

Pollworker Pulse

Spring/Summer 2009

The Newsletter for and about Miami-Dade Election Workers

Message from the Supervisor of Elections

The 2008 Presidential Election has been in the history books for five months now, and the hard work and dedication from you—Miami-Dade County's Poll Workers—helped ensure voters' confidence in the fair and transparent operation of the election.



Lester Sola

Nearly one million voters cast a ballot in the November 4th election, many using the optical scan voting equipment for the first time—poll workers were experienced, patient and helpful to voters who entered each precinct.

Your expertise did not go unnoticed. Florida Governor Charlie Crist and Secretary of State Kurt Browning lauded the work of the more than 12,000 Miami-Dade poll workers. In addition to these expressions of gratitude, many local leaders also shared their satisfaction for a job well done including Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Miami-Dade County Commissioners and County Manager George Burgess.

In an effort to reduce the Elections Department's carbon footprint and pursue greener options in how we deliver products and services to the public, the department will no longer mail out the Poll



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR



March 3, 2009

Mr. Lester Sola
Miami-Dade County Supervisor of Elections
Post Office Box 521550
Miami, Florida 33152

Dear Miami-Dade County Election Workers:

Thank you for your work on behalf of the People of Florida. During the 2008 Election Cycle, our state experienced record registration and historic voter turnout. As Governor, I was proud that our state conducted a fair, sound, and smooth, election. As a result of your hard work, the voters of Miami-Dade County received quick and courteous service and we are confident in the results recorded.

It is because of the commitment of citizens like you, our democracy can continue to thrive. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Charlie Crist

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399 • (850) 488-2272 • FAX (850) 922-4292



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CHARLIE CRIST
Governor
KURT S. BROWNING
Secretary of State

March 10, 2009

Miami-Dade County Elections Office
P.O. Box 521550
Miami, FL 33152

Dear Miami-Dade County Election Workers:

On behalf of the residents of the State of Florida, I say "Thank You." The 2008 Elections saw record turnouts, and because of your hard work, the voters of Miami-Dade County have a high level of confidence in their election process.

As an Election Worker, you were asked to deal with often-unpredictable situations that would be overwhelming to many people—you excelled. You were asked to work long hours with little rest—you did. You were asked to resolve problems and be the face of the election—you surpassed expectations. You were asked to make sure that each person who walked through the door was confident that his or her vote would count, and you succeeded with flying colors. No matter the task, you rose to the challenge and for that, you should be proud. I most certainly am.

The citizens of Miami-Dade County can honestly say that their election officials and workers are among the best in the state. I hope that you will continue your service to the people of Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida. Without citizens like you, our democracy cannot continue to thrive. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Kurt S. Browning
Secretary of State

KSB/law

R. A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250
Telephone: (850) 245-6500 • Facsimile: (850) 245-6125
www.dos.state.fl.us

Worker Pulse. We will still produce two issues a year, but they will be emailed to those poll workers whose email addresses we have on file, as well as having all issues on the department's website: www.miamidade.gov/elections. If you want to make sure that you still receive the Poll Worker Pulse, please forward your email address to polls2@miamidade.gov and you will be added to the Poll Worker Pulse distribution email list.

Poll workers are, in many cases, the department's front-line workers who come into contact with the public. The Elections Department is committed to keeping you as up-to-date as possible on all Elections related information as it occurs.

While the next Presidential Election may not be until November 2012, there is still plenty of work to be done in 2009 and 2010. With many municipal elections taking place this year, and the gubernatorial election in 2010, we look forward to working with you as you assist your neighbors to elect candidates who will represent them right in their own backyards.

Lester Sola
Supervisor of Elections

Poll Worker Section Updates Files, Needs Poll Worker Info

The winter is over—or what little South Florida experiences of one—and many people identify this time of year with one thing, “Spring Cleaning.”

The Elections Department is no different. The Poll Workers Section recently contacted hundreds of poll workers in an effort to update computer files with current addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

In many instances, electronic communication is becoming the primary and preferred method by the Elections Department to reach poll workers. If you have an email address, please contact the department, so that you will remain informed on an up-to-the-minute basis regarding Elections issues.

When you move or update any of your information, it is important to contact the Poll Workers Section because you may miss being scheduled for important trainings or contacted to participate in an upcoming election.

Should you work an election, but have inaccurate information on file with the department, your payroll check may be delayed while staff attempt to contact you to correct the situation.

Also, the Poll Worker Pulse is going to debut an electronic version in October and the only way to receive it is by email (You can view it on the department’s website, as well—www.miamidade.gov/elections).

Please contact the Poll Workers Section at 305-499-8448 to update any information or email polls2@miamidade.gov

Congratulations!

Clerks and Assistant Clerks who received a perfect score in the Clerk Certification Training Program through March 31st:

NAME	PCT.
Patrick R. Rojas.....	14
Tara N. McDonald	249
Jennifer M. Gonzalez	305
Jair Pearson	372
Luis Sagastume	402
Margarita Vidal	630
Kathy Dorsey	803
Shania Galan	906

Brown Bag Lunches Provide Communication, Suggestions

In January, the Elections Department invited a cross-section of poll workers to participate in a focus group session to solicit feedback and recommendations on the new voting system procedures. More than 100 poll workers attended a series of six Brown Bag roundtable discussions with Elections Staff. The department’s goal is to continue to host these events on an annual basis.

“I enjoyed participating in this event,” said Quality Assurance Specialist Roxana Karoba. “This has really enhanced my experience as a poll worker and I felt like my concerns and suggestions were heard. Today I felt like I was not only a poll worker, but I played a role in the process.”

The following are some of the issues brought up during the six sessions with answers. The en-

tire list of requests/suggestions can be found on the department’s website at www.miamidade.gov/elections/pollworker_brown_bag.asp.

Itemize payroll checks

The department will work with the Enterprise Technology Services Department (ETSD) to study the feasibility of implementing this suggestion. Once the evaluation is complete, the proposal will be brought before the Elections Department’s management team for consideration.

Include payment schedules in training manuals

This will be included in all future manuals.

Precinct layouts should be developed in conjunction with the precinct clerk’s input

Feedback from clerks is welcome. Because most of the precinct clerks have been assigned to the same location for a significant amount of time, clerks may revise the voter flow and can provide the department feedback so the layouts can be revised. When precinct layouts are developed,



Assistant Deputy Supervisor of Elections Barry Garner takes some information from QAS Roxana Karoba after the January 15th Brown Bag lunch.



Inspector Ralph Falkenburg speaks with Elections' Thomas Burns after the January 22nd Brown Bag lunch.

the Polling Place Staff and the Director’s office work together to ensure that voter flow inside the precinct does not cause bottlenecks.

Too many changes in operations from one election to another

The department attempts to minimize election procedural changes after training has begun, however some changes are required by federal and state law. Other changes are incorporated as lessons learned in previous elections.

Electronic Pollbooks Become Popular in 2009 Municipal Elections

Poll workers can expect some procedural changes for many of the remaining 2009 municipal elections (For a list of remaining elections, see page 4).

With the exception of November 3rd's general elections in the cities of Hialeah, Homestead, Miami and Miami Beach voter check-in will be completed using the Electronic Voter Identification (EViD) unit rather than the traditional precinct registers. The November 3rd elections will continue to use the paper-based precinct registers. Many poll workers may already be familiar with EViDs if they worked at or



voted at one of the 20 Early Voting sites in 2008.

Working as an electronic poll book, the EViD can streamline the voter check-in pro-

cess by verifying the voters against a database of registered voters, checking them in and producing a paper ticket for the voter to proceed to the voting area.

The benefit for poll workers using EViDs includes the ability to accurately identify eligible voters, detect if a voter already voted, receive alerts for voters needing further review and the ability for address verification/change capability. All poll workers will receive instruction and training material related to operating EViD units during their scheduled poll worker training.

Students Honored For Scholarship, Service

Seven student poll workers received \$500 book scholarships on March 6th from the Miami-Dade County Elections Department. The recipients will use the money toward furthering their education.

"These students are to be commended," said Supervisor of Elections Lester Sola. "They maintain high grades, assisted the democratic process by becoming poll workers during the very busy 2008 election year and wrote some terrific essays. We look forward to working with them in the future."

The students were also lauded by Commission Vice Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz and Assistant County Manager Alina Hudak during the luncheon.

Many of the six college scholarship recipients and one high school winner wrote about the excitement and pride of participating in an historic election, as well as the time, preparation and security associated with administering an election.

"...Americans usually take for granted the democratic country where they live and the freedoms that they enjoy. However, on November 4th, I understood the great power that each vote carries, and the idea that when people unite, they are invincible. The idea of equality as the foundation of the American political system and the electoral process further



Assistant County Manager Alina T. Hudak, Peter Cruz, Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Alicia Sneij, Stephanie Reyes, Carolina Lambert, Claudia Acuna and Supervisor of Elections Lester Sola. Not pictured: Jose Vazquez and Maritza Soto.

reinforces the idea that the people truly hold the power in this country."
—from Jose Vazquez's winning scholarship essay

Elections Assists HUD Residents Elect Board Members

In addition to overseeing the administration of countywide and municipal elections, the Miami-Dade County Elections Department also assists with the operation of elections for Miami-Dade County's Public Housing Agency communities. Residents of these communities voted for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.



Above Florida City Gardens resident Elsa Galindo finishes submitting her ballot for her community's Board election.

The Fair—We Were There!

In addition to elephant ears, carnival rides and midway shows, Miami-Dade County Fair attendees were able to register to vote, test out the optical scan voting equipment and sign up to become poll workers. Elections staff member Zory Cruz, at left, assists Kristin Alspaugh and Brom Rector as they register to vote. The South Dade residents both recently turned 18 and were excited to become voters.



2009 Elections At A Glance

May 12, 2009	North Miami Regular & Special Election
May 19, 2009	North Miami Run-off Election, North Miami Beach Run-off (if necessary)
September 8, 2009	Virginia Gardens General Election
October 6, 2009	Homestead Primary Election
November 3, 2009	Hialeah Primary Election Homestead General Election Miami General Municipal Election Miami Beach General Election
November 10, 2009	Miami Run-off Election (if necessary)
November 17, 2009	Hialeah General Election, Miami Beach Run-off Election (if necessary)
December 1, 2009	Biscayne Park General Election
December 15, 2009	Biscayne Park Run-Off Election (if necessary)

Please refer to the Elections Department Calendar at http://www.miamidade.gov/elections/news_ecalendar.asp for the most up to date schedule for elections.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Miami-Dade Elections Department • www.miamidade.gov/elections
305-499-8448 • TTY: 305-499-8480 • email: polls2@miamidade.gov

Carlos Alvarez
Mayor



Board of County Commissioners

Dennis C. Moss, Chairman
José "Pepe" Díaz, Vice Chair

Barbara J. Jordan District 1	Katy Sorenson District 8
Dorrian D. Rolle District 2	Dennis C. Moss District 9
Audrey M. Edmonson District 3	Sen. Javier D. Souto District 10
Sally A. Heyman District 4	Joe A. Martínez District 11
Bruno A. Barreiro District 5	José "Pepe" Díaz District 12
Rebeca Sosa District 6	Natacha Seijas District 13
Carlos A. Gimenez District 7	

Harvey Ruvin
Clerk of Courts

George M. Burgess
County Manager

Robert A. Cuevas, Jr.
County Attorney

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

"It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

Miami-Dade Elections

Registration Statistics as of 3/31/09

Republican	377,983	31%
Democrat	552,421	45%
Other	304,063	24%
TOTAL	1,234,467	100%

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