

Swarengin's Fresno fundraiser nets \$250k for state controller campaign

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Ashley Swarengin

Ashley Swarengin's Fresno connection continues.

The mayor of California's fifth-largest city picked up a solid \$250,000 — and likely more — from a fundraiser for her state controller campaign held last week at the home of farmer Stuart Woolf.

Some of the money is already popping up on the Secretary of State's website: \$6,800 each from John and Tammy Shegerian and \$6,800 from Fred Ruiz of Ruiz Food Products.

"We wanted our fundraiser to be a \$250,000 event," said Tim Clark, Swarengin's campaign consultant. "We ended up reaching that."

That money is from what Clark called "hard commitments" — which means the contribution was definite. He said if all the "soft commitments" come through, it could add another \$250,000 to the total.

From the start of her campaign, Swarengin has leaned heavily on Fresno for cash. Now, Clark said, she's branching out.

Swarengin has three Southern California fundraisers — in San Diego, Orange County and Los Angeles — in the week leading up to the June 3 primary election.

There are six candidates seeking to replace current Controller John Chiang, who is termed out of office, but only three are considered viable. Besides Swarengin, they are Assembly Speaker Emeritus John Pérez (he just handed over the gavel this week to San Diego Democrat Toni Atkins) and state Board of Equalization member Betty Yee.

Pérez is, by far, the leading fundraiser — though a Field Poll showed him behind both Swarengin and Yee.

He's picked up a lot of union money, and this week got help from the Service Employees International Union Local 1000, which put \$50,000 into an independent expenditure on his behalf.

