

1. Please describe how you have been personally involved in, supported, or been affected by the nonprofit sector.

Nonprofits are catalysts for change. They fill in the gaps where government and implementation of vital public services converge. My life has been enriched by a number of nonprofit endeavors over the years and especially her in Tallahassee. I am an active member of the League of Women Voters. Through the League, I led the Get Out the Vote effort for the 2018 midterm election on the FSU campus where over 400 students came for pizza and information on their voter registration status and where to vote. This was part of a college challenge with FAMU and TCC; FSU raised its voter turnout the most in the subsequent election over the last midterm election thus winning the challenge. It was an empowering afternoon of motivating a generation of students to use their voice. A friend recently told me she was working the polls at the Tucker Civic Center during early voting in 2018, noting that it had been poorly attended for days until we had our event and she had to call the Supervisor of Elections for reinforcements to handle the sudden line of students who were ready to vote.

Also through the League, I had the honor of serving as their Chair of the Local Government Committee for 2019. In that role, I attended nearly every County Commission, City Commission, and Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency meeting to stay abreast of the issues that affected topics of interest to the League. I briefed the Committee monthly and offered my voice to empower their message in front of the electeds. I taught others in the League the process and gave them support to use their own voice. Of all the issues I engaged on through the year, none were as important to me as the task of monitoring and participating in the local government comprehensive planning process for the Land Use and Mobility Element updates throughout the year. While I enjoyed getting “into the weeds” with the planning staff, the value I added was more in my ability to distill it down to the key issues in my discussions with the County and City Commissioners. Like nonprofits everywhere, the League not only leans on those in their membership who have expertise in various matters but also nurtures and uplift those who want to put that talent to work for the betterment of the group. I was honored to do my part for this historic nonprofit organization.

As an active member of the Rotary club, I value their mission and commitment to bettering our community and the lives of our citizens. My Sunrise Rotary Chapter often teams with nonprofits filling areas of need in the community to do service projects. Two specific nonprofits resonate strongly with me. With Ability1st, an organization providing services to people living with disabilities, I have participated in three wheelchair ramp builds around Leon County at homes of fellow citizens who needed that extra assistance. This is a chore that touches deep for me because my sister has been restricted to a wheelchair for the

past 21 years due to an automobile accident that left her with a brain injury. With Sleep In Heavenly Peace, I built bunk beds with other volunteers for children impacted by Hurricane Michael. The beds were bound for the Panhandle so children sleeping on pallets seven months after the storm could gain a sliver of normalcy in a tumultuous time in their lives. It means a lot to me to be able to construct something in one day that improves someone's quality of life through teamwork, sweat, and sometimes a little blood.

Rotary thrives on philanthropic giving of time and of money; giving that is often led by local champions. For my Club, I am the local Chair of our weekly CART Fund (Coins for Alzheimer's Research Trust) where our collective pocket change funds scientists across the states doing research on this disease. This 501(c)3 program goes to show that giving isn't always about getting the large donations. I enjoy participating in events as a way to bring attention to areas of need. In 2019, I won an award for raising the most funds in the WalkAbout Brain Injury, a local event at Lake Ella aimed at raising awareness about brain injury and involving survivors and their families. It was a bonding experience to have my husband, children, mother and sister all join in on this event. As awareness grows of the pervasiveness of brain injury thanks to impacts related to war, sports, and car accidents, I thank the nonprofits who focus their efforts on outreach. There are more needs in the community than there are volunteers, nonprofits, and money but if each of us does a little, a lot of benefit is felt by the giver and the getter.

My life has been positively affected by nonprofit organizations in immeasurable ways. The many years I spent in the Girls Scouts, which then continued with my daughter's years in scouting here in Tallahassee, helped form the foundation for the woman I am today. The support of a nonprofit hospice through the passing of my grandparents in the same year during my last pregnancy helped my extended family cope with the sorrows of death so that we could honor the circle of life. My active leadership role over the years in the local chapter of the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals has enhanced my professional development as a businesswomen as well as enhancing associated professions through events such as lunch and learns, socials, and the statewide conference of which I co-chaired when it came to Tallahassee. While the list of nonprofits in my life is long and varied across a broad array of service areas, the above discussion highlights the more significant ones.

2. There are over 2,400 nonprofit organizations registered in Tallahassee and they have an economic impact of \$3.1 Billion in Revenue. How do you plan to ensure that the nonprofit sector has a voice in the decisions being made in the commission?

If elected as your county commissioner, I will commit to hearing all perspectives on Leon County's most pressing issues. I will refer to the expertise of those with vast knowledge and history of various community plans while evaluating how to best use the resources of our county. Collaboration with nonprofits is essential in helping to solve complex and multifaceted problems facing Leon County. I will advocate for nonprofit representation on task forces and in Citizen Advisory Boards that play a role in advising County staff and the Commission.

3. How would you use the nonprofit sector to advance the vitality of our community?

Our local nonprofits strengthen the quality of our lives across a broad spectrum of service areas including health, housing, education, workforce training, entrepreneurial support, raising up disadvantaged groups, providing support for families, and access to the arts and culture. Governmental collaboration with nonprofits paves the way for a brighter future for all Leon. I will support well-functioning programs that are already in place to support nonprofits while at the same time promoting innovative programs that help to set Leon County apart and create the community we deserve.

Nonprofits play a critical role in public health and wellness, a traditionally underfunded area of government services. The work of nonprofits such as Second Harvest of the Big Bend help in nourishing the food deserts throughout our County. Newer organizations such as Red Hills Farm Alliance can help in this effort by connecting the local producers of healthy, fresh food with areas in greatest need. There is a long list of nonprofits working in this arena. More cross-sector collaboration is needed in the area of food security and I intend to tackle this head on by creating a Food Policy Council that will bring together the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to attack the war on hunger with a coordinated approach to feeding those in need throughout all Leon. The Council would focus on connecting the dots from seed to table in Leon County with solid footing in the data on where the gaps are between needs and supply. Leon County is one of the most food insecure counties in Florida and we can do better in addressing this through stronger collaboration and communication.

4. What suggestions do you have to improve the financial deficit that exists among nonprofits to serve the needs of our community?

Aside from philanthropic giving, our local nonprofits receive funding from Leon County, City of Tallahassee, United Way, and others. The County distributes funds to nonprofits in a number of ways such as through the Community Health Service Partnership (CHSP) Program. This Program has been in transition in recent years due to the United Way leaving the longstanding three-way partnership. A recent needs assessment review led to the funding of a Promise Zone to tackle poverty in a more focused manner by driving additional funding into a defined geographic area of concentrated poverty. As your Commissioner, I would support the CHSP Program and work to enhance its effectiveness in the areas of greatest need by pressing for additional funding and a deeper dive into the allocation strategies.

Additionally, the Children's Services Fund is a special taxing district that will be on the ballot in November and will raise funds through a new tax assessment in Leon County. Those funds would then be distributed among nonprofits across three priority areas: improving school readiness by improving the quality of daycare services, nurturing good mental health, and offering additional stability to families in need by improving food security and access to job training. I am supportive of the priority areas but caution that, should the voters pass this ballot initiative, transparent and equitable qualification and selection processes would need to be developed to prevent corruption and abuse of the system.

5. 1 in 10 jobs in Tallahassee are in the nonprofit sector. If our community is concerned about retaining and attracting talent, how would you encourage government leaders to assist in growing the workforce in the social sector?

Investing in the retention and growth of Leon County's workforce is central to growing our communities economy and resilience. A key aspect to increasing the social sector workforce in Tallahassee is retaining the talent produced at our local schools. If we can connect these students with local leaders within the social sector, we can better retain a young, local workforce while improving their employment opportunities. Programs aimed at recruiting past alumni of FSU, FAMU, TCC and Lively also serve as a source of social sector employees, especially those in the active retired phase of their life. However, whether it be the young workforce or the older workforce, both groups want a more walkable, connected community. We must invest in smart community growth to create outlets to keep our workforce engaged in the community in more than just their philanthropic careers. Our workforce wants it all - work, live, play - so government investment in our community needs to be as diverse as our workers' needs.