



## Lori Speese Gay

Class of 2018

Lori Speese Gay graduated from Las Plumas High School (LPHS) in 1980 and was involved in many school activities. In addition to serving as ASB president as a senior, she was a Top Ten, Honor Roll, and National Honor Society student, and Student Council Representative to the School Board all four years. She also participated in track and field and was a member of Girls Block LP every year. She played JV basketball as a sophomore, was a GAA member for three years, along with being active in band, drill team, song leader, basketball princess, and president of the Christian Club among others. She served her community as a member of the Chapel of Faith and was Keywanette Lieutenant Governor her last two years.

Immediately following graduation, Lori attended UC Davis (UCD) where she earned her BS degree in Development, Resource and Consumer Economics and then earned her MBA degree at Pepperdine University. While at UCD, she also ran numerous 5 and 10K races.

Her professional life began with her working in healthcare marketing with Mexicare and in 1990 realized her dream of working in community development, but had a tough time breaking into the field. She embarked on her career with Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Los Angeles County, worked her way up through the ranks and is currently the President and Chief Executive Officer. NHS is a non-profit lender, developer, and neighborhood revitalization corporation. She has worked in the community development field for over 25 years and focused her efforts on rebuilding impoverished communities and creating mechanisms for community empowerment and ownership.

Los Angeles NHS is a non-profit organization committed to creating lifelong homeowners and stable communities for families of modest means throughout LA County. NHS serves as a catalyst for local residents, business and government representatives to work together to build stronger neighborhoods, improve the quality of life for families of modest means and to revitalize communities into neighborhoods of choice. Through the varying NHS services, the organization has become the nation's largest affordable homeownership provider and is known for being one of the largest financial counseling entities in the country due to its high volume of counselling.

In 2017, Lori founded and created the NHS Center for Sustainable Communities, the nation's first community development "hub" to transform and build sustainable communities. The Center provides an array of services for the cities of Compton, Lynwood, Gardena, South Los Angeles and Long Beach.

In addition to authoring numerous articles on community development and social justice, many honors and awards have come to Lori. She was the NBA Women in Business and Black History Month Honoree and won the National Community Development Leadership Award. In 2016, she was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award, National Neighbor Works Association.

Lori serves her community as a member of the JP Morgan Chase, CIT Bank, and Cathay Bank Advisory Councils. Also, she is a Board Member of The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Los Angeles Branch, the Federal Reserve Consumer Advisory Council, and The California Housing Finance Agency (CalFHAS). She was also chairman of the National Community Stabilization Committee and the California Organized Investment Network.

Since 1990, Lori has led groups of volunteers at Neighborhood Pride Day events where they spruced up a residential block by painting homes, planting gardens, performing minor repairs, removing graffiti and trash, and also volunteers at the Fred Jordan Mission.

In a letter of support, Melody Winter Head, Regional Manager, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, wrote, *“Lori Gay is a charismatic market leader, most eloquent speaker and for many families and business owners in Los Angeles County, the voice of reason. She is a skilled negotiator and fairness mediator. As a prolific real estate developer, housing advocate, and protector of financial well-being for low-income families, she is without comparison. In Lori’s chosen field of Community Development, she is joined by a small group of long-tenured, highly respected market leaders, ones whom we lovingly call “The Immortals.” Her finely honed skills as a fair-minded mediator and a highly principled real estate developer, earn her a place among them.”*

Lori is a licensed minister, the daughter of the late Reverend Lloyd Speese and former OUHSD trustee Lillaine Speese. She makes her home in Los Angeles with her husband Bob and is the mother of five children.