By ERIK CHALHOUB
TOWN & COUNTRY

WATSONVILLE — When Georgia Acosta looks at the state’s agricultural workforce, she sees an industry that is “very regulat ed,” and, as a result, is being starved.

“We constantly say that we feel the world, but we don’t support that industry that’s doing that,” she said. “We’re going to cease to be able to do that at some point,” she said.

The Watsonville resident, who is running for the state’s Assembly District 35 seat, said the district’s ag industry has been “underrepresented” during the past 40 years.

Strict water regulations have forced farmers to grow less across a year-on-year basis, Acosta said, pointing to the Soquel Canyon, but noting that case is “not isolated.”

In addition, the ILA program, which gives foreign agricultural workers a temporary work visa for seasonal agricultural work in the United States, is “not realistic,” Acosta said, adding that employers are having their “hands tied” behind their back.

Acosta said her roots in agriculture date back to her great-grandparents, and she grew up on her grandparents’ ranch in Mexican Hill. She owns Watsonville-based ISD Ag Solutions, which provides agricultural companies layout and design applications.

She also has ties to education, having served as board member and chairwoman for Pacific Coast Charter School, where she developed a scholarship program for the school’s students. She currently sits on the Cabrillo College Bond Oversight Committee.

During her time with Pacific Coast Charter School, Acosta said she saw the benefits that Watsonville offers.

“Two become such an strong proponents of charter schools,” she said. “If we run that well to more of these communities, I believe that will be beneficial.”

Acosta said the district should consider creating an ag-based charter school, giving graduating students a leg up in the industry that dominates the 35th District.

“If we have something that’s going to do the same thing, or does it do the very thing that interests us?” she said.

Watsonville resident Georgia Acosta is running for State Assembly, District 35.
**TEAM**

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Response Assessment and Engagement. They meet with people and establish rapport. The liaison goes to places like downtown, where people are often sitting outside. They also work with the police department and other organizations to help people who are on the streets. They try to find out if they need any services. They know who is missing from their families. They help families and individuals find the resources they need.

**ASSOCIATION**

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The Usual Suspects continues to thrive. The group meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Watsonville Branch Library, starting at 6:30 p.m. The group is open to anyone who wants to contribute to the community. The group focuses on community service and volunteer work. They have helped with a variety of projects, including environmental cleanup, chili cookoffs, and more. The group is always looking for new members to join and help.

**ALUMNI**

Watsonville High Alumni Golf Tournament

Spring Hills Golf Course

Friday, June 17, 2016

Lunch & Registration 12:00 pm

Shigoin Start 1:00 pm

Entry Fee $150.00

All proceeds benefit boys and girls athletic programs at Watsonville High School

Contact Tournament Director

Brad Hubbard

831-787-6390 ext. 6463

brad_hubbard@pvusd.net

**COMMITTEE**

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

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PV Toastmasters

The Pajaro Valley Toastmasters Club meets Mondays from 12:15 p.m. at Valley Bingo, 551 Freedom Blvd. Details: 722-2842.

| Hamburger Night

The American Legion Post 123 invites all to its Hamburger Night Tuesday, July 5, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Masonic Hall, 150 Blackburn.

| Watsonville Bonsai Club

The Watsonville Bonsai Club meets the first and third Mondays of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Kizuka Hall, 150 Blackburn. Cost: $6. Proceeds benefit the boy's community activities.

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