
2017 Candidates for the Central Group Executive Committee
6 Candidates (Listed in random ballot order)
5 Open Positions

Barbara Hensleigh

I began my relationship with the Sierra Club when I took its Basic Mountaineering Training Course in 1986. Since then, I have participated in many of its outings.

Last fall, I saw an opportunity to protect the places I enjoy and also make a difference locally by volunteering to reorganize the Central Group. The Group, in the heart of LA and consisting of almost 4,000 members, was defunct. As the Chair of the Reorganization Committee, I recruited volunteers the Caesar Chavez way, one person at a time. We now have a diverse group of talented, enthusiastic and committed volunteers who will represent the urban and wild environment.

I have established a welcoming, positive atmosphere for the critical mass of new volunteers. We have received activist training, established a parks campaign, initiated a single use plastics resolution under consideration for inclusion in national Sierra Club policies, started an outings program, and will publish our first newsletter shortly. I want to carry the vision forward. With reorganization soon complete, we will be able to endorse candidates running for public office, encourage local initiatives to protect the environment and continue recruiting volunteers to increase our effectiveness and do more.

Thanks for considering me.

Helen Hwang

I have found myself dedicating more time and energy fighting against the legislative agenda of this current White House administration. The results from the November 2016 election propelled my civic engagement and led me to join the efforts of the Sierra Club Political Committee, Central Group and another non-profit, Bet Tzedek, which focuses on providing free legal services for people in underserved communities. Becoming a part of these efforts has opened the opportunity to increase awareness not only in my social circles but everyone around me too. The importance of increasing political awareness and engagement in terms of advocacy, voting, and organizing has been something I am proud to be included in. I would be honored to be a part of the EXCOM to help execute the changes we need now.

Tom Williams

Memberships: Sierra Club Life Member, Water, Transportation, Clean Break Committees; LA-32 Neighborhood Council, Save Porter Ranch, Others.

Employment: Retired URS Corp, Engrg.Sci./Parsons Corp, MHA, DUBAI-WORLD/Others.

Education: BS-MS-PhD In Geology, Paleontology, and Zoology.

Ethnicity: Old/White/Educated, Lived Africa, West/South/East/SE Asia, Peru, Pacific Islands, Live In East LA/El Sereno, Hablo espanol un pocito ... and a few others.

Experiences: LA Floodplain Update One Water LA Citizens Coalition For A Safe Community, Save Porter Ranch, Save Walnut Canyon, Golden Gate Audubon-Wetlands, Worldwide Environment (Including Arctic Ocean) Geology/Oil & Gas, Seismicity, Groundwater, Zoology/Wildlife Management, Ecosystems, Wetlands and Endangered Species, Environmental Sciences/Engineering, & Project Management, Infrastructure-Pipes/Pavement, Structured Development-Mixed/Lo- Hi Rise Uses Housing - mixed, high-low rise, affordable, below median, senior urban development CEQA/NEPA Prep & Review of 400+ EIRs, EISs, and EAs worldwide Workshops, Forums, Door2Door, & Presentations.

Tim Phillips

I'm a composer for film, television and theater, with a deep love of wilderness and passion for the environment. I've donated to environmental causes for years. This past year I've become very active in Central Group reorg, attending many rallies and meetings. I co-organize/promote our public meetings. I established our Twitter page and am on our Park It and Communications teams. I also attended the Connect the Dots advocate training workshop at SC National HQ last July. I was a principal author of Angeles Chapter's Single Use Plastics Resolution (against single use plastics in eateries and shops), currently under consideration by the CCL to become a national policy recommendation. I intend to start a local anti single-use plastics campaign. I also hike weekly with Griffith Park Section and will be taking the Wilderness Travel Course soon. I want to be a part of the Central Group's ExCom in order to further our efforts to protect wilderness locally and nationally, push for Zero Waste, expand Angelenos access to open space, promote green building practices (including in the new LA River plan), and also keep an eye on our politicians.

Jason Wise

My name is Jason Wise, and I'm an environmentalist. It started in my childhood going camping with my dad in our local Central California mountains, or up to Yosemite if we were lucky. The passion grew in my youth when I learned about climate change on the evening news, and spent the next few decades getting educated on the issue. It burgeoned in school when I organized a newspaper recycling drive and became president of the Environmental Club.

The spirit continued in both my undergraduate and master's degrees here in Los Angeles, where I studied environmental policy. It's there with me every time I jaunt off to camp, hike and explore our natural wonders. It's infiltrated my blog where I write about the mindfulness of nature. The zeal feeds all of my current volunteer work, with TreePeople getting my hands dirty, Yosemite Conservancy educating the masses, or right here trying to make Los Angeles a healthier place with the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter.

It would be a dream to continue that work as an elected leader with the Central Group, using this passion and experience for the common environmental good, doing my small part in saving this beautiful earth we call home.

Betzabel Sevelian

I became a Sierra Club member four years ago after completing my Sierra Club Wilderness Training Course. Besides being an outdoor enthusiast, I am an immigrant rights advocate and my work is guided by a social justice framework. I was born in Mexico and came to Los Angeles at the age of four. I currently live in West Adams, located in South Los Angeles. Growing up as an undocumented immigrant in a low-income family I was presented many challenges to accessing opportunities. One of them was not experiencing the outdoors. My interest lies in working with youth of color and creating opportunities for them to experience the outdoors, fostering leadership, teaching valuable skills, and addressing barriers that impede low-income and communities of color from exploring our State and National parks.