

Tustin attorney new leader of Democratic Foundation

November 2, 2009 | Orange County Register, The: Blogs (Santa Ana, CA)

Author/Byline: BRIAN JOSEPH; Sacramento Correspondent | Section: Total Buzz

356 Words | Readability: Lexile: 1240, grade level(s): 11-12

After 17 years with Wylie Aitken at the helm, the Democratic Foundation of Orange County has a new leader today.

Tustin attorney Dan Jacobson was elected the new chairman of the foundation last night at the organization's annual membership dinner at the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach. More than 170 were on hand for the dinner, which honored the retiring Aitken and the late Dick O'Neil.

Jacobson, 50, may be familiar to Orange County Register readers for his involvement a year ago in blowing the whistle on a little-known quasi-governmental agency that the newspaper exposed for its questionable practices. Jacobson was one of the loudest critics of the California Insurance Guarantee Association, for which he once was a board member. He and another former board member warned state officials about problems at the agency, which along with the Register's coverage, led to a legislative hearing and a Department of Insurance investigation.

Today, in addition to his law practice, Jacobson teaches at the Pacific West College of Law in Orange and writes scholarly articles for law journals. He can barely contain his excitement about his new position.

"I see the role as chair as like the the role of a director of a play," he said in a telephone interview this morning. "It's not my job to make me shine. It's my job to make the players shine. And the players are the Democrats of Orange County."

Among those in attendance at last night's dinner were: State Senate Lou Correa of Santa Ana; Assembly members Jose Solorio of Santa Ana, Hector De La Torre of South Gate, Dave Jones of Sacramento, Ted Lieu of Torrance and Fiona Ma of San Francisco; Orange County Clerk-Recorder Tom Daly; San Juan Capistrano City Council members Mark Nielsen and Laura Freese; Irvine City Council members Larry Agran and Beth Krom; Fullerton City Council members Pam Keller and Sharon Quirk; Orange City Council member Tita Smith; Tustin City Council member Deborah Gavello; and Rancho Santiago Community College District trustees Brian Conley and John Hanna. U.S. Rep. Loretta Sanchez was the MC.

Other Foundation officers elected Sunday evening were:

* Conley, vice chairman,

* Steve Howard, treasurer, and

* Michelle Vo, secretary.

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