**Mendocino Women’s Political Coalition**

**2024 ELECTION YEAR ENDORSEMENTS**

Ukiah City Council Version | Updated 9/1/2024

Thank you for expressing interest in seeking an endorsement from the Mendocino Women's Political Coalition. MWPC is committed to uniting women in Mendocino County, promoting diversity, fostering economic opportunities, and encouraging women's active political participation. Our goals include advocating for women's issues, supporting sustainable environmental practices, and endorsing qualified candidates who share our values.

MWPC seeks out qualified candidates who share our vision for a more inclusive, equitable, and environmentally conscious community. Endorsed candidates will receive our official support, and in some cases may receive a campaign donation. To request endorsement, please complete this candidate questionnaire.

We appreciate your dedication to public service and look forward to learning more about how your positions on key issues align with MWPC's mission. Thank you for working with us to create positive change and improve our communities.

City of Ukiah candidates who wish to be considered for MWPC endorsement in the March 2024 primary election must return completed questionnaires **by September 30, 2024**.

MWPC nominations for endorsement will be collected after candidate forum events on September 24, 2024.

Email to: [kristana.arp@gmail.com](about:blank) and cc: [mayers4ky@gmail.com](about:blank)

Or mail to: MWPC, BOX 1140, Ukiah, CA 95482

**Response Format**

This questionnaire has been provided in Microsoft Word. Candidates may submit their written responses in any format they choose, as long as the responses are complete and legible.

**Mendocino Women’s Political Coalition** Updated 9/9/2024

**CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

*You may provide longer answers on a separate page and attach any relevant campaign materials.*

Phone:707 349-0475

Name: Heather Criss

Email: heathercriss4ukiah@gmail.com

Election Date: November 5, 2024

Office Sought: Ukiah City Council

I have been working for Mendocino County for over 10 years. In that time, I have learned a lot about government, about process and procedure, budgets, contracts, etc. More importantly, I have been blessed to work on projects that focus on the community. In this work I have learned how through data we can see how access to services impacts different demographics. Making sure that there is equitable access to the things that improve health, wealth, and satisfaction with life are important to me. I have seen decision makers lead with their egos and ignore the people they serve, that doesn’t sit right with me. I pledge to listen to different perspectives and make the decisions that make sense for the greater good of the whole community through an equity lens.

Campaign Name: Heather Criss for Ukiah City Council 2024

Website: heathercriss4ukiah.org

Campaign Email: heathercriss4ukiah@gmail.com

Campaign Committee ID Number\*: n/a

Campaign Treasurer: Zoey Fernandez

\* California campaign committees may obtain a committee ID number by filing Form 410, Statement of Organization, with the California Fair Political Practices Commission. Form 410 must be filed within 10 days of raising $2,000 or more. For more information go to [https://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn.html](about:blank).

**ELEVATOR PITCH:** Why you are the best candidate for this office? Please provide a concise introduction that can be communicated in 30 seconds or less (one short paragraph).

**PART ONE - MWPC Core Principles**

**Reproductive Choice:** In recent years there has been an orchestrated effort to chip away at women’s right to reproductive choice by dividing the issue into sub-issues including parental consent and public funding of family planning and abortion.

Do you unequivocally support a woman’s right to reproductive self-determination? **Yes.**

Do you support public funding of abortion? **Yes, it is healthcare**

Please state any reservations: **No reservations**

**Child Care and Dependent Care:** Do you support increased access to childcare and other dependent care programs funded from all available sources?

Yes.

**Support of Ending Discrimination:** Will you make a commitment to ending discrimination based on race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, marital status, socioeconomic status and disability?

Yes.

Do you support Marriage Equality?

Yes.

**Elimination of Sexual Harassment:** Will you work to ensure that laws and educational programs are in place to eliminate sexual harassment?

Yes.

**Comparable Worth:** Comparable Worth is the effort to bring wages in female-dominated occupations to a level of pay equal to other jobs (often male dominated) that require comparable skills, responsibilities and education. Do you support the concept of Comparable Worth?

Yes.

**PART TWO – Campaign Information**

1. What are your qualifications for this office?

I am a citizen and a registered voter in the City of Ukiah.

I have worked for the County of Mendocino for over 10 years. During that time, I have learned government processes, systems, regulations, contracting, budgeting and much more. My work has been focused on addressing community needs and working with community-based organizations. Building relationships with those partners has been essential in the work to bring services to the community, and more importantly, creating access to those services for our most vulnerable community members.

I graduated from Sonoma State University in 2018, with a BA in Liberal Studies.

B. What campaign experience and training have you had?

I have not ever run for office before. I have sat on different non-profit boards and school site councils.

I took the abbreviated training offered my MWPC this year. I am grateful to Lynda for taking the time.

C. List your major endorsements.

SEIU 1021

North Bay Labor Council

Mari Rodin

Juan Orozco

D. Where do you expect to get your main political, financial and volunteer support?

I have a great group of about 20 volunteers for my campaign; a media creator, social media director, a treasurer, a Spanish language interpreter, several people willing to walk neighbors and phone bank.

I am seeking your endorsement and the Inland Democratic Club endorsement.

I am not seeking any further financial support.

E. Describe your campaign organization (staff, consultants, volunteers.)

Website and Print Media design- Angela Kelley

Social Media Specialist- Jeff Weston

Treasurer- Zoey Fernandez

I have a long list of others who are willing to walk neighborhoods.

I have consulted with sitting City Council members, my County Board of Supervisors representative, former City Council members, and other friends who have run for office. I have not hired a professional political consultant.

F. Describe your campaign strategy (mailers, forums, walking, phone banks, etc.)

My strategy is to walk neighborhoods, tabling public events, and lawn signs.

I am also participating in the MWPC forum.

I have also been meeting with all the City’s department directors to learn what they do and what projects they have going on now and upcoming. I want to know what issues they are seeing have community feedback and concerns.

G. List your opposition:

The other people running: Douglas Crane, Josefina Duenas, Kristina Mize, John Strangio, Jacob Brown

H. What are the demographics and political affiliation of your district?

Population > 16, 400

Approximately: 54% white (non-Hispanic), 33% Latino, 3% Asian, 3% Indigenous, > 1% other.

91.8% are US Citizens

51% female/49% male

16.2% live below poverty line

Median household income $62,934/year (Men’s median income $46k/yr vs. Women’s median income $29k/yr)

Home ownership is 50.7%

Last presidential election: 63.5% voted Democrat vs 34.3% Republican

**PART THREE – Office-Specific Questions**

Please answer the specific questions for each election office and year (see attached) in the box below. List the question number next to each response, and attach additional pages as needed.

I. Office-specific responses: How will you assist women and children?

As a woman and a mother, I can relate to the struggles women face, and my perspective on issues that face women would be different from my male counterparts. In my work with the County, I help address the needs of underserved and marginalized community members, I would use this perspective when approaching my work as a Council Person. I feel it is my duty to take everyone into account, especially those whose voices are silenced or muffled when looking at any ordinances or projects that are put before me.

I can make sure when evaluating classifications and salaries for positions that are historically held by women, that I make sure that the responsibilities of the positions aren’t proportionately overburdened with responsibilities and undercompensated.

I can also support creating a flexible schedule to accommodate working parents with school age children and their drop off and pick up schedules. Not that these tasks are solely a woman’s responsibility, but that in reality the burden of those details often fall to the woman.

As a City Official, I can use my voice as a woman to encourage other women to do the same to promote policies and programs that benefit women and children. I was taught as a young woman to not take up space or give my input. Being an elected official I can create space for women and their voice.

**PART FOUR – Personal Information**

J. Please tell us something about yourself, (occupation, education, family, community involvement, etc.) You may attach your resume if you wish.

I have worked for the County of Mendocino for over 10 years. Before that I operated a licensed contracting business with my ex-husband. I was a certified arborist for 6 years and have a passion for trees and the natural environment. Most of my adult life I have worked more than one job at a time and/or I was attending school. I have had many jobs including working at the library, working with developmentally disabled adults, IHSS, and ran a licensed childcare while my children were young.

I have two grown daughters, being a parent is one of the greatest joys in my life and the hardest job I have ever had.

I participated on the site councils for three different schools that my children attended. I also volunteered in the schools on a regular basis.

I have served on three different non-profits, two were churches/spiritual centers, and I am still currently on the board of Redwood Empire Aikikai.

**PART FIVE – Financial Information *(Confidential)***

K. What is your projected budget? How much have you raised at present? How do you intend to raise the balance? *(This is for our information only, and will not be posted on the MWPC website.)*

I pledged to stick to under $2,000.

I have raised $1,918 so far and am not looking for financial funding at this time.

**SUBMIT**

By submitting this questionnaire, you give us permission to post your responses to Parts One through Four on the MWPC website at [https://mendocinowomen.org/endorsements/](about:blank).

Candidate's Signature: \_\_Heatehr Criss\_\_(electronic signature) Date: September 20, 2024

**Return this completed questionnaire by the deadline to be considered for endorsement.**

Mail to: **MWPC ~** or ~ Email to: **kristana.arp@gmail.com.**

**BOX 1140**

**Ukiah, CA 95482**