

Gianna E. Judkins

Empowerment Congress Southwest,
Area Neighborhood Development Council
8475 S. Vermont Ave.
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Board@SouthwestNC.org

RE: Governing Board Vacancy

January 12, 2021

Members of the Board,

My name is Gianna Elyce Judkins. I am a lifelong Angeleno and resident of Council District 8. My family moved into this neighborhood in 1983. My mother and her siblings attended both Henry Clay Junior High School and Washington Preparatory High School. There are no limits to my love for my home, my neighbors, and my community. In 2017, I graduated from Howard University and have been seeking opportunities to get involved in this community that means the world to me.

Upon returning home, I have been disheartened to see the lack of investment in our community. I have wondered who can advocate for our needs at the municipal level and make a sustainable, long-term change. I am no longer wondering and have decided to be the change that I wish to see.

I, like many of our neighbors, know what it is like to live in a marginalized community that is often overlooked and underserved. We grow tired of asking the city to clean trash down Western. We wonder where we can find support and resources for our neighbors at the 88th and Western Encampment. We grow weary with rising rent and stagnant wages. We grow frustrated with shoot outs at intersections such as Van Ness and Century.

However, despite our challenges, fears, and frustrations, we have always come together to make changes that lead to a better tomorrow. We have never given up or given in. We learn from our failures and use them as the catalysts for our greatest innovations, policies, and initiatives. We are dedicated and resilient people. I believe fully in our collective power.

If given an opportunity on the governing board as our council's youth representative, I will diligently work with community members to provide solutions to our neighborhood's greatest challenges. I pledge to fight for policy solutions and outcomes that reduce violence, improve access and equity in our schools, increase economic opportunity with significant community development initiatives/programs, and expand our civic engagement and community outreach

programs. I also want to make our council and other elected officials more accessible to the community in which they serve.

I pledge to organize, unify, and mobilize. I will make sure that advocacy, advancement, and opportunity are all part of the policy decisions that impact our daily lives. I want to be a voice in our community that challenges that narrative that portrays us as a fractured community plagued with violence and poverty. I want City Hall to see the South LA that I know - the community that raised me, and the pride of a people who continue to rise even in the face of adversity.

The opportunity to serve our community as the governing board's youth representative would be the greatest honor of my lifetime. I thank you in advance for your consideration of my vision in advancing our neighborhood forward.

Respectfully,

Gianna E. Judkins