



Tuesday, September 8, 2020  
6:30PM to 8:00 PM  
Via Zoom

## **CORAL GABLES DEMOCRATIC CLUB MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING SUMMARY & PLAN OF ACTION**

**Board Members Present:** Bentonne Snay, Jane Moskowitz, Richard Thurer, Elizabeth Newman, Pat Thaller, Marjorie Wilkoff, John Wander, Janet Nostro

**Members Present:** Victor Balestra, , Rae Stein, Emily Ardid, Martha Schoolman, Ally Easley, , Kerry Gruson, Susan Scholtz-Rubin, , Linda Fernandez (and husband), John Funchion, Judith Stopek, David Abraham, Sheryl Gold, Laura Green and husband, Joseph Jamison, Roman Lyskowski, Beatriz Portela, Janet Stearns, Sharon Langer, Madeline Shirley, Karen Dreyer, Karen Moore, Barbara Zwick, Barbara Markowitz, Maria Gonzalez, Sterling Cole, Jill Berman, Catherine McGrath, Gus Castillo, Keyvan Antonio Heydari, Yolanda Romero, Norman Moskowitz, Penny Thurer, Julie Samkoff, Linda Marraccini

**Friends and Guest Speakers Present:**

Congresswoman Donna Shalala (member), Maydee Martinez, Sofia Padron, Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, Daniela Levine Cava, Jeanne Baker (member), Gary Gromet, Danielle Jordan, Brian Olson, Doreen Gustave, Lynn Kislak, Alette Simmons-Jimenez, Renee Rossi, Rachael Stempler (member), Genesis Del Toro, Mark Meaney, Jason Berkun, Laura Brueggeman, Paul Hunt, Lisbeth Bustin, Gordon Fales, Maria Antonietta Mosesti, Cameron Cohen, Sterling Cole, Catherine McGrath, Gus Castillo, Keyvan Antonio Heydari, Yolanda Romero, Bo Halterman, Andrea Markoff, Rosemary Reiss, Marti Wakshlag, Brooke Weiser, Vijay Arneja

*NOTE: The Plan of Action for all CG Dems is connoted with italicized information below.*

- I. **Call to Order and Welcome** Pres Bentonne Snay  
Bentonne called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed all attendees and reviewed the Zoom rules which included requesting that all questions be put in the chat box since there are so many people present.
  
- II. **Candidate Presentations** Introductions by Jane Moscovitz
  - a. **Congresswoman Debbie Mucarsel-Powell**
    - First South American immigrant to be elected to Congress
    - Running against County Mayor Carlos Jimenez and in a recent poll they were tied
    - On US House Crime Sub-Ctte and committed to prison reform, especially for minority women and minors
    - Prior to Congress, she worked in Florida for over 20 years including for several non-profit organizations
    - Has worked with Republicans to build trust within the parties

- Platform/priorities include the economy, immigration, ending gun violence/gun safety, the environment/protecting coral reef, healthcare and tax reform
- There have been hearings on ways to pass legislation towards criminal justice reform. How to handle minor civil crimes, incarcerated women, rights of minors. Will send bills which they are marking up as a couple deal with criminal justice reform.
- Responded to question re helping non-documented people in her district and what is being done.
- *Could use assistance on her campaign with texts, phone calls, contributions, postcard writing and volunteers. See <https://www.debbiemucarselpowell.com/> for volunteer opportunities (or CG Dems website [www.coralgablesdems.org](http://www.coralgablesdems.org))*

**b. Congresswoman Donna Shalala**

- In answer to a question to Donna, Jane Moskowitz advised that in Florida VBM ballots can be counted 22 days prior to the election.
- Congress is currently in committee meetings via Zoom. They go back to in-person sessions on Sept. 14 – October 3 when they will address the appropriations bill for next year, stimulus money, healthcare, education/teachers, essential workers including police and fire.
- Her opponent received a lot of money (\$1MM+ via Trump-related PACs). Congresswoman Shalala has worked hard to be bipartisan, has high name recognition and support from numerous Republican mayors. Has also worked on several bills with Mario Diaz Balart.
- Believes the Federal Government needs to do more on affordable housing and keeping people in their homes. Government has delayed payment for rent and mortgages to help keep people in their homes.
- Federal Government did help fund the COVID-19 vaccine testing at UM. The amount of research money from NIH was tripled.
- On education, she explained what she supports to help students with student debt, controlling the affordability crisis, financially assisting colleges and universities with budget shortfalls.
- Helping relieve student debt is a high priority for Biden.
- Believes more needs to be done on humanitarian aid to Venezuela.
- Stressed the importance of tourism in Florida and how COVID-19 has devastated Miami's tourism and hospitality industries.
- Critical issues include healthcare, prescription drug coverage, COVID-19, the Affordable Care Act, the environment/climate change, gun safety.
- Miami-Dade has great number of people on Obamacare.

- Her ad focuses on bi-partisan support from all mayors in her district, even Republicans.
- *For free yard signs and delivery see <https://donnashalala.com/>*
- *To volunteer for Donna Shalala's Day of Action on September 12<sup>th</sup> see <https://www.mobilize.us/donnashalalaforcongress/event>. They will be calling 10,000 voters to remind them to vote by mail and spread the word about Donna's policies. Any questions can be directed to Sofia Padron.*

Donna Shalala and Debbie Mucarsel-Powell answered attendees' questions about Trump's reversal on oil drilling off the Florida coast, believe a deal with be stimulus bill cut within the next two weeks, the CARES Act, criminal justice reform and undocumented people in the district. Assured us that voting machines in Miami-Dade County are connected through highly secured wi-fi.

**c. Miami-Dade County Mayoral Candidate Daniella Levine Cava**

- Daniella expressed her gratitude for everyone's hard work which enabled her to prevail and come out on top. Credits building a movement with more than 250,000 contacts made for a new future, activism, getting young people involved, having 100s of volunteers, civic participation and an amazing "get out the vote effort" which Penelas did not have.
- She was the first mayoral campaign to qualify to get on the ballot by petition.
- Priorities include transportation, COVID, business recovery, anti-violence.
- Regarding criminal justice reform, she believes people are kept in prison too long, need alternatives to incarceration, need to do more to prevent crime, more police training and behavioral accountability and make racism a part of training for all county employees. Also need to train police to de-escalate potentially violent situations.
- Not in favor of building a new prison and thinks we need to safely reduce the prison population.
- Acknowledged pride in getting young people engaged. Is concerned for their future.
- Feels the version of the independent civil review panel was "watered down" and hopes to strengthen it after being elected.
- On September 14, Daniella will be turning 65 and will have a fundraiser in honor of her birthday. The clock is reset for donations, meaning that even if you already donated the maximum amount to Daniella's campaign in the primary, you could donate for the general election.
- Will be sending information regarding an upcoming Day of Action.

- To join Daniella's campaign efforts please see <https://www.mobilize.us/daniella.vote/> Direct any questions about volunteering or involvement with the campaign to Maydee Martinez (Team DLC) 786-250-9233
- For yard signs, please see [www.Daniela.vote/yardsigns](http://www.Daniela.vote/yardsigns).
- If you already have yard signs, she recommends keeping them and adding new #81 sticker.

**d. ACLU of Florida Policing Policy Chair Jeanne Baker**

- Jeanne explained how the Independent Civilian Panel (ICP) will work and advised we will now have stronger oversight of police than ever before. The Independent Review Panel from 1980 to 2009 did not focus on police officers, only other departments. After prior efforts for a review board failed, in 2018 they went back to the drawing board and came up with another plan and after the George Floyd shooting, the commissioners recognized the need for an Independent Civilian Panel
- Jeanne explained that most complaints about the police in Miami are not about use of force but about discourtesy and lack of respect.
- All 35 police departments in the county will be able to opt into the ICP, not just Miami-Dade.
- The panel will investigate complaints and use of force, etc. There will be a review and alternative dispute resolution/mediation will be used to resolve some cases.
- Members of the community can sit down with police to build a better system of policing and the new ICP will have subpoena power.
- The ICP is funded. More details will be provided after the new administration takes office
- Miami-Dade County will also adopt a sheriff system of law enforcement.

**III. CG Dems Business**

**a. Treasurer's Report & Biden Yard Sign Sale**

Treas Richard Thurer

- Richard Thurer advised that we currently have \$4,501.34 in our account with a few outstanding obligations. Biden Yard Signs are available as well as mugs, t-shirts and bumper stickers.
- *Biden yard signs which are picked up are free or can be purchased for \$5 each with free delivery.*
- For more information see [www.coralgablesdems.org](http://www.coralgablesdems.org) (DEM Merchandise under the About tab)

**b. CG Dems Membership Update  
Special Zoom Event 9/13: Chocolate Tasting**

Elizabeth Newman

- Elizabeth Newman advised meeting attendees about the upcoming chocolate tasting which is not a fundraiser but a way to have fun as we gear up for a critical time prior to November 3. Sign up by September 9.

**c. JP Bado Fundraiser September 9<sup>th</sup>**

VP Jane Moscovitz

- JP Bado is the Democrat running for State Rep. for House District 114
  - *This event was postponed until September 16. To register and receive log-in ID & passcode, please contact Marissa Tully at [marissa@tullycampaigns.com](mailto:marissa@tullycampaigns.com) or 941-962-6675*

**d. Update on VBM and GOTV Activities  
Request for Volunteers**

Pat Thaller/John Wander

- *Volunteers needed to ensure VBM Voters Mail Ballots by October 17 or drop off at an early voting site between October 19 and November 1.*
- *Ways to get involved include the following activities:*
  - Sending postcards from 9/15-9/30*
  - Mail slates of Democratic Candidates from 9/20-9/30*
  - To get involved, email Pat Thaller at [patthaller66@gmail.com](mailto:patthaller66@gmail.com)*
  
  - No-knock/contactless doorhanger drop offs on 9/26-27*
  - Phone banking and Text banking 9/19 - 9/20*
  - To get involved, email John Wander at [sailordogjp@gmail.com](mailto:sailordogjp@gmail.com)*

**e. VoteMiami2020 Media Campaign**

Bentonne Snay

- The CG Dems are part of an organized effort to get the facts on Vote by Mail to all Dem Voters in Miami-Dade County to prevent ballots from being rejected due to lack of signatures, etc. or due to late arrival to the SOE.
- Focus is on low-turnout Democrats with non-traditional media approaches
- *To contribute, please go to <https://www.coralgablesdems.org/donate>*
- *Enter VoteMiami2020 after your phone number so we know it is for this purpose*

**IV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by Bentonne Snay at 8:00 p.m.

Summary recorded and written by Secretary Marjorie Wilkoff with edits and approval of President Bentonne Snay.