I’ve lived in Atascadero for more than 20 years. I own and operate a small electrical contracting business with my husband, and I’m a 30-year Registered Dietitian, currently working at the Atascadero State Hospital. We proudly raised our two children through the public school system. While my kids were young, I served the City of Atascadero on the Planning Commission, City Council and as Mayor. I’m deeply rooted in our community. I’ve volunteered with our local schools, community clubs, and I’ve been a board member of the Atascadero Land Preservation Society. I have a passion for public service and giving back to my community by building public trust, which was my focus while serving on the city council. I’m a grounded optimist always looking for opportunities for our future, but I’m not afraid of tackling the challenges before us as we work towards building a stronger community for everyone.

Which theme in the Chamber’s economic vision, Imagine SLO, do you think deserves the most focus in the next four years and why?

While each of the themes are important parts of the overall vision, I believe the theme of Creating Connection captures the vital importance of fostering a broader community of welcomeness, inclusion, and collaboration. With our thriving business community, nonprofit and education sectors, and engaged community members, I firmly believe that our region has all the tools and ideas we need right here to tackle our challenges. To foster this collaboration, however, we need leaders with the political will to prioritize housing affordability and collaborate with nonprofits, developers, and community partners to move us forward.

What is the biggest opportunity for your district in the next four years?

SLO County’s 5th District must also continue diversify its economy by meaningfully attracting and retaining a talented workforce. We need a strong suite of solutions. We need both market rate housing that’s close to jobs and situated near transportation corridors. Housing affordability is reaching crisis levels. Our children can’t afford to stay, local businesses struggle when their employees can’t find housing, and our unhoused population continues to grow. Local government can support a thriving economy by supplying workforce and next generation housing that’s close to jobs and situated near transportation corridors. We need a strong suite of solutions. We need both market rate housing that’s close to jobs and situated near transportation corridors.

If elected, what will you do to address the issue you identified above as most significant?

Housing affordability is reaching crisis levels. Our children can’t afford to stay, local businesses struggle when their employees can’t find housing, and our unhoused population continues to grow. Local government can support a thriving economy by supplying workforce and next generation housing that’s close to jobs and situated near transportation corridors. We need a strong suite of solutions. We need both market rate housing that’s close to jobs and situated near transportation corridors. Getting it right is challenging - we have to be thoughtful, smart, and proactive in the process. We need leaders with the political will to prioritize housing affordability and collaborate with nonprofits, developers, and community partners to move us forward.

Do you think our business environment is healthy? If not, what would you do to change that?

We have seen SLO County grow in important ways as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. With growth comes new opportunities to continue to serve our community members and businesses smarter and more effectively. We can support the growth and health of businesses by easing the burdens of fees and regulations while supporting incentives making it more accessible for people to start new businesses. It is also essential that we address the holistic issues that assure businesses can grow, by supporting employees and families to afford to live and thrive in this community. As supervisor I would proactively and collaboratively work with non-profit partners, local government agencies, developers and our business community at large to meaningfully address our housing crisis, childcare costs, living wage and more. I see the Hourglass Project as instrumental in moving an innovative approach forward, addressing our jobs and housing while building regionalism.

What is the biggest opportunity for the County as a whole in the next four years?

To start, our county should adopt community choice energy. CCE will not only save county ratepayers approximately $8 million a year on their utility bills, but it will also create opportunities for our county to invest in local renewable energy programs and generation projects. With the looming closure of Diablo Canyon—which of course will impact the entire region – we must begin considering how our economy will adapt. Exploring renewable energy projects, such as wind, solar, or even wave technology, will not only supply clean energy to our community, but will also bolster our local economy. Ultimately, our county cannot operate as an island. We must look to the rest of our region to partner in developing solutions to our challenges and embracing new opportunities. The Hourglass Project is a great example of this important work already underway, and our county government should continue supporting and aiding in these efforts.

For more information, visit slochamber.org