



## **Eduardo Montesino Watsonville City Council 2014 District 4**

1-Please tell us why you are interested in reaching out to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community.

**ANSWER: I am interested in reaching out to the LGBT community in order to get educated on LGBT issues and to have a partner that I can come back to and ask questions of. It is very important for me to reach out to the LGBT community because I need to learn more.**

2- Why do you want the endorsement of The GLBT Alliance, Santa Cruz County's grassroots progressive gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender political organization?

**ANSWER: I got your endorsement four years ago and I was honored to have it and now I want to get your endorsement again for my re-election because you are a grassroots organization that educates our community on LGBT issues and how to be more tolerant. You are a great organization that cares about people. I would be proud to list the GLBT Alliance of Santa Cruz County on my literature. We need more awareness in Watsonville of LGBT issues, especially those that affect our youth.**

3-Please tell us about your history with the LGBT community, and your awareness of issues specific to our community.

**ANSWER: My history with LGBT issues have been around education and what I mean by that is that a large part of my time I spend talking to people about these issues is because our Latino community is often not yet comfortable talking about this issues.**

a - Have you had any opportunities to address LGBT issues in the course of your community service or professional life to date (i.e., have you helped formulate corporate non-discrimination standards, worked on the board of a non-profit that developed a LGBT outreach program, etc.)?

If so, please tell us about this work.

**ANSWER: As a council member to help advocate for non-discrimination language and identifying LGBT language and as a Labor leader at my job always advocating for more inclusive language on policies and procedures. Our contract was one of the first one to have language of recognizing domestic partners.**

b - The queer community is diverse, and we work to represent all elements of it. In support of that objective, we'd like to ask, specifically, whether you are familiar, at any level, with the issues faced, specifically, by the bisexual and transgender communities. If so, what influence would this have on your decisions as an elected official? If not, what steps will you take to become familiar with the issues, needs and concerns of these communities?

**ANSWER: I am not familiar with all the issues faced by the LGBT community but one of the steps I would take to get more familiarized with them is to tap into community members for the LGBT community that live in Watsonville to learn what issues they are facing, another would be to use GLBT Alliance members as a resource.**

c - As documented in the The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute publication, "Bisexual health: An introduction and model practices for HIV/STI prevention programming" (2007), which is available for download at the URL below, in many cases bisexual people face even greater health risks and obstacles to accessing effective health care and health information than their peers in the queer community, including higher levels of self-harm, suicide attempts and thoughts of suicide. What specific steps would you take to address the issues raised in this report, and elsewhere, that are specific to bisexuals, including "biphobia" and lack of service provider awareness of bisexuality?

[http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/bi\\_health\\_5\\_07\\_b.pdf](http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/bi_health_5_07_b.pdf)

**ANSWER: A lot of these issues, especially for the Watsonville community is education and talking to parents. Watsonville has a large Mexican community and our culture is not very open about talking about these kinds of issues so at every opportunity, there needs to be more educating of people and teaching that we are all one community and its ok to be LGBT. As a parent myself, I would like to be more educated so I can talk about these issues with my own children.**

A summary of the top ten health issues for the bisexual community, sourced from the above report, can be found here:

[http://brown.edu/Student\\_Services/Health\\_Services/Health\\_Education/lgbtq\\_health/bisexual\\_health/health\\_concerns\\_for\\_bisexuals.php](http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Health_Services/Health_Education/lgbtq_health/bisexual_health/health_concerns_for_bisexuals.php)

4 - Many adults, in and outside of the queer community, express their sexuality in a variety of ways, many of which are not well understood by the general public or the service provider community, and often subject to severe social stigma; this frequently leads to poor health outcomes for the individuals in question and / or complications when interacting with the legal system and social services providers.

What do you know about "alternative" sexualities aka Leather/BSDF/Fetish (often collectively referred to as "kink") and their associated communities? Are you willing to learn more about them and engage in dialogue with people from your community who express their sexuality in this manner, in order to ensure that these constituents are better served by the agencies and institutions that you will be overseeing?

The Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance, which "works to advance the recognition of sexual, gender, and family diversity" and "to affirm sexual freedom as a fundamental human right" addresses these issues as part of their larger agenda of supporting "sexual freedom." Their web site is at <http://www.woodhullalliance.org/> <http://www.woodhullalliance.org/%E2%80%8E>

The National Coalition for Sexual Freedom (NCSF) has an introduction to SM that outlines the governing principles followed by responsible individuals and organizations within these communities:

<https://ncsfreedom.org/key-programs/education-outreach/education-outreach-program-page.html>

**ANSWER: I do not know much about "alternative sexualities." Part of my homework will be to use the links that you provided for me. Is there a way for the GLBT Alliance to help educate myself, other elected officials and the public in a public event?**

5 - Many adults, in and outside of the queer community, participate in relationships that do not fit the traditional two-partner model, and in doing so, are subject to discrimination in housing, insurance coverage and access to health care, immigration, custody and parental rights.

What do you know about these "alternative" relationship structures, often referred to by those participating in them as the practice of "polyamory" (defined as "the practice, desire, or acceptance of having more than one intimate relationship at a time with the knowledge and consent of everyone involved"), the people who

participate in them, and the communities that have formed around them? Are you willing to learn more about how these types of relationship structures work, and engage in dialogue with people who participate in them, in order to ensure that these constituents are better served by the agencies and institutions you will be overseeing?

**ANSWER: See answer above. I am open to learning more.**

You can find out more about these types of families, and the issues they face, on the Family Matters Project website (sponsored by the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance) at <http://www.familymattersproject.org>, which is "dedicated to advancing, respecting and protecting the fundamental human right to family by eliminating discrimination based on family structure and relationship choices."

6 - Have there been any LGBT people who've had a significant impact on your life as role models, inspirations, mentors, friends, etc.?

If so, please tell us a little bit about how they've influenced you.

**ANSWER: Yes I have one person: when I was a teenager I worked in a pizza place and had a co-worker. She saw something in me that caused her to educate me on LGBT issues and things I needed to be aware of. I was so young at age 15, I fully did not understand every thing she was talking about till later in life but I would thank her now.**

7 - Please describe your philosophy for working with under-represented communities of which you are not a member and, specifically, how this will manifest itself in your tenure in office.

**ANSWER: My philosophy to serve under-represented communities is to reach out to these communities to learn more about them. I look forward to doing so more often, with your help. I would like to have a positive impact on this community and be a listener.**

8 - Please tell us what you know about current City-operated or funded programs which impact the LGBT community, and what suggestions, if any, you have for improvements.

**ANSWER: Mostly when we fund community programs and being vigilant on your behalf that we have tolerant non-discrimination policies in place. Just about everything we do has an impact on the LGBT community. I am learning more about how important it is to keep this in mind.**

9 - Local non-profits that serve the LGBT community, along with other non-profits, have experienced considerable cuts in funding from all sources over the past couple of years. As a member of the City Council, where would you place funding for health and human services on your priority list?

**ANSWER: It is a top priority for me to get more funding for community programs to ensure that nobody is turned away from services. It doesn't matter if it's health care or counseling. As we prepare for funding in 2015, I would welcome assistance from the GLBT Alliance and others to help focus additional funding around LGBT youth in Watsonville.**

10 - Will you insist that the City not associate with organizations - such as the Boy Scouts and The Salvation Army - that have clearly stated their intent to discriminate against LGBT people, supporting, instead, such inclusive organizations as Girl Scouts or Big Brothers/Big Sisters or Goodwill?

**ANSWER: I will do this.**

11 - Will you ensure that medical insurance for City employees covers complete health care for gender reassignment surgery and medical care for transgender employees and family?

**ANSWER: I will look into it because I am not very familiar with the health care plan the city offers all I know its a collective with other agencies. After I learn more, I would welcome working with you if we need to do more.**

12 – If elected, do you intend to take a leadership role with respect to LGBT youth in your city, working to ensure that all schools are safe for all students? If yes, please cite a concrete example of how you would do so.

In particular, did you support AB 1266 (text here: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml>), which guarantees equal access to all school programs and facilities for students in accordance with their expressed gender identity?

**ANSWER: I support AB 1266 and I would reach out to the LGBT community in both High Schools to learn from them and tap into their activism. Our youth are becoming leaders in Watsonville. I am proud of helping to initiate the Watsonville Youth City Council. With your help, maybe we should ask them address some these issues by working with High School groups.**

13 – If elected, do you intend to take a leadership role with respect to rights and services for LGBT elders in your city?

If yes, please cite a concrete example of how you would do so.

**ANSWER: Just always be in communication and get to know the elders of the LGBT community in Watsonville. Isn't there a seniors group that's part of the Diversity Center. Could they help me meet LGBT elders in my city?**

14 - What would you do to support HIV education and services for at-risk communities in your city? Specifically, do you support syringe exchange in an effort to stop the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases and will you work to keep the program based on best practices and evidence-based research? Do you support safe needle drop-boxes in public areas, such as parks or bus depots? Will you support the syringe exchange program if it encounters interference? Do you support training for your police department around needle exchange?

**ANSWER: I do support all this programs specially the syringe exchange program to give a clean syringe and keep use ones from being used by multiple people and keep them out of the trash or just thrown out any where. And I do support police training on these matters.**

15 - Do you support marriage equality, and did you do so publicly? Are you aware of a nation-wide movement to create "religious exemptions" to marriage equality and other nondiscrimination laws (e.g.: AB 2237 - text here: [http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab\\_2201-2250/ab\\_2237\\_bill\\_20140221\\_introduced.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab_2201-2250/ab_2237_bill_20140221_introduced.html))? Do you have a position on such exemptions?

**ANSWER: I do support marriage equality publicly and do support other non-discrimination laws.**

16 - Have you in the past, and will you in the future, attend LGBT events, such as LGBT Pride, Queer Youth Leadership Awards, or the BAYMEC dinner?

If you have not attended, why not?

**ANSWER: I have and will attend events like QYLA and Watsonville Pride.**

17 - If you receive The GLBT Alliance's endorsement, will you display it in your campaign literature?

**ANSWER: Yes I will, proudly.**

18 - Have you received endorsements which you think might be of interest to the LGBT community?

**ANSWER: The Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County, and, I hope, the Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club.**

19- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

**ANSWER: Thank you for this opportunity to participate and thanks for advocating for your community. One of my goals for my next term is to learn more and do more about LGBT issues, especially those that effect LGBT youth in Watsonville.**

---