

Dianne Gates-Anderson

## Modern Quilt Guild Region 1 Board Representative Questions

### Why are you uniquely qualified to represent Region 1?

I'm an idea person who is uniquely qualified to represent Region 1 for the following reasons:

- My absolute love of Modern Quilting
- My professional background as an innovator and problem solver developed while working as an Environmental Engineer researcher at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- My history as a community volunteer, including 8 years as an appointed Human Relations Commissioner in Union City, CA
- My history of volunteer service with the Silicon Valley Modern Quilt Guild

### How would you solicit input on issues from Region 1?

I think a key element to enhancing communication between MQG members in Region 1 and MQG board would be to educate membership about the Board's function and the mechanisms that are already in place to elevate issues to the Board. Next, I would evaluate the feasibility of developing new digital tools to solicit input. What if there were a Region 1 Slack channel or WhatsApp to facilitate the communication of issues in within the region. I also think the in person collection of feedback should be considered. What if at QuiltCon in addition to the Board of Directors Ask Me Anything table there was a survey for members to fill out to let the MQG Board of Directors know how the members feel about the way things are going.

### What is your history of service?

I have a long history of volunteerings. The two most relevant one that I will mention here are my volunteer roles as a member of the Silicon Valley Modern Quilt Guild and my two terms as an appointed member of the Human Relations Commission in Union City, CA.

Community volunteer: I was appointed to 2 four-year terms on the Union City, Ca (population 68,000) Human Relations Commission (HRC). In this role, I served as a liaison between the community at large and the City Council while striving to uphold the HRC's mission of ensuring that all members of the community felt safe, respected, and included. During my tenure, which included three 1-year terms as chair, we worked on issues including ensuring all community members felt secure following 9/11, facilitating the City's response to the Patriot Act, and responding to community outcry for a police review board. The conflict resolution and community engagement skills I developed during my tenure as an HRC commissioner align well with the role and responsibilities of a Regional Representative to the MQG board.

Local guild volunteer: I have been a member of the Silicon Valley Modern Quilt Guild (SVMQG) since 2018 and have participated in guild leadership in the following roles: co-Programs Vice President, 2020; Sr Vice President and Lead Programs co-Vice President, 2021. I am currently the Quilt Show coordinator and the leader of the Bag Making small group. As a result, I have significant experience in the

organization and leadership of an MQG chapter and in working with and engaging guild members to fully participate.

### Describe your leadership style?

I have a very “soft power” leadership style. I build relationships and lead by influencing others and building consensus.

I like to encourage and support those that I get to volunteer for the guild. It’s our guild, let’s make it into what we want it to be.

I’m all about inclusion and full participation. In a guild I feel that all members should feel as though they can participate in the running of the guild. Members should also feel as though they are getting something in return for their membership fees.

### What other unique skills and/or perspective do you feel you would bring to the MQG board?

I am an introvert, but by no means am I shy. I like to listen and synthesis information before jumping into a discussion. But once I’m engaged I can clearly establish and support my position. I have a calm demeanor. As an African American MQG member, I have had a few experiences where I would have benefited from knowing more about MQG’s conflict resolution process.

### How would you de-escalate a public situation?

In a public situation I would first work to establish an environment where respectful communication can take place. Once I understood what the issue creating the situation is, my next step would be to work to facilitate a follow-up meeting with the correct people involved to address the issues that have been raised. My personal strength in this situation is the fact that I have a calm demeanor and I am a good listener.

### How would you handle conflict resolution?

Conflict resolution results from effective communication and you have to build relationships in order to have effective communication. So, in order to resolve conflict all parties would have to commit to open, transparent communication where we would try to define the issue at hand and understand each party’s perspective on the issue. Once this has been effectively communicated, all parties can then look for common ground and a path to move forward with. In this process it is very important that all parties feel heard.

### How would you embrace diversity and encourage inclusivity in Region 1?

I would embrace and encourage diversity and inclusion in Region 1 by asking the member guilds to look at their structure (organization and bylaws) and ask themselves if there is anything there that would discourage inclusion and participation. We should look beyond buzz words and work on diversity outside our comfort zone. I would suggest that guilds reach out and find the diversity they want to embrace. Perhaps start where you know there are areas of commonality. Visit, partner up with, engage in exchanges with diverse guilds in your community. Find organizations to support with your philanthropy that embrace and serve the diverse communities you want to engage. Teach what you know. Reach out.

### What do you love about modern quilting?

For starters, for me this is just what quilting is. What others call a modern quilt is what my grandmother's just called a quilt. What I love about quilting, particularly Improv quilting is the calm, focus and joy that I feel while creating without having to worry about whether or not I'm breaking some rule. Quilting feels like freedom for my mind.

### What color do you have the least of in your stash?

The color that I have the least of in my stash is yellow. It's not that I don't like yellow. I love it. It is just that it's hard to find good yellow fabrics in my opinion, especially light yellow. So, the yellows that I do have get used up and I am always left scrounging around for more yellows.

### Which quilting book, blog, or magazine has been influential in your quilting journey and why?

The magazine Curated Quilts will always hold a special place in my heart. After attending my first QuiltCon in 2022, my mini exchange partner suggested that I participate in challenges including the free challenges that Curated Quilts hosts to stretch my skills. After I returned home, I quickly sewed 3 mini quilts to submit to Curated Quilts' Utility themed challenge. I was quite pleased when my mini quilt was not only selected for inclusion in Curated Quilts but was selected as the cover quilt. Being on the cover of Curated Quilts increased my visibility and credibility and has certainly influenced my journey as a modern quilter. I am also, semi-active on Instagram and follow a variety of modern quilters including Carole Lyles Shaw, Jacquie Gering, Maria Shell and many more.

### What do you think are the next three trends in modern quilting?

The continued shrinking of the geographic quilting world as zoom and other digital platforms erase barriers to connecting with quilters around the world.

Accepting and embracing social message quilts as modern and as art.

More patterns being made for modern quilts that moves traditionalism forward.