

INIE Candidate Questionnaire - Spring 2020

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence (INIE) is a non-profit management support organization. The mission of INIE is to strengthen the capacity and impact of the nonprofit sector through education, collaboration and advocacy. We are comprised of over 180 members with a reach of over 2,400 registered nonprofit organizations.

Collaboration with all sectors is vital to having a vibrant community and a thriving nonprofit ecosystem that is prepared to serve the needs of all residents in the Tallahassee and surrounding area.

Please complete and submit this questionnaire to provide YOUR VOICE regarding the nonprofit sector. We ask that this questionnaire be SUBMITTED by FEBRUARY 21st. We will release candidates' responses, including "no response", to our members and the public on Friday, February 28th.

We commend you for your desire to serve our community and look forward to hearing YOUR VOICE. Thank you.

Email address *

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Candidate Name *

Brian Welch

Name of desired commission seat and/or position.

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Leon County Commission, District 4

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

Most of my involvement has been associated with my experience as a classroom teacher over the past 13 years.

I created an event at Chiles High School that ran for 5 years which collected approximately 10k pounds of non-perishable foods for the Second Harvest Food Bank.

I participated in, and was the top fundraiser, for the March of Dimes annual Men in Labor program in 2014.

I started the Chiles High School Foundation in 2013 as a 501c3, and have served as Vice Chair of it's board since inception. We have raised over 15k in that time to privately support the students, staff and mission of the school.

I sit on the board of the Chiles Wolf Dash 5k, which annually supports the March of Dimes and Chiles High School Foundation.

I currently sit on the board of the Foundation for Leon County Schools.

I currently sit on the Centerville Conservation Community HOA board where we annually host the Habitat for Humanity and Community Leadership Academy 5k's.

My family and I volunteer in the community and financially support programs like Goodwill, 211 Big Bend, The Oasis Center for Girls, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, and others as much as we can.

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? *

One of my biggest issues is to enhance the amount of community engagement and advocacy for folks living in NE Tallahassee.

I would also work to enhance that level of engagement with the non-profit sector, to the extent that it is currently missing.

I think it is the job of a County Commissioner to adequately engage with those they are serving. Obviously, the non-profit community provides services to ALL sectors of the county, including those that are perceived as more affluent. However, this perception of affluence can create a mirage to the reality that people from all over the county can benefit from the services provided.

As the Commissioner from District 4, I would work with the non-profit community to identify segments of my district that are under-served and/or under-informed about the resources available to them.

I plan to create a Council of Northeast Neighborhoods Engaged in Conversation and Transparency (CONNECT) to ensure that residents of the NE are in tune with the larger issues facing our county and to the resources available to them, both from the government and the non-profit sectors.

I will make it a priority to routinely meet with and serve alongside, the leaders of the non-profit community to ensure that our residents are being given the best opportunities for support and success in Leon County.

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

Our community's vitality is related to our ability to provide a safe, diverse, supportive and welcoming environment to not just our current residents but also to prospective ones. This includes a thriving art, music and cultural scene. A dynamic business community, A robust social services network, world class educational opportunities, transportation infrastructure, etc.

Obviously, the Children's Services Council is a step in the right direction to addressing our growing concerns with poverty, crime and economic and educational segregation. I have supported the CSC from the beginning and will continue to do so.

Partnerships between the various layers of government, the business community (Chamber) and the non-profit sector are crucial to this vitality. I would work across the community to forge and strengthen these partnerships by being intentionally engaged in the conversations so as to identify ways to find solutions to our complicated problems.

We simply cannot retreat to our corners and abdicate our responsibility as leaders in the community to proactively serve the best interests of our residents. We **MUST** work to break down the idea that there are two Tallahasseees, (one for the haves and one for the have nots). Engagement is key. Absence is unacceptable.

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

I feel like there has been a general lack of engagement within our community in terms of charitable donations and volunteerism.

Again, I think the insular nature of our community contributes to this apathy towards supporting programs, that fix problems, that we cannot see.

We must do a better job as public servants in identifying and facilitating the utilization and support of these programs. As a County Commissioner, I will work to inform my constituents about the programs available to them via multiple channels and then encourage their financial and moral support. I don't think I have ever been asked, educated or informed by my public officials to help support a mission of the community.

I also think that our taxing authorities can do more to assist the funding of our very important non-profits. We must have fiscal responsibility. The CSC is an excellent model that should address very important problems while also freeing up some funding to be redirected at underfunded or under-appreciated programming.

As a community we have to work together to identify ways to leverage more funding for local issues. Whether that be through federal or state level grants or through more sophisticated fund-raising campaigns.

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We have to foster a greater sense of community and less isolationism.

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? *

Partnerships with our business community, Colleges and the local school system would be a great place to start.

As a High School teacher, I don't know if I have ever heard someone encourage a student to pursue a career in social services or non-profits.

We should approach that recruitment as vigorously as we do career and technical education. We should include non-profit careers in our Leon Works expos. We should invest in programs that employ local talent. We should actively and aggressively educate our residents and students about the value of community service.

The first way to fix a problem, is of course, to recognize that you have one.

I think it is obvious that someone from our community may be more invested in serving it as a career path but many people come here for one reason or another and fall in love with Tallahassee.

Identifying those people and then encouraging them to give that love back to community is a great way to advance employment in the sector.

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