

Monique Kelly-Vallance was born and raised in Modesto, California, and is a second-generation Portuguese American. Following in her mother's footsteps, Monique was heavily involved in the Portuguese community as a youth: she played in two Portuguese marching bands, served as side maid and queen, and danced in three Portuguese folklore groups. She has always been passionate about the Portuguese culture, and she has always considered it to be a part of who she is.

Monique decided to pursue history in college, and she eventually earned a Ph.D. from UC Santa Barbara in Portuguese history. She wrote her dissertation on Queen D. Luisa de Gusmão and published that work through Circulo de Leitores (Lisbon) in 2006. She taught at University of the Pacific, Modesto Junior College, Sonoma State and UC Santa Barbara before making the difficult decision to leave academia and made the radical career change to accounting, joining the family firm.

Today, Monique continues to be heavily involved in the Portuguese community. She is on the board of directors of the Modesto Portuguese Pentecost Association, Casa dos Açores in Hilmar, and the Portuguese Education Foundation of Central California. She is also currently the Supreme President of the Portuguese Fraternal Society of America (2019-2021), but that does not stop her from continuing to dance, as she is a member of the Grupo Etnográfico Pérolas do Atlântico of Hilmar. Her career also involves the Portuguese community. Because a large percentage of her clientele is Portuguese, her clients also turn to her for help with matters such as social security and Medicare. Her office also assists with Portuguese citizenship and procurações (Portuguese powers of attorney). In her spare time, she enjoys writing a Portuguese history blog and has a regular Portuguese history segment on the Portuguese-American hour radio program put forth by PBBI-Fresno State on Multicultural radio in Fresno.