

About Tom

Tom Steyer stepped down as head of his investment firm in 2012 to dedicate all his time to philanthropy and political action focused on making America more just by putting the people, not the corporations, in charge of our democracy.



Across the country and in his home state of California, Tom has repeatedly shown that going directly to the people and raising their voices is the way to beat entrenched corporate interests and win fights for fairness. He helped beat Big Oil to protect California's landmark clean-air laws and he followed that up with wins for clean energy in Michigan and Nevada. He helped close a massive corporate tax loophole to generate \$1.7 billion for public schools. He helped beat big tobacco companies and forced them to pay their share of healthcare costs for the harm their products have caused.

In 2013, he founded NextGen America, a nonprofit group that combats climate change, promotes social justice, and increases participation in our democracy through voter registration and grassroots organizing. In 2017, Tom became the first major Democrat to rally millions of Americans with a public call to impeach Donald Trump by launching Need to Impeach.

In the 2018 midterms, Tom led the nation's largest voter-turnout effort through Need to Impeach's mobilization of petition-signers and NextGen's outreach to youth, people of color, workers, and other underrepresented groups. All these voters contributed to Democratic wins that took back the House, won Senate seats and governorships, and captured state legislatures and local races.

Tom announced his candidacy for president July 9, 2019 to address the top crisis facing our nation and planet: climate change. He campaigned on the promise to make the climate crisis his number one priority and to break the corporate stranglehold on our democracy, which prevents any progress on achieving environmental, economic, and racial justice. Tom kept his promise throughout his campaign, consistently bringing climate and racial disparities front and center during debates when no other candidate would.

When Tom suspended his campaign in February 2020, he vowed to continue working with communities most impacted by environmental and racial justice and to campaign for the election of progressive leaders, at all levels of government.

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Tom, a self-made billionaire, and Kathryn Taylor, were among the first to sign the Giving Pledge – a commitment to give away the bulk of their personal fortune during their lifetimes. They have devoted hours of their time and donated tens of millions of dollars to charitable projects that advance education, renewable energy, clean air and water, healthy food, sustainable agriculture, self-sustaining communities, and more.

Their charitable foundation powered the birth of “California Food for California Kids,” a program that now serves more than 300 million healthy meals yearly to the state’s school kids using natural food from California farms.

They also started Beneficial State Bank in 2007 which serves low-income individuals, people of color, small businesses, and non-profit community projects shut out by regular banks. Since then, the bank has grown to \$1 billion in assets. Tom and Kat have given more than \$120 million to building the bank, which reinvests any profits back into the communities it serves. Their support of the bank is ongoing.

Together, Tom and Kat also founded the TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation, which promotes regenerative ranching practices on an 1,800-acre working cattle ranch.

In 2014, Tom founded NextGen Policy, a California based non-profit dedicated to supporting and advocating for progressive state policies with a focus on environmental, social, racial, and economic justice.

Recently, they have been working to pass progressive legislation to address racial inequities. In 2021, Tom and Kat are supporting SB 364, “School Meals for All,” which provides fresh food to California schools for all kids who qualify for free or reduced meals, to pass the California Legislature.

Tom grew up in New York City, the youngest of three brothers. His father, Roy, interrupted his law career to join the Navy and serve on the legal team that prosecuted Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg. His mother, Marnie, was a journalist and teacher who taught in the city schools and volunteered to tutor prisoners in a large city jail. Tom's parents taught him that action always speaks louder than words.

Tom Graduated from Yale and earned his MBA at Stanford. Working on Wall St. was not for him, so he moved to San Francisco in 1986 and started his own small investment firm. Backed by two seasoned investors, Tom started managing the new fund, which began with \$9 million in investments. Over the years, Tom achieved double-digit returns for his investors – mostly universities, foundations, and individuals. His success built the firm to \$36 billion in investments at the fund's peak.

Tom is 62. He and Kat have four grown children. San Francisco has been his home since 1986.