



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

MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING SUMMARY

Board Members Present: Bentonne Snay, Richard Thurer, Jane Moskowitz, Margy Wilkoff, Pat Thaller, Mac Hooton and Janet Nostro

Members Present: Linda Fernandez, Rachel Stempler, Barbara Zwick, Maria Gonzalez, Karen Moore, Julie Samkoff, Susan Scholtz-Rubin, Elizabeth Honkonen, Gabriele Armstrong, Janet Stearns, Monique Selman, Beatriz Portela, Pat Keon, Victor Balestra, Marti Wakshlag, Madeline Shirley, Roman Lyskowski, Jill Berman, Diana Hooten and Joseph Fadel

Guests Present: Lisa Askowitz, Don Donelson, Jane Torres, Sharon Van Smith, Lynn Wheeler, Ricardo Ibarria, Christina Brackin (Speaker), Keynan Antonio Heydari, Christopher Richmond (Speaker) and Karen Paul

I. Call to Order and Welcome

- Bentonne welcomed the attendees at 6:30pm and provided instructions for submitting questions to the speakers.

II. Election Results, Lessons Learned and Plans Moving Forward Presentations with Introductions by Bentonne Snay

- a. Miami-Dade Democratic Party Exec. Director Christopher Richmond spoke in place of Chair Steve Simeonidis who was unable to attend
- Lessons learned included 1) improving messaging, especially in coordination with the DNC and including the socialism issue for Hispanics; 2) Micro-targeting voters with better data without relying on the FDP or DNC and data-gathering as our approach was broader and Republicans do more on an individual voter basis; 3) improving get out the vote and election day coordination and accountability so we can be more effective, like the Republicans, who received hourly updates from the Supervisor of Elections Office, in support of their efforts to encourage voters to vote at certain times and follow up with them to ensure they voted; and 4) Voter Registration needs to provide Dems with more accurate data/contact info and/or an improved Voter Activation Network (VAN).
 - Election Results/Accomplishments included the fact that MD Dems ran the largest field campaign in the State of Florida. Ran in-house and hired a paid organizer. We had a good turnout in MD County- 74% among registered Democratic voters. Additionally, we had an impressive vote-by-mail push, record number thanks to funding which enables us to build a needed infrastructure for 2021 and 2022. Daniella Levine Cava's victory was also a big accomplishment!
 - Christopher answered questions regarding how we can get better data, how we know what the problems were, why the socialism/communist labels associated with Dems were not addressed.
 - Christopher's contact information is executivediretor@miamidadedems.org.

- Elizabeth Newman commented via chat with Jane Moskowitz in agreement that Christopher should come back and speak about his previous work with museums/arts/culture.
- Bentonne advised the group that MD did everything we could with very little help from the state and that we cannot control what the candidates say or do not say. We tried to connect with the Biden campaign back in April but could not get anyone to listen. Going forward, state and national Dem Party support and input will be important.
- Julie Samkoff mentioned that Rise Up Florida put a great panel together for one of their meetings a couple of years ago. Jim DeFede was one of the panelists. He pointed out that if we were not reading and listening to conservative news outlets, we would not be able to prepare for what we would be up against. She believes either Janet Nostro or Maria Bures organized it.

b. Go Vote Miami 2020 Media Campaign

Campaign Co-chair and Go Vote Miami Co-founder Christina Bracken spoke on accomplishments, lessons learned and plans moving forward and provided an excellent Power Point slide presentation

- Go Vote Miami (GVM) was founded in 2017 and is a non-partisan organization dedicated to facilitating voting. They simplify voter information via their website, work with other organizations and agencies and offer training and support mandated under the National Voter Registration Act.
- GVM offers tools and resources to individuals, public agencies and organizations to offer effective voter registration and related services.
- Voter turnout “is where it is at.” MD had more voters than ever- 74.7% which was 3% higher than the Florida average and 8% higher than the national average.
- 2020 had the lowest rejection of vote by mail ballots.
- 2020 had the highest numbers of those who voted by mail: 506,857 compared to 299,516 in 2016.
- Christina explained the success of the GVM 2020 Media Campaign tour (held over 4 weekends), digital ads targeting low-turnout Dem voters, Hispanic and Black community canvassing efforts, and Haitian radio ads.
- Bentonne expressed thanks to the many volunteers and donors who contributed more than \$30,000.
- GoVoteMiami campaign increased voter participation in approximately 30 precincts in 14 MD Communities, including 70,000+ voters.
- Christina expressed the need to get more people engaged, especially to get more voters to turn out, including NPAs, in future elections.
- Attendees were encouraged to connect with Christina and fellow GVM leader, Jane Torres, to see how they can help.
- To contact Jane Torres re: volunteering w/GVM: janeatorres@gmail.com



c. **Voter Protection Committee**

Jane Moscovitz, Board Vice President and Committee Member spoke about accomplishments, lessons learned and plans moving forward

- Despite dissatisfaction with MD voter turnout, Jane stated that the approximately 350+ MD volunteers served as poll workers, answering the voter hotline, assisted with ballot curing and phone banking.
- The cure rate was an impressive 81%.

III. **CG Dems Business**

a. **Treasurer's Report**

- Richard Thurer advised that the current account balance is \$2,778.89.
- After making board-approved contributions/donations we will have a balance of approximately \$2,000. We have sent checks of \$250 each to the food pantries at Bethel Temple in Richmond Heights, Coral Gables Congregational Church of Christ, and the Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry. CG Dems also sent a check for \$1,000 to Stacey Abrams' Fair Fight.

b. **CG Dems Membership Update**

- Elizabeth Newman advised that we have 127 members. She will be reaching out to 14 people whose memberships have or are about to expire.
- Details will be forthcoming on our first Members Only Annual Meeting and postponed Holiday Party in March 2021. Hoping it can be outdoors in person.
- We will need to elect a few new Board members and a new secretary. Election will take place at the Members Only Annual Meeting.
- We will be selecting several current meeting attendees who were also volunteers to receive free T-shirts. The T-shirts will be delivered this weekend when postcards for the Georgia election will be delivered to volunteers.

c. **Special Food Distribution Project**

- We have sent checks to the food pantries at Bethel Temple in Richmond Heights and the Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry as well as a check to the Compassion Fund at Coral Gables Congregational Church, as noted above.
- Bentonne will be providing additional information for volunteer and donation opportunities once they are finalized.

d. **Supporting US Senate Runoff Races in Georgia**

- Out-of-State Volunteers Needed for Phone Banking. Can use Google voice and it appears that you are calling from Georgia.
- Bentonne will be providing additional information regarding volunteer opportunities and much-needed donations.



IV. Next CG Dems Monthly Meeting - January 12th via Zoom

- BWCMD Chair Julie Becker will speak on 2020 Election. There will also be speakers to address the important issue of better engaging Hispanics
- Will seek nominations for new CG Dems Board Members, including secretary

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

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