

Biography of Pete Constant
District 1 Councilmember
City of San José

Pete Constant was born on October 22, 1963 in Dearborn, Michigan and raised in Westland, Michigan, where his Greek immigrant father and second-generation Greek mother had settled with their four children (Pete has an older and younger sister and a younger brother).

As a young boy, Pete demonstrated a high aptitude for math and tested as a top student in Eastern Michigan University's Math Experts competition. He also showed an early appreciation for initiative and hard work, doing odd jobs and washing dishes in the restaurant where his father worked, as well as selling Christmas and greeting cards door to door.

Pete's family moved to San José in September 1977 as a result of his father's job transfer and settled into a small house in District 1. As a student at Blackford High, Pete discovered photography. Although he continued to work in the restaurant business, it wasn't long before photography became a passion that he would pursue as a career. Pete began to hone his skills while working as a photographer for the Blackford High newspaper and year book and was soon applying for a darkroom assistant job at a local photography studio, Germain Photography. Though he was told he was too young, he persevered until the owner finally relented and gave him a limited part-time position. He kept his other jobs, but soon found himself staying late at the studio to learn the ins and outs of the photography business.

With his excellent SAT scores (750 math/650 English), Pete was accepted to Santa Clara University School of Engineering as an Electrical Engineering major. Although his parents could not afford the fees at Santa Clara, Pete was able, through a combination of loans, grants/scholarships, and, of course, part-time work, to pay the necessary tuition. Toward the end of his freshman year Pete discovered that he was more passionate about business than he was about electrical engineering and tried to change his major. But the business school at Santa Clara was full and could not grant his request.

Rather than pursue an electrical engineering degree, Pete decided to plunge into photography full time at Germain Photography. While Pete worked on his career in photography, he also attended a variety of courses at West Valley and De Anza Colleges, including just about every imaginable photography class available. In 1985 he became one of the youngest Certified Professional Photographers in the country, while at the same time becoming a Vice President at the company and receiving a 10% share in the business.

In 1986 Pete, with his partners from Germain Photography, and his close friend Bob Collins, opened a state of the art photo lab offering one hour photo and slide services,

as well as services for professional photographers. That same year he also became a Reserve Police Officer for the San José Police Department.

After being a reserve police officer for three years, Pete became a full-time officer with the Department in 1989. His many assignments included uniformed patrol, community policing foot beat officer, traffic investigations unit (detective), street crimes unit, vice unit (under-cover detective), and robbery unit (detective). Most of Pete's assignments were in the SJPD N district, which is within District 1. During his time with the Police force, Pete received numerous letters of commendation, including Day-to-Day Excellence Award, Project Crackdown Officer of the Year, City Manager's Award of Excellence, and Employee Suggestion Award (that saved the department approximately \$65,000 per year). He was also the director for the San José Police Officers Association.

Pete met his wife Julie in May of 1992 and married her two years later at Mission Santa Clara. The couple lived in a condo they had bought together on Winchester Blvd. in 1994, and then purchased a home in District 1 in 1996, just off of San Tomas Expressway and Williams Road, where they live today with their two sets of twins, Amanda and Alexandra, Pete Jr. and Samantha, and Sydney their newest family member.

After marrying Julie, Pete continued to serve as a San José Police Officer and opened a photography studio and digital imaging lab, Image Concepts, Inc. dba Sharper Image Photography on Winchester Blvd. The studio grew to be one of the largest and best known studios in the area. He also became a partner in a real estate investment company, Collins & Constant Investments, LLC, which owned commercial property, also on Winchester Blvd.

Pete was severely injured in the line of duty during an undercover drug enforcement arrest in 1997. When the multiple injuries prevented him from returning to the streets as a police officer, he received a disability retirement in 2000. In recognition of these grievous injuries sustained in the performance of his duties as a law enforcement officer, Pete was awarded the Legion of Honor Award by the American Police Hall of Fame.

After his retirement from the Police Department, Pete continued his work in the photography business. He and Julie began another photography business called Constant Image Photography, which specializes in corporate, editorial, commercial, political, and event photography and the two continue to operate this business today. Also during his recovery, in 2002, Pete began to perform part-time contract photography for San José Magazine, eventually becoming Photo Editor until 2004.

That same year, Pete became co-publisher of the former *Santa Clara Valley Life Magazine*, which he re-titled Silicon Valley Magazine. While there he created an entirely new concept for the glossy periodical that included thoughtful and entertaining editorial content infused with a high level of design integration. Silicon Valley Magazine was

launched in October 2004 to rave reviews and in 2005 Pete became publisher and co-owner. With three issues published, Silicon Valley Magazine is preparing for a fourth issue once funding for future growth of the magazine is secured.

After his retirement, Pete found new ways to serve the public. In District 1, he helped found the Lynhaven Neighborhood Association and was later elected as the association president. Pete has also been appointed by the Mayor and City Council to two positions, as the city's representative on the Valley Transit Authority's Citizen Advisory Committee and as a commissioner on the City of San José Appeals Hearing Board, where he served as the chair. Pete has also been active in several non-profit organizations, serving on the board of directors for Young Audiences of Northern California (arts education for underprivileged children), Silicon Valley Crime Stoppers, Rotary Club of San José North, and The Salvation Army of Santa Clara County.

Although Pete's decision to not pursue his studies at Santa Clara University has never hindered his ambitions or accomplishments, he felt that to fill a need in his life, he wanted to complete his college education, this time around as the business major he had wanted to be following his freshman year at SCU. In January of 2004 he enrolled in St. Mary's College and resumed work on a bachelor's degree. His discipline and work ethic paid off once again and, despite the extreme challenges of trying to be a full-time student along with the demands of being husband, father, businessman, and community activist, Pete received his degree (Bachelor of Arts in Management) eighteen months later with a 3.7 GPA. Never one to let grass grow under his feet, Pete is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Leadership from St. Mary's College.