

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 *

ddr@deedee.org

Candidate Name *

DeeDee Rasmussen

Name of desired commission seat and/or position.

*

(LCS) Leon County School Board, District 4

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

I am a Sustaining Member, Junior League of Tallahassee; a former Board Member of Big Bend Hospice; I have been a church, community and school volunteer; and, for the past two decades (2000-2019) I served as the Executive Director of a state-wide organization where the mission was largely devoted to collegiate community service, including an AmeriCorps VISTA program (VISTA = Volunteers in Service to America). 4 years ago as School Board Chair, I was instrumental in initiating two significant initiatives: 1) The Title One Advisory Council and 2) our first "Community School" model in Leon County -- today this is a strong 25-year partnership between LCS, FSU Medical School, Childrens' Home Society, FAMU, TCC, City and County - serving students and families/neighbors of Sabal Palm Elementary School.

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? *

The Leon County School Board has a number of Advisory Committees, based on areas of expertise or need. The aforementioned Title One Advisory Council is an example of one that I initiated so that the unique needs of our most impoverished and vulnerable youth could be better served through transparency and accountability in the expenditure of tax dollars. We also have myriad partnerships with non-profits such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, 2nd Harvest Food Bank, Disc Village, Southern Shakespeare Co etc. Many of these organizations serve our students and their families -- but ALSO, many of our students are actively serving in the community and raising funds for important causes like TMH, the Cancer Society, the Heart Association and more. I am pleased to say that a part of our LCS strategic plan that I initiated is to educate our students, not just for college and career, but also for life as an engaged citizen through community service and/or philanthropy.

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

That is precisely how I see the nonprofit sector already; in a "government town" like ours with limited industry, it is ALREADY the nonprofit sector that advances our vitality; the "how" would be through fundraising and strategic partnerships such as those mentioned above.

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

In my experience, the best strategy is to diversify funding streams so that the organization is not relying on just one or two revenue sources and as vulnerable to losing income if one source falls short. In other words, a combination of federal money, state/local government money, plus fundraising events, individual donors and corporate sponsors, for example.

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? *

Many institutions of higher education, including FSU, are now offering certificate and/or degree programs in nonprofit management and social entrepreneurship. In addition, both colleges and K-12 schools can encourage service-learning courses as a part of the curriculum, thereby exposing students to career opportunities in the social sector.

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