaulnier also serves as chair of the Transportation and Housing Committee.

“As a member of these committees, I can be a valuable voice for the people of the Seventh Senate District,” DeSaulnier said. “In 2012, I introduced several bills aimed at helping foster, homeless, and underserved youth. I will continue to advocate for the more vulnerable members of our population as a member of the Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services and Health Committee. As chair of the Transportation and Housing Committee I will work to ensure that there is greater accountability on the state’s transportation infrastructure projects, while continuing to focus on supporting smart, pragmatic transportation and housing policy. It is critical that we make the most out of limited resources, and I look forward to using my assignment on the Budget & Fiscal Review Committee to advocate for greater fiscal responsibility and governmental oversight

Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan

Joan Buchanan's Committee Assignments

Chair, Committee on Education

Primary jurisdictions are education generally, certificated employees of schools, school finance, and school facilities.

Chair, Budget Subcommittee No.4 on State Administration

Budget Subcommittee No.6 on Budget Process, Oversight & Program Evaluation

Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review

Primary jurisdictions are identifying savings and efficiencies in the management of state government, reviewing and studying the implementation, operation, and effectiveness of state programs and agencies.

Committee on Budget

The Budget Committee's jurisdiction is the Budget.

Committee on Transportation

Primary jurisdictions are Transit Authority, California Highway Patrol, vehicles, aircraft, and vessels; operation, licensing and registration, and drivers licenses.

Committee on Utilities and Commerce

Primary jurisdictions are public utilities; the California Public Utilities Commission; the California Energy Commission; the California Independent System Operator; Electricity Oversight Board; energy companies; common carriers; electricity; alternative energy development and conservation; natural gas; wireless, wireline and cable communications; international trade; Women and Minority Business Enterprises; and tourism.

Select Committees

Select Committee on Government Efficiency, Technology and Innovation

Commissions

Advisory Commission on Special Education

Delta Protection Commission

Judicial Council Court Technology Advisory Committee