

# Wine Country Young Democrats

## CONSTITUTION

### PREAMBLE

In working toward a more perfect California through scholarship, social equity, and a constant questioning of the status quo; in striving to foster a fully just and sustainable society through higher consciousness, action, and finesse; having opinions to be represented, rights to be protected, and needs to be administered; we dedicate ourselves to directing the participation of Young Democrats in California's Wine Country.

We pledge to fight political apathy and call for an educated public. We recognize that limited approaches are increasingly ineffective in a world that is as fast changing, globally interrelated, and complex as ours has become. We now must move beyond educating ourselves for just one role or just one sector, but for all roles and all sectors as they are all interrelated.

As Democrats, we look back on a proud history — a history not just of a political organization but of a national vision. It is a vision based on the strength and power of millions of empowered, socially diverse, compassionate, and enlightened Americans. We embody the notion that wealth and social status are not entitlements to rule.

As citizens of today and leaders of tomorrow, we are committed to public service. Our vision identifies public service as work of public importance wherever it happens. We will shape our work in public service by the values of our Party.

In this mission, we call for the full participation of all young democrats without regard to sex, gender, race, ethnic origin, religious or spiritual affiliation, disability, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation in Democratic advocacy.

For these ends and upon these principles, we, an assembled group of Young Democrats in Wine Country, do hereby associate ourselves and adopt this constitution as the Wine Country Young Democrats.

### ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Wine Country Young Democrats, herein after referred to as the WCYD.

### ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The WCYD, upon chartering with the Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee (DCC), and the California Young Democrats (CYD), shall become a member organization in each of the above groups, and therefore pledges itself to support the philosophy of the Democratic Party.

We will also:

1. Represent the interests of Young Democrats and the Democratic Party
2. Accept contributions in the form of gifts, bequests, and membership dues to carry out our purposes and activities.

### **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Eligibility**

Registered Democrats under the age of 36 are eligible to be voting members of WCYD and will be recognized by the chartering organizations listed above for purposes of membership count and delegate representation.

Registered Democrats over the age of 36 may be considered as honorary members but will not retain voting rights within the organization.

Members of the community under the age of 36 whose political views align with the Democratic Party but are, for whatever reason, unable to faithfully complete a voter registration document may be considered for membership in WCYD on a case by case basis provided they are willing to state their case in person to the Executive Board. Following this presentation, the Executive Board shall sign and retain a document which states that the prospective member has declared their ineligibility to become a registered Democrat and fulfilled the requirements above. Once declared, these members will be conferred all the rights and responsibilities of a voting member of the WCYD but may not be recognized by chartering organizations per their rules.

We will not restrict membership based upon race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical and/or mental disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship, or status as a veteran or member of the armed services.

#### **B. Members in Good Standing & Membership Dues**

Members in Good Standing shall be defined as: any eligible member who has paid the annual dues (or has requested a waiver of hardship from the organization's treasurer) and regularly attends meetings (at least three meetings or organizational events per calendar year). The price level of membership dues shall be established each year by the Executive Board. Only Members in Good Standing are eligible to vote or to hold office in this organization.

#### **C. Honorary Membership**

All former WCYD who maintain Democratic registration are also allowed to serve as Honorary Members upon receipt of their membership dues. Honorary members cannot vote, but may otherwise actively participate in the activities of the organization.

#### **D. Membership Lists**

The organization shall keep a membership list containing the name, address, phone number, e-mail address and birth date of each member. E-mail addresses shall be used to compile an electronic mailing

list that will be maintained by the Secretary-Treasurer or whomever they appoint with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board. Non-members can be added to the mailing list at the discretion of the Executive Board. This membership information shall be subject to the rights of inspection as required by law. The organization shall also keep an ongoing recruitment "sign-up" list for those who have shown interest in the organization. This list is confidential and is not subject to inspection laws. Only the Executive Board may have a full copy of this list, although the list can be distributed with the approval of the Executive Board by a two-thirds vote. Release and usage of both the membership and recruitment lists is subject to the discretion of the Executive Board.

#### **E. Transferability of Membership**

Neither the membership of WCYD nor any rights in the membership thereof may be transferred or assigned for value or otherwise. Under no circumstances will transferred or assigned membership status, or the rights granted thereof, be recognized by the organization or the Executive Board.

#### **F. Termination of Membership**

The membership of any member shall terminate upon resignation of the member, expiration of the period of membership, non-payment of dues, or expulsion or suspension of the member by a two-thirds vote of the present quorum. Following a determination by the Executive Board that a member should be suspended or expelled, a notice shall be given no less than 14 calendar days before the proposed effective date of the suspension or expulsion, and the reasons therefore. An Executive Board determination concerning termination of membership must pass with a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board. The member shall be given an opportunity to be heard on the matter, either orally or in written form, before the final vote by the present quorum of Members in Good Standing. The result of the vote will take immediate effect.

### **ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

#### **A. Authority and Responsibility**

The Executive Board shall have general authority and responsibility for the ongoing affairs of the Wine Country Young Democrats. Executive Board votes can be overturned by a 60% vote of the general membership at the proper meeting as outlined in the process below. Any Member in Good Standing may propose a challenge to an Executive Board vote at any time. This challenge will be heard at the next general meeting, or at the meeting in which the challenge is presented. Any member or Executive Board member will have a chance to be heard on the matter at this challenge. A simple majority (51%) vote of the Members in Good Standing will move this challenge to a formal hearing in which debate will be conducted. After this hearing, a vote can be held to overturn the Executive Board vote requiring 60% of the General Membership. Executive Board votes are non-challengeable once more than two meetings of the general membership have occurred since the vote in question. Delegation of duties and responsibilities and creation of subcommittees, as assigned by the Executive Board, are not subject to a challenge.

#### **B. Composition**

The Executive Board will be composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Political Director, Communications Director and two Members-at-Large. Discretionary Executive Board members may be added upon a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board members.

### **C. Quorum**

A quorum of the Executive Board shall be recognized when a minimum of 51% of the Executive Board Members are present in person except as outlined under the subheading, Emergency Meetings.

### **D. Emergency Meetings**

In the event that an issue arises that is of such immediate importance that an action must be taken as soon as possible and the delay of such action would cause harm to the purpose of this club, the Executive Board shall have the right to conduct votes on these limited issues with a recognized quorum of 51% of the Executive Board present in person or by active electronic communication. These emergency votes and actions will be noticed after-the-fact for seven days and are challengeable by the general membership.

### **E. Elections**

Elections for the Executive Board shall take place in the following manner:

The Executive Officers shall be elected at the first meeting of the calendar year by the Members in Good Standing.

Only those who are Members in Good Standing are eligible to vote or run for office in the election.

Candidates for the Executive Board must be nominated and seconded by a Member in Good Standing. The nominee must consent to the election in person or by proxy. Each candidate for an office may speak for no more than five minutes. The eligible members present will elect a winner by a simple majority vote by secret ballot. Should no candidates receive a majority; a runoff will be held between the two top vote-getters. This process will be repeated in the elections for each office; going in the order of President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Political Director, Communications Director and the Members-at-Large. The President or presiding officer of the election meeting may request a voice vote for an uncontested election. If any Member in Good Standing has an objection to a voice vote, then the process will revert to the original, secret ballot method of voting.

### **F. Terms of Office**

All elected officers' terms will commence immediately after the election meeting, and terminate upon receipt of the next Executive Board election results. Appointed officers' terms will begin immediately after acceptance of the post and will expire after the next Executive Board election.

### **G. Term Limits**

The office of the President shall be term limited to two consecutive terms of one year and the same individual shall not hold the office of the President for longer than two calendar years consecutively. The

term limited individual may be elected to any other Executive Board position if nominated. After a period of one term of office, a term limited individual shall be eligible for election to the office of the President.

### **H. Removal**

Executive Board members may be removed in the following manner:

Cause for Removal: Cause for removal shall be defined as malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of assigned duties; being charged or convicted with a serious or violent crime; or upon other grounds found by members of the Board to constitute good and sufficient cause.

Process for Removal: To begin the process of removal, any Member in Good Standing may charge the officer with the reasons for his/her removal during a meeting of the Executive Board. The officer in question must be offered an opportunity at both meetings to defend themselves, either in person or in written form. If the charge stands, after a period of two weeks, the issue will be put to a vote by a meeting of the Members in Good Standing including a quorum of Executive Board officers. The Members in Good Standing must affirm removal by a two-thirds majority vote.

### **I. Vacancies**

A vacancy shall be declared when a member of the Executive Board dies, resigns, is removed from office, or misses more than 3 consecutive meetings without an approved excuse (as defined by the Board). If there is a vacancy of any other position than the President, the President shall appoint a successor with the majority vote of the remaining officers.

If the vacancy is the President, then the automatic replacement follows the following line of succession: Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Political Director, Communications and Members-at-Large. An individual who is term limited from holding the office of the President shall not regain the office through vacancy and shall be passed over in this line of succession.

## **ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

### **A. The President**

The President ensures that the activities of the chapter correspond with the overall mission of the organization. The President's responsibilities shall be:

1. The Chief Executive of the Wine Country Young Democrats.
2. Act as the official representative to other groups, administration, and the media.
3. Define the agenda of the organization and meetings for their tenure.
4. In consultation with the Executive Board, select a monthly meeting day and time. The President shall also reserve a monthly meeting location.
5. Ensure, along with the Secretary-Treasurer, that the organization is properly registered with all necessary entities.
6. Carry out the mandates, policies, and directives of the Executive Board.

7. Appoint, in consultation with the Executive Board, standing and ad-hoc committees and coordinators of such committees.
8. May appoint, in consultation with the Executive Board, a Webmaster to maintain the website.
9. Preside over all official meetings.
10. Work closely with the Treasurer and Vice President in creating an annual budget.
11. Be responsible for maintaining relations between elected Democrats on the local, state, and national levels.
12. Be the only officer, along with the Secretary-Treasurer and Vice President, who has access to the bank account.

### **B. Vice President**

The Vice President should ensure that all chapter events are enjoyable and lead the coordination of activities and celebrations. The Vice President's responsibilities shall be:

1. Recruit and retain new and existing members.
2. Leading the coordination of Democratic themed social events. (e.g. "Election Night" and "State of the Union" watch parties)
3. Lead the coordination of speakers, forums, panel discussions, and debates.
4. Act as an assistant to the President and Political Director when needed.
5. Serve as advisor to the President regarding Democratic Party functions.
6. Lead the coordination of campaign rallies, petition or letter writing campaigns, lobby days, etc.
7. Lead the coordination of community service activities.

### **C. Secretary- Treasurer**

The Secretary-Treasurer's primary jobs are to aid in internal communications within WCYD and monitor club finances. The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

1. Make all necessary preparation for organizational meetings and record and distribute all official minutes of all meetings in a timely fashion. Minutes must include all votes conducted by the Executive Board of General Membership.
2. Maintain an updated list of e-mail addresses of all interested WCYD Members and interested non-members and be responsible for posting important notices.
3. Make reservations, arrangements, and other preparations for organization outings, gatherings, summits, etc. and gather emergency information (contacts, medical conditions, insurance, etc.) prior to any trips.
4. Communicate with individual members through mailings and e-mail.
5. Ensure that the organization is properly registered with all necessary entities, including the IRS and Franchise Tax Board.
6. Direct all membership dues collection, donations, and the selling of merchandise. This duty includes maintaining an active list of dues-paying members.
7. Create an annual budget with the assistance of the President and Vice President.
8. Maintain complete records of all expenditures and receipts.

9. Coordinate the organization reimbursement procedure.
10. Act as the official liaison to the Federal Elections Commission, the California Fair Political Practices Commission, the relevant County Clerk (concerning campaign finance laws), and with all financial institutions that maintain WCYD funds.
11. Perform such duties as the Executive Board or President may assign or are customarily performed by a Secretary-Treasurer.

#### **D. Political Director**

1. The Political Director will oversee the organization's involvement in local elections and will attend policy meetings deemed important to our purpose. The Political Director's responsibilities shall include:
2. Find opportunities for WCYD involvement in local politics.
3. Create an endorsement process, subject to Executive Board approval, and conduct it for each electoral cycle in compliance with all applicable endorsement rules.
4. Help coordinate speakers, forums, panel discussions, and debates.
5. Regularly attend the local Democratic Central Committee meetings.
6. Be the primary organizer and coordinator of WCYD involvement in national, state, and local campaigns (e.g. phone banks, Get Out The Vote efforts, literature drops, etc.)
7. Ensure that the WCYD is represented in the Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee's Candidate Search & Development Committee.

#### **E. Communications Director**

The Communication Director will oversee all outside communications of WCYD. They may act as the official representative of the club to the media if delegated by the President to do so. The Communications Director's responsibilities include:

1. Manage the Facebook, Twitter, official WCYD website and any other social media platforms that are utilized by the club.
2. Submit an entry each month to the Sonoma County Democratic Party's monthly newsletter. This responsibility may extend to other counties.
3. Draft and distribute press releases as directed by the President.<sup>4</sup>
4. Coordinate events and activities that will generate positive media coverage of WCYD.<sup>5</sup>
5. Maintain a contact list of local journalists and media outlets.<sup>6</sup>
6. Maintain an archive of all mentions of WCYD in news media (photos, clippings, etc.).<sup>7</sup>
7. Communicate with individual members through mailings and e-mail.

#### **F. Members-at-Large**

The Members-at-Large have no assigned duties. Priorities and duties of the Executive Board are delegated to Members-at-Large in the absence of Executive Board members.

### **ARTICLE VI: REGULAR MEETINGS**

#### **A. Frequency of Meetings, Noticing, and Rules**

A schedule of regular meetings that includes at least one general meeting every other calendar month shall be set by the President. All general meetings shall be publicized and noticed to all members via email and social media networks at least seven calendar days before the meeting. A notice, including date, time, location, and tentative agenda for the meeting shall go out to all email addresses compiled in the official membership list and the WCYD Facebook™ page. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure that the WCYD has up to date contact information to properly notice them. Apart from what is stated above, all other reasonable efforts will be made to notice Members in Good Standing of an impending meeting. All meetings shall be conducted at reasonable hours and locations and will be governed broadly by Robert's Rules of Order. Where Robert's Rules are not applicable, discretion will be given to the presiding officer to govern the meeting. Executive Board meetings will be held on an as needed basis, but not less than quarterly; or four times per calendar year and will be noticed in the same manner as general meetings.

### **B. Quorum**

A quorum at a WCYD general meeting shall consist of not less than 25% of the total number of Members in Good Standing, not counting a quorum of the Executive Board. A quorum shall be required at all general meetings before any official action can be taken.

## **ARTICLE VII: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

Any Member in Good Standing may propose an amendment to this constitution. This constitution may only be amended after a one week notice before the proposed vote whereby the change is approved by a two-thirds majority of the Members in Good Standing. This amendment must be proposed in writing and distributed with the meeting notice, or before the notice is distributed.

## **ARTICLE VIII: RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

Any resolution concerning the philosophy of the organization or its platform must be made by a Member in Good Standing with at least one cosigning Member in Good Standing. Resolutions read will be added into the notes at the meeting at which it is proposed and voted upon at the subsequent formal meeting. Approval of any resolution must be by a majority vote of all Members in Good Standing in attendance at the meeting. Only two resolutions may be presented for consideration at each meeting. If more than two resolutions are proposed, the members present will conduct a voice vote in favor or against each proposed resolution. The two resolutions with the highest number of votes will be considered. Any other resolution may be presented again at a future meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX: ALLOCATIONS OF FUNDS**

Any action concerning the allocation of funds over \$50.00 for organizational purposes and activities must be presented by a Member in Good Standing and can be voted upon during the meeting at which it is proposed. This allocation must pass with a simple majority vote of the Executive Board. Allocations under \$50 do not require a vote.

## **ARTICLE X: ENDORSEMENTS**



Wine Country Young Democrats (also referred to as the “club”) will only endorse ballot propositions. No official endorsements of candidates will be solicited or approved.

1. The Political Director will reach out to all ballot propositions as the propositions qualify for the ballot, or at the filing deadline and invite both sides to seek the endorsement of the Wine Country Young Democrats.
2. Early endorsements can be sought at the discretion of the club.
3. If the club chooses not to early endorse in a race, all propositions will be considered together after the filing deadline.
4. The Political Director will take input from the club regarding questions for the club's questionnaire.
5. All proposition questionnaires will be designed by the Political Director, and reviewed by interested club members, prior to the filing deadline or early endorsement.
6. Propositions interested in the Wine Country Young Democrats must answer the questionnaires within 21 days of receipt of the questionnaire unless otherwise specified on the questionnaire. If the questionnaire is late, an endorsement cannot be considered for that particular respondent.
7. The questionnaires will be public documents.
8. Propositions may come to interview with the club, though it will not be required for an endorsement. All races will be provided an opportunity to address the club.
9. If the club chooses to early endorse, other endorsements may still be considered at a later date.
10. An endorsement vote will be held by the general membership of the Wine Country Young Democrats. A proposition that receives a simple majority of the club's vote shall be granted the rights to the use of the club logo and the Wine Country Young Democrats may be listed on public endorsement materials.
11. An endorsement may be rescinded by a super majority (2/3rds) vote of the WCYD general membership.

#### **ARTICLE XI: DISSOLUTION**

Dissolution of the WCYD requires unanimous approval of the Executive Board and approval of three-fourths of the Members in Good Standing at two consecutive general meetings. Upon dissolution, all unspent funds (after expenses/liabilities are satisfied) will be donated to the Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee.