

THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



Meet Lee County's New State Committee Members January 1, 2025

In the past Florida's State Democratic Committee has operated with a "weighted vote" system. Under that system, our county had a Committeeman and a Committeewoman who wielded 9 votes. Now, the State Committee has moved to a "1-person, 1-vote" system enabling more people to be involved in decision-making. The people who will represent Lee County Democrats at the state level are a diverse group—some have long histories with Florida and the Democratic Party. Others are relative newcomers. All are committed to turning Florida blue. Here they are:



Cory Andrews is the President of Young Democrats of Lee County. As an FGCU student, not only has he worked to organize Young Dems in Lee County, but he has also worked as a precinct leader for precinct 202 and actively worked for Kari Lerner's 2024 campaign against Byron Donalds. As a state committeeman, he is looking forward to representing the needs of Lee County at the state level.



Steven Blumrosen began his career in Democratic politics at the age of two, handing out literature for Adlai Stevenson; more recently, he has served as President of a Democratic Club and has been a member of the Steering Committee of the LGBTQUIA+ Caucus, as well as a Precinct Committeeman. He has observed statewide FDP meetings and is looking forward to working with the County's other State Committee people to turn a job for two Democrats into a bigger tent of nine. With two local elections in March, he believes there's a chance to help set the tone for things to come.



Rachel Brown is a leader of the Bonita Springs Progressive Committee. She is a committed environmentalist and ran for the District 27 State Senate seat in 2020.



Rita DiSalvo has resided in Lee County, FL for 36 years and has been doing volunteer work in the county for 15 years. She works primarily in the areas of environmental, human/civil/women's rights, advocacy for children, and democracy. She has been active with the Lee County Dems for the past ten years, currently serving as Democratic Precinct Leader/203 - Fort Myers. She

emphasizes the importance of keeping an open mind— hearing from all sides and empowering people to use their talents.



Keith Edison is a retired police chief who moved to Florida from Massachusetts. He volunteers as a teacher for citizenship classes in Lee County. Keith also serves as the Legislative Liaison for Democratic Women's Club of Lee County.



Cornelius Fowler is a married father of 5 who has lived in Lee County for seven years. He is a farm worker/truck driver and Union man. In addition, he serves Vice president of the IAMAW Florida Machinist State Council area 4 and as trustee for the Palm Beach Treasure Coast AFL-CIO CLC. He is active in the Lee County Party as a precinct leader and a 2024 candidate for Florida House of Representatives District 77. Cornelius looks forward to growing our county party in 2025.



Kari Lerner Kari Lerner was born in Ohio, grew up in Lee County, and raised her family in NH before circling back to her roots in Cape Coral. She has been a Realtor for 37 years with licenses in FL, NH, & MA. While in NH, Kari served as State Representative (Transportation 2017-2018) Chester Town Chair (2016-2017), and Clinton Launch Center Director (2015-2016) as well as volunteering for Senator Shaheen (2009-2015). Since returning to Florida, Kari has served as Zone Leader (2020), State Committeewoman (Judicial Council 2020-2021), County Chair (2021-2023), and candidate for FL CD 19 (2024).



Sandra McClinton has a long history of activism with the Florida Democratic Party. She served as the DEC Vice Chair beginning 2007 and as the DEC Chairwoman beginning in 2009; she was also President of the Cape Coral Democratic Club 2006–2007. Sandra is President of the Lee County Democratic Women's Club and has been involved with the DWC at the state level as well, serving as Region Chair, 2nd and 3rd VP and Chair of Region Chairs. She has also represented Lee County as district delegate to the Democratic National Convention three times.



Francis B. ("Brad") Smith has been a Florida resident since about 2000. Brad was Chairman and CEO of a small NYSE-listed engineered products and services company. From 2001 until 2023, he and his wife, Gloria, spent most of each year on their sailboat, crossing the Pacific Ocean to New Zealand and Australia in 2010-12. Francis became active in Lee County Dems during the recent election. He was involved in voter registration, voter protection, canvassing, the Lee County data team, and digital advertising. He is particularly interested in digital advertising and voter registration but is happy to help wherever he can be useful. Brad and Gloria are two of three co-leaders of Lee County Precinct 313.