



Kid's Voting Leon County: A Brief History

Kid's Voting Leon County was established in 1992 through the inspiration of Carrol Dadisman and Peggy Durham, both of the Tallahassee Democrat. It all began with some information Carrol Dadisman brought back from a publisher's meeting and passed on to Peggy Durham on a new and innovative program known as Kid's Voting. The program had been piloted in Arizona and the research suggested that it really made an impact on the student's knowledge and dispositions about the voting process. Ms. Durham loved the idea and called together the first meeting with interested parties at the Tallahassee Democrat in Spring of 1992.

Bill Moeller stepped up to be the first Chairperson for the organization and ***Kid's Voting Leon County*** was off and running. Other early pioneers of the organization such as Randy Felton, Russ Landry, Kathleen McCarron, Jan Bellamy, Kathy Willis, Betsy McCauley and the late Joel Goldfarb and Tom DeRose worked diligently to make ***Kid's Voting*** a success.

Throughout the early years and today, ***Kid's Voting*** is set apart from other voter education programs in relation to the curriculum that is provided for students. ***Kid's Voting*** is a total learning experience and not just a simple mock election program. ***Kid's Voting***, with the help of the Tallahassee Democrat, Leon County Schools, and a host of other public and private partners is able to print and distribute not just ballots, but a full curriculum resource to each teacher and student in Leon County. The students are engaged in the whole voting process including decision making processes to choose candidates, referendums, history of voting and voting along side parents or other students on election day.

Kid's Voting Leon County has grown over the years and is now recognized as "THE" voter education program that is used in this District. Following in the footsteps of Bill Moeller were Tom DeRose (Chairperson in 1996), Townsend Waddill (2002-2004), Angela Morrison Uhland (2006), and the present Chairperson of ***Kid's Voting Leon County***, Mike Collazo.

The present members of the Board continue the efforts that were started by these fine citizens of Leon County. Whether it be fundraising, developing curriculum, seeking other volunteers for coordinating voting booths or working late into the night to tally votes on election day, the members of the Board are continually committed to providing a quality educational experience for the youth in Leon County.