

Monroe Sweetland Dinner & Auction 2019

Marion County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC)

Honorary Co-Chair, Ms. Vanessa Nordyke, Esq.



Vanessa Nordyke is a third-generation Salem lawyer and proud union member of AFSCME Local 1085. Vanessa's dedication to community service goes back to her teens, with work on issues like homelessness, teen pregnancy, veterans, domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse, women's rights, and the empowerment of communities of color. Vanessa has served on many local boards, such as City of Salem's Youth Advisory Commission, Social Services Advisory Board, Community Police Review Board, and the Citizen Budget Committee. She helped found the Marion County Veterans Treatment Court and served on the Marion County Sheriffs Citizen Advisory Committee. She co-captained a mock trial team of Latinx students through the Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality.

In 2018, Vanessa made history as the youngest ever-elected President of the Oregon State Bar, a unified bar of about 19,500 lawyers and judges statewide. As President, Vanessa brought wellness to the forefront, by overseeing the creation of mandatory mental health and substance abuse training for all Oregon lawyers, and spearheading OSB's first Wellness Summit. After completing her OSB presidency, Vanessa resumed her local focus by serving as emcee at the Women's March Salem and at Salem Day Out, a benefit for Marion County CourtCare. Vanessa also advocated for a Climate Action Plan for the City of Salem and met with Oregon legislators to advocate for unanimous felony juries and legal services funding for marginalized communities.

Vanessa graduated with honors from Georgetown University School of Foreign Service with a Bachelors of Science in International Political Economy in 2002. After graduating from University of Oregon School of Law in 2008, Vanessa was admitted to the prestigious Honors Attorney Program with the Oregon Department of Justice, where she has made her career as a trial lawyer. She is the recipient of Oregon DOJ's Excellence in Justice Award, the Marion County Bar Association's Government Lawyer of the Year, and the University of Oregon School of Law's Outstanding Young Alumnus Award.

Proficient in Spanish, Vanessa is a proud dogmom and loves karaoke, traveling, and the great outdoors.