

## POLICY WATCH – November 2021

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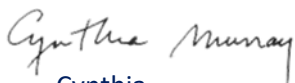
It is hard to believe that 2021 has felt so long and yet as we enter the holidays, it feels like the year flew by. NBLC wishes you and your families a very Happy Thanksgiving! We hope that this time of gratitude lifts your spirits and warms your hearts with recognition that together, we have gotten through the darkest days of the pandemic and have much to look forward to in 2022.

In this issue we welcome our newest board member, MarinHealth, who has been an integral part of the healthcare system in Marin County and beyond. We appreciate all our hospital members for how well they have met the challenge of the pandemic and worked so hard to keep us well.

We also look at the rising concerns about inflation and how we can address the underlying reasons for the increasing costs. And we lament the new research that shows that girls are being turned off to politics at an early age. We need to get more girls interested in their political futures!

NBLC members are doing great things in the North Bay. Read what they are doing and be inspired that there are good works happening every day here!

Best,



Cynthia

### Gratitude Is Good and Needed

In 2020, we looked forward to 2021 as the year we would be past the pandemic. Vaccinations loomed and we clamored to get back to normal. Unfortunately, 2021 did not bring the post-pandemic lift we ached for, and we are weary of all things pandemic-related. But yet many good things have happened this year, and we need to give thanks to the good in our lives. With Thanksgiving this week, we join with others in giving thanks for what's right in our lives and community.

In [Gratitude Is Good: Why It's Important And How To Cultivate It](#) by Tracy Brower (Forbes [Link](#)), Brower says, "While it might be cathartic to make a list of all we've lost, all we're tired of and all we want to leave behind, expressing gratitude is actually a better idea. Gratitude is a powerful positive force. Far from a fluffy or frivolous concept, it has real impact on physical health, emotional wellbeing, motivation, engagement and belonging."

Brower urges us to understand why gratitude is good, and how to bring more gratitude into your day. Most of us are impatient with the pandemic, and frustrated the pandemic is *still* here. Brower says, “The good news is gratitude can reduce impatience. A study published in *Psychological Science* found when people focused on being thankful, they were more able to demonstrate patience. In addition, a study published in the *Review of Communication* found gratitude has a positive impact on our mental and emotional states (optimism is an example) as well as physical health. It also predicts behaviors such as helping others and exercising. All of this means gratitude may be just what we need at the moment—while we’re hanging on—or still traipsing toward the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Brower says, “Gratitude is also the root of happiness. It tends to focus you on what you have and replace a sense of what you might be lacking. According to some philosophers, you can’t feel both grateful and unhappy, so when your mind focuses on all you are thankful for, you’re more likely to feel joy. In addition, when you are more grateful, you tend to focus on the present—appreciating right now—and this can reduce a sense of yearning or anxiety about the future. In fact, what you’re grateful for today may be something you hoped for yesterday. In addition, by focusing on all you have, you perceive those elements of your life as growing larger. Hence, gratitude tends to give you a feeling of fullness—that what you have is enough—and this is associated with contentment.”

“Gratitude is also a “gateway emotion” of sorts,” says Brower. “Philosophers over the years have suggested it’s the greatest virtue because it leads to so many others. For example, appreciation of someone can grow into love, gratitude for what you have can lead to greater satisfaction and loving your work can lead to improved performance.”

And Brower has the data to prove it. She says, “Gratitude is also really good for your relationships and the community of which you’re a part. Specifically, gratitude can foster friendships. A study at the University of New South Wales found when people express appreciation, others perceive that they can form a constructive relationship with them, and tend to invest and contribute to connecting. In addition, according to a study by Portland State University, when people received more expressions of gratitude at work, they reported better sleep, fewer headaches, healthier eating and more satisfaction with their jobs. Expressing gratitude tends to spread positive feelings. You feel good about something and your appreciation makes someone else feel good as well, which contributes to an emotional economy—a give and take of feelings which fosters a positive ethos of the entire group.”

What more reassurance that gratitude is helpful? Brower says, “Expressing gratitude can also create the conditions for awe and flow. These experiences are more likely when you’re lifted out of yourself. In fact, neuroscience research highlighted in *The Happiness Hypothesis* by Jonathan Haidt finds experiences of awe and flow are associated with reduction in activity in the parts of the brain which are vigilant and self-focused. Being thankful can liberate you from a preoccupation with yourself and focus you more on the bigger picture—which tends to predict positive experiences.”

Brower shares strategies to help you become more appreciative:

- *Give continuous attention.* Throughout each day, find small things about which you can be thankful. Perhaps the line at the coffee place was shorter this morning or your coworker made you smile. Avoid taking things for granted. Make everything count and bring conscious attention to elements which make you glad.
- *Begin and end with intention.* Start each day by thinking about all you appreciate and expect from the day, and as you turn out the lights at the end of each day also consider all you’re grateful for.

- *Be expansive.* Ensure you're focusing on being grateful not just for things, but for people and conditions. Perhaps you particularly appreciate the headphones which help make your workout more fun, but also pay attention to the person at the club who made you feel welcome or the fact that you have the capability to walk, lift or stretch.
- *Write it down.* Research at Kent State University found when you write down elements you're grateful for, that simple act can foster happiness and wellbeing. This is probably true because it causes you to pause, focus, reflect and reinforce your positive experiences.
- *Express yourself.* Gratitude is both an individual and a team sport. When you share what you're grateful for in a team environment, it holds even more power. Thank a coworker during a team meeting or provide positive feedback to a colleague during a project session. When gratitude is expressed and shared, it helps both you and the group.

Brower advises, "Gratitude is good, and it has plenty of positive effects. It may also be what can help get us through the last miles of the pandemic marathon. Staying present, being attentive to others and appreciating all we have—just as we wait for all we want—can help us get to the finish line."

Thank you to our Policy Watch readers – we are grateful for your support and attention!

## North Bay Leadership Council Welcomes MarinHealth as New Board Member

North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC) announces that MarinHealth is joining the organization as a board member. MarinHealth is a nonprofit organization consisting of three major entities – a hospital, foundation, and network of expert clinicians – and their combined offering provides North Bay residents with a wide spectrum of high-quality services from health and wellness education to diagnosis to advanced treatment and beyond for injuries and illness of all kinds. MarinHealth Medical Center, located in Greenbrae, has more than 1,600 employees and 327 hospital beds.

Patty Garbarino, Board Chair of NBLC, said "The importance of healthcare has been driven home during the pandemic. We are pleased to have MarinHealth, who plays a fundamental role in the health of the North Bay, joining us in our work to improve public policy and make the North Bay a great place to live and work."

### **MarinHealth Medical Center**

MarinHealth Medical Center is an **award-winning**, full-service, independent, not-for-profit hospital with deep roots in the community . And it has been meeting the healthcare needs of the North Bay since first opening its doors as Marin General Hospital in 1952. The hospital was a founding member of North Bay Leadership Council in 1990.

MarinHealth's philosophy of care is very much in tune with Marin's residents embrace of healthy living. They are dedicated to treating the whole patient — mind, body and spirit, and their patient-centric approach to care focuses on each patient's needs, goals, and satisfaction.

**MarinHealth Medical Center** offers advanced medical expertise, state-of-the-art technology, and treatments in an exceptionally healing environment. Patients are offered the opportunity to complement their medical treatment with **Integrative Wellness** services. In Fall 2020, they opened the state-of-the-art **Oak Pavilion**, a best-practices environment that enables their medical teams to do their best work and improve patient outcomes.

MarinHealth Medical Center has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™ for its Hospital Services, Advanced Inpatient Diabetes Care Program, and its Behavioral Health Services. [The Gold Seal is a symbol of quality that reflects a healthcare organization's commitment to providing safe and quality patient care.](#) In addition, MarinHealth Medical Center is Certified by The Joint Commission as a Primary Stroke Center for demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards.

### **MarinHealth Medical Network**

MarinHealth Medical Network is the medical foundation that represents the expert clinicians and physicians who practice at primary and specialty care MarinHealth | UCSF Health Clinics throughout the North Bay.

### **MarinHealth Foundation**

This essential fundraising organization works tirelessly to inspire philanthropy from donors large and small. The **Foundation's** important work provided for the construction of the **new hospital building**, Oak Pavilion, and supports key hospital service lines.

The NBLC board member representative is Dr. David Klein, Chief Executive Officer of MarinHealth. Dr. Klein said, "MarinHealth serves the North Bay and we are excited to work with other North Bay leaders on public policy issues like housing, education, healthcare, and the environment for the betterment of all. Hospitals have a crucial role to play in the health of the people and economy of this region. We look forward to partnering with NBLC members to strengthen our region's vitality."

Dr. Klein brings an informed perspective to his position as CEO of MarinHealth, having spent the first fourteen years of his career working as a general surgeon. Since leaving the operating room, Dr. Klein has built a long, successful career as a healthcare executive and hospital CEO. His open leadership style fosters communication and collaboration between the hospital staff, the administration, and the community at large.

Prior to his position at MarinHealth, Dr. Klein served as President and CEO of Dignity Health's two San Francisco-based hospitals: Saint Francis Memorial Hospital and St. Mary's Medical Center. At Dignity Health, he oversaw a great deal of positive change, including a turnaround to profitability, multiple Healthgrades Five Star and Excellence Awards, the development of a Transgender Health Program, the establishment 14 Bay-Area based urgent care centers, and the launch of the new Bothin Burn Center, the largest burn unit in Northern California.

Dr. Klein has sat on numerous community boards, from the American Heart Association, March of Dimes, and American Cancer Society to the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. He is the current Chair of the San Francisco Section of the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California and a member of the San Francisco Marin Medical Society. Dr. Klein received his bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California, his medical degree from the University of New Mexico, and his master's degree in Business Administration from the University of California, Irvine.

## **Inflation Now Chief Concern Among Many Small-business Owners**

President Biden and many economists assert that the Build Back Better (BBB) bill will be one of the ways to bring down the rate of inflation. This claim is heartening as we see inflation really taking off this fall and a rising concern if it is transitory or not. One of the key areas where the BBB will help is to reduce the cost of childcare, a major expense to working families.

In [Inflation has surpassed the Covid-19 Delta variant as the biggest concern small-business owners face](#), [\(Link\)](#), Andy Medici, says, “About 48% of small-business owners cited inflation as their top concern in September, up from 38% in August. The growing concern over inflation comes as fears of the Delta variant dropped among business owners, according to a survey of small-business owners from small business network Alignable.”

Medici says, “The survey found 70% of businesses are currently fully open and providing the same level of products and services as they did prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. About 34% of businesses are still reporting significant negative financial impacts from Covid-19, although that number has stabilized after climbing the last two months, according to Alignable.”

“About 40% of business owners say they are earning 50% or less of their pre-Covid monthly revenues, down slightly from 43% in August,” says Medici. “About 30% of businesses are reporting they are at or above their pre-Covid revenue levels.”

Medici says, “Concerns over inflation come as consumer prices increased by about 5.3% in August over the same month last year. The 5.4% year-over-year increases in consumer prices in June was the biggest monthly gain since August 2008, according to an analysis by the Brookings Institution.”

And things have gotten worse since August. In [U.S. consumer prices jump 6.2% in October, the biggest inflation surge in more than 30 years](#), [\(Link\)](#), Jeff Cox says, “Inflation across a broad swath of products that consumers buy every day was even worse than expected in October, hitting its highest point in more than 30 years, the Labor Department on November 10th.”

Cox explained, “The consumer price index, which is a basket of products ranging from gasoline and health care to groceries and rents, rose 6.2% from a year ago, the most since December 1990. That compared with the 5.9% Dow Jones estimate.”

Cox says, “Fuel oil prices soared 12.3% for the month, part of a 59.1% increase over the past year. Energy prices overall rose 4.8% in October and are up 30% for the 12-month period. Used vehicle prices again were a big contributor, rising 2.5% on the month and 26.4% for the year. New vehicle prices were up 1.4% and 9.8%, respectively. Food prices also showed a sizeable bounce, up 0.9% and 5.3% respectively. Within the food category, meat, poultry, fish and eggs collectively rose 1.7% for the month and 11.9% year over year.”

“The price increases meant that workers fell further behind,” says Cox. And small business owners, too. The rising prices have been said to be a contributing factor to the drop in approval of President Biden. But many are saying that the inflation is transitory.

Medici says, “But many companies and government officials are labeling the inflation as “transitory” with assurances that inflation will return to more normal levels in the near future. Small Business Administrator Isabel Guzman reassured small businesses in a talk she gave at the recent annual conference of the Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing. “We know that those inflationary pressures are real, but we have heard from experts including Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen that those are transitory,” Guzman said. Medici says, “Yellen said recently on CNN that she expected that inflation rates will fall to normal levels by the middle or end of 2022.”

Medici points out, “A recent report from Moody's Analytics said global supply-chain issues are plaguing the U.S. economy and easing the bottlenecks at ports and other logistics facilities is pivotal for U.S. manufacturing production, replenishing inventory and easing inflationary pressures.” It is hoped that the newly passed infrastructure bill will help ease supply chain woes and if the Build Back Better bill is passed it will reduce costs on many consumer items like child care.

Medici reports, “About 85% of small-business owners have said that the cost of their supplies and inventory has increased compared to pre-Covid levels, with 29% saying those costs have increased by more than 25%. About 50% of businesses have charged higher prices compared to pre-Covid levels, with 10% raising prices by more than 25%, according to the survey.”

Rising prices coupled with increased wages to retain and attract employees are hitting small businesses hard. The number of high-paying remote jobs is also surging, which is complicating matters for small businesses looking to avoid turnover.

Cox says, “Escalating inflation could cause the Fed to tighten policy more quickly than it has signaled. The central bank has indicated that it will within the next few weeks start reducing the amount of bonds it buys each month, though officials have indicated that interest rate hikes are still off in the future.” Looks like we still need to keep our seat belts on as we continue this bumpy ride of a recovery!

## Girls Turned Off to Politics at an Early Age

In Girls learn early that they don't have much of a place in politics, ([The Conversation Link](#)) The authors say, “In the United States, women express less interest in politics and run for political office at lower rates than men. These gaps threaten democracy because they distort representation: Women make up 26.7% of members of Congress and 31% of state legislators, despite making up 50.8% of the population.”

The authors say, “Imbalances like this threaten core values of representational democracy like fairness, inclusion and equality. They reduce the quality of policies produced by political bodies.”

“Similarly, even though women make up the majority of college students, they run for and win fewer student government positions,” say the authors.

The authors state, “Our research team has spent a lot of time studying these gaps, building on research that shows this lack of representation is associated with the fact that women are less interested in politics and less likely to run for office than men.”

What the authors found is that the inequality goes back to early childhood. The authors say, “The roots of gender inequality in politics reach far back to childhood. Those roots take hold as a result of many factors: how kids learn about both gender roles and politics through classroom activities, how their parents discuss political events, and how the media portrays politics.”

One way the authors discovered the perceptions of girls was through their drawings. This chart depicts how gendered political socialization limits little girls' political ambition and interest.

## Girls more likely to draw leaders as male over time

Researchers asked children in 2017 and 2018 to draw a political leader. About half the youngest girls drew female leaders, but by sixth grade, girls were as likely as boys to draw leaders as men.

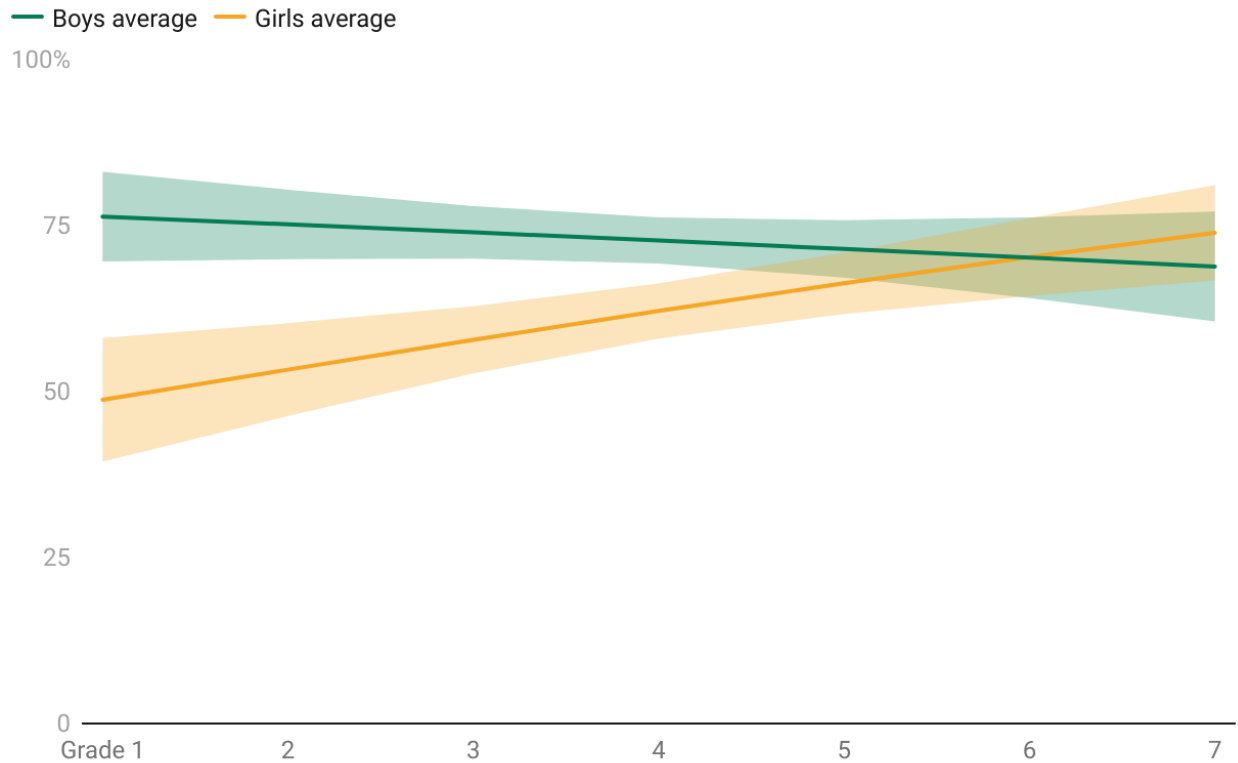


Chart: The Conversation/CC-BY-ND • Source: This One's for the Boys: How Gendered Political Socialization Limits Girls' Political Ambition and Interest

Researchers asked children in 2017 and 2018 to draw a political leader. About half the youngest girls drew female leaders, but by sixth grade, girls were as likely as boys to draw leaders as men.

Two lines crossing showing about half of young girls drew a political leader as a female, but the number shrank in each higher grade.

The solution? "Increasing the number of women who run for and hold elected positions depends on what parents, teachers and the media present as so-called "normal" for different genders," say the authors. We need to show little girls that their future is tied to their becoming political leaders and give them new tools to seize these opportunities.

## NBLC Member Anniversaries

Thank you to the for being NBLC members all these years!

*BioMarin Pharmaceutical ~ 15-year anniversary*  
*Santa Rosa Junior College ~ 15-year anniversary*  
*Providence Sonoma County ~ 12-year anniversary*  
*Interwest Insurance ~ 2-year anniversary*  
*Recology ~ 2-year anniversary*

## Members in the News

### **Sonoma State University Scholarship Program**

The Fall 2022- Spring 2023 University Scholarship Application is now open!

### **Sonoma County Winegrowers' Karissa Kruse to Speak at TEDxSonomaCounty**

Simply defined, emergence is order arising from chaos. As TEDxSonomaCounty reflects on how our community has changed over the past year, and we cultivate the seeds of new beginnings, we bring you TEDxSonomaCounty 2022: Emergence!

### **Parent of Petaluma's Arrow Benefits Buys Sebastopol Insurance Benefits Firm Aita and Associates**

Coinciding with a surging growth plan, the parent company of Arrow Benefits Group bought a Sebastopol insurance benefits firm.

### **Sonoma State University School of Extended and International Education – a Partnership with Santa Rosa Junior College**

Sonoma State University and Santa Rosa Junior College are excited to announce the international pathway program for international students between Sonoma State University and Santa Rosa Junior College!

### **The Buck Institute for Research on Aging and Other Bay Area Labs Explore Causes Behind Age-Related Illnesses and How to Stop Them**

As the Baby Boom generation swells the ranks of the elderly, the Bay Area's scientific community is turning its attention to the causes of age-related illness.

### **Sonoma Raceway Accelerates Growth Plan with Corporate, Group Events**

As more than a hub for NASCAR events, Sonoma Raceway is gearing up for a banner 2022 with a new mission aimed at attracting companies and other users wanting to experience the thrills of its motor sports venue.

### **Becoming Independent Has Broken Ground!**

We have officially broken ground on our Program Headquarters!



### **Redwood Credit Union's International Credit Union Day Celebration Raises More than \$40,000 to Support Child and Youth Development**

Redwood Credit Union (RCU) joined over 56,000 credit unions around the world in celebrating International Credit Union (ICU) Day, a time when credit unions reflect on their history and commitment to their members and communities.

### **Sonoma State University Named One of the 2021 Equity Champions for Excellence in Transfer for Latinx Students by College Opportunity**

We are proud to announce that the following California Community Colleges and California State University campuses will be honored as 2021 Champions of Higher Education and Equity Champions for Excellence in Transfer during our annual Champions of Higher Education for Excellence in Transfer awards ceremony.

### **Sonoma County Tourism Cares Donation Drive for Personal Hygiene Products**

Sonoma County Tourism Cares is pleased to partner with the Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce, Petaluma Visitors Program, Rohnert Park Chamber of Commerce, and Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center on a personal hygiene products donation drive.

### **BPM Named Best CPA Firm for Women in 2021 Accounting MOVE Project**

BPM LLP, one of the 50 largest public accounting and advisory firms in the country, has been recognized as one of the Best CPA Firms for Women in the 2021 Accounting MOVE Project by the Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance (AFWA) and Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc. (WTA).

### **Bank of America's Student Leaders®: Be the generation to serve, inspire and change the world**

Through Student Leaders, Bank of America recognizes high school students who lead and serve in their own communities and beyond.



**Who We Are**

Over thirty years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call 707.283.0028 / E-mail [info@northbayleadership.org](mailto:info@northbayleadership.org)

[www.northbayleadership.org](http://www.northbayleadership.org)