

## THE FLY

## CONFLICT MAP

The only historically conservative seat on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors could vanish in 2022.

Former San Jose City Councilmember **JOHNNY KHAMIS** and Los Gatos Vice Mayor **ROB RENNIE** are sweating over one proposed redistricting map that cleverly excluded the two announced candidates' homes from District 1, which stretches across South County, from south San Jose, Gilroy and Almaden Valley to Los Gatos and Monte Sereno.

But while waiting to learn if they're even eligible to run for the district they're campaigning to represent — along with Morgan Hill Mayor **RICH CONSTANTINE** and Santa Clara County Office of Education President **CLAUDIA ROSSI** — another concern has emerged before a decision is made by Dec. 7.

Should all five supervisors ethically be allowed to approve a map, choosing from the Advisory Redistricting Commission's "Yellow," "Purple" and "Equal and Equitable 2.0" models?

Supervisor **SUSAN ELLENBERG** endorsed Rossi and Supervisor **CINDY CHAVEZ** hosted a fundraiser for Constantine on Oct. 30, meaning two of the people voting aren't exactly impartial decision makers.

Additionally, Chavez was previously the executive officer of the South Bay Labor Council and director of Working Partnerships — two groups that helped craft the Yellow "Unity" map.

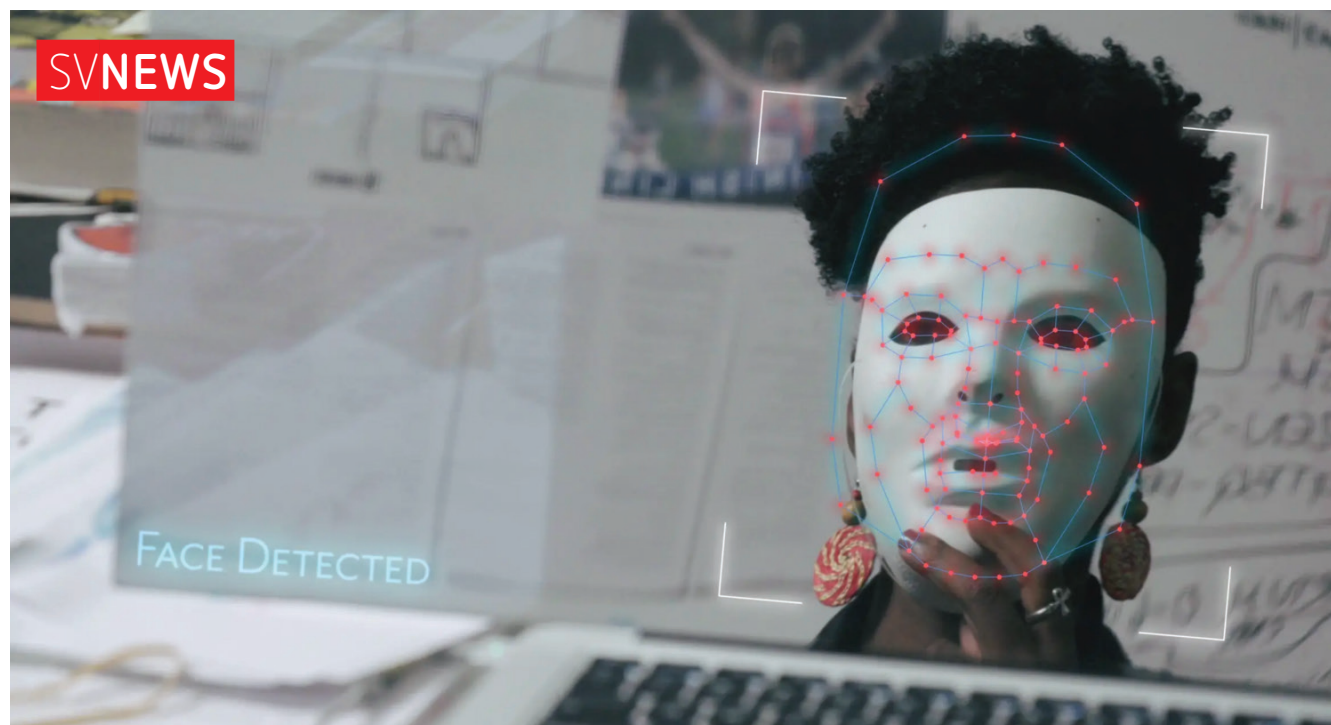
Elected officials regularly abstain from votes that even remotely impact their lives outside of their jobs — whether involving family members, personal investments or non-financial interests.

Average voters rarely get worked up over these wonky skirmishes. Still, it doesn't take a political scientist to see there's at minimum an appearance of conflict in voting on a redistricting that determines the futures of candidates they've endorsed in a race that's already underway — and whose winner could support a supervisor's future legislation or next election.

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**MASK OFF** Researcher Joy Buolamwini tests facial recognition software by donning a white mask in the film *Coded Bias*.

## DATA DANGER

*SJSU racial justice panels dive into the civil rights issues behind artificial intelligence*

BY ETHAN GREGORY DODGE

**“HELLO WORLD,”** says a robotic voice atop ominous music, vibrant waves with a dark backdrop illustrating the fluctuation of the voice's tone. “Can I just say, I am stoked to meet you,” it continues. “Humans are super cool.”

The worse-than-Siri sounding voice is reading tweets from a Microsoft artificial intelligence Twitter bot, Tay, which was launched in March 2016 and shut down a mere 16 hours (and 96,000 tweets) later for sending inflammatory, sexist and racist tweets.

The computerized vocalization of an AI project gone completely wrong opens the documentary *Coded Bias*, which follows academics and activists in their research and fight to stop the problems that Tay exhibited.

But the dangers extend beyond degrading posts to life-changing

issues: facial recognition has historically failed to recognize dark-skinned faces. *Coded Bias* cheekily demonstrates how the problem is fixed by donning a white mask.

In its simplest form, artificial intelligence (AI) is when a decision is left to be made by a computer program as opposed to a human. Its current applications are seemingly endless and creep up in daily interactions that most are not even aware of: viral Facebook posts, credit score calculations and loan approvals, even the pre-screening of job candidates before a human ever reads the resume. If potential for error in these applications wasn't dire enough, AI has also been found responsible for denying Black patients kidney transplants.

Following a screening of the film hosted by the San Jose Human Rights Institute Monday, *Coded Bias* director Shalini Kantayya had some words of encouragement for Silicon Valley residents worried about AI.

“I think we've had this reverence around big tech in our culture, that big tech can solve all of our problems,” Kantayya said during a Q&A. “San Jose really matters when it comes to legislating these companies because some of these companies are in your district ... When you send a note to your representative, it actually makes a difference.”

However, she noted that's still far from the case for some of the damaging algorithms developed in Silicon Valley, specifically calling out Mark Zuckerberg, a resident of Santa Clara County, for the power gleaned by him and his company through AI.

One of the AI applications that concerns Kantayya, predictive policing, is in use by the San Jose Police Department. She explained how the algorithm is deployed to speculate where crimes are likely to be committed, which often results in communities of color being over patrolled in comparison to whiter districts.

A budget of \$160,000 was approved in October 2020 for SJPD to acquire the “Crime and Mobile Predictive Analytics Software Suite to provide patrol staff with an accessible resource to proactively predict and prevent crimes,” according to a city memorandum.

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