

MICHELLE REHWINKEL VASILINDA, J.D.

Tallahassee, Florida

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QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

Forward-thinking leader with a with distinguished career in higher education, law, public relations and as a Florida legislator. Reputation as a champion of positive change, pioneering innovative solutions and driving, creating, and implementing initiatives to improve policy and community.

- Demonstrated political acumen with a reputation as an inclusive leader who engages general, civic, corporate, and government stakeholders to achieve common goals that cultivate positive public perception and awareness.
- Analytical, innovative problem-solver skilled at leveraging outside-the-box thinking to identify needs and propose workable solutions that benefit organizations, communities, and institutions
- Collaborative communicator with exceptional interpersonal skills committed to building networks and partnerships and promoting cooperation among stakeholders to build unity and effect change.
- Skilled in strategic planning to raise funds to benefit charitable and political campaigns.
- Adept at creating and successfully contributing to the effective management of eight annual state of Florida budgets valued at up to \$82B, working to shepherd needed funding to local government, Florida State University, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee Community College, for water, road, maintenance, and building and special projects.
- Significant public relations expertise, authoring and placing Op-Eds, leading and management of press conferences, press packages, and events to draw public, press, and legislative attention to issues.

LEGISLATIVE AND LEGAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

LEGISLATOR/FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Tallahassee, FL **Florida State Representative**, 2008 – 2016

Served as ranking member on high-profile committees including education, finance, agriculture, energy, and economic policy. Vetted, critiqued, and improved bills/amendments with legislative colleagues. Helped craft and voted on state's multibillion-dollar budgets. Filed bills and amendments designed to meet Florida's challenges and empower Florida residents. Leveraged issues and positions to move legislation through the process. Led and managed staff on complex, dynamic projects designed to introduce and move new ideas, proposals in the legislative process. Planned and implemented public relations strategies, including press releases and media events to gain support for bills and amendments. Served as guest speaker, panelist, and moderator for a variety of profit/non-profit organizations, professional associations, and higher education institutions. *Please see selected highlights of legislative service below.*

- Served as ranking member on Choice an Innovation Education K-20 committee in 2012 and ranking member on the Higher Education Committee 2013-2016.
- Introduced and passed *Character-development Instruction* amendment to 2016/CS/HB1147, which mandated workplace ethics, conflict resolution, and employment interview education and became law in 2016.
- Championed and successfully passed an amendment to 2016/HB307/HB1313 *Medical Use of Cannabis* that authorized cannabis research in the Florida college and university system and became law.
- Filed and collaborated with stakeholders to ensure 2013/HB277 *Assessment of Residential and Non-Homestead Real Property*, became law as the necessary statutory enactment of a 2008 Florida Constitutional amendment providing that property appraisers may not consider increases in just value attributed to the installation of a renewable energy device when assessing real property value for residential purposes.
- Sponsored 2013/HB289, proposing a 7% raise for all state employees. All state employees earning less than \$40K per year received a 7% raise; state employees earning more than \$40K received a \$1,000 bonus in Appropriations Bill 2013/HB5001

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- Sponsored 2012 HB743 *Energy Efficiency* bill, which provided for local government referendum for local surtax revenues to be dedicated to energy efficiency improvements; the bill was rolled into HB7117 and is now law.

FLORIDA BAR VISION 2016 COMMISSION MEMBER 2013-2016

Appointed by Florida Bar President Eugene Pettis to a three-year term to analyze and make recommendations to help Florida lawyers meet the challenges of law practice in a global economy. The Commission focused on access to courts, use of technology for lawyers and law firms, reciprocal bar membership among states and internationally, and uniform bar exams. Reviewed and made recommendations to internal Florida Bar administration/governance on international in-house counsel status, multi-state Uniform Bar exams, interstate practice, reciprocity, and a proposal to allow attorney spouses of military personnel stationed in Florida be permitted to practice law regardless of their state bar membership.

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Additional legal experience: Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, Florida Office of the Attorney General, Department of Legal Affairs, Florida Bar Paralegal Study Commission. Mike Vasilinda Productions.

HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM DESIGN, DELIVERY AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Program Coordinator | Primary Faculty ~ Legal Studies Program, 1987 – Present

Develop and implement content and structure of legal studies program curriculum of the Legal Studies program at Tallahassee Community College. Collaborate with an advisory committee to continually evaluate program effectiveness and implement ongoing improvements. Recruit, hire, develop, and supervise faculty. Coordinate registration, course scheduling, faculty assignments, and student recruitment and advising to ensure program success. Design and teach traditional and online courses including Legal Concepts of Business, Law of Business, Introduction to the Legal Process, Applied Ethics, Civil Procedure I and II, and Real Estate Law.

Designed and coordinated first internship program at Tallahassee Community College which has evolved into a college department that has collaborated with over 445 employers to place 894 students into internships of which 129 (nearly 15%) were within the field of Legal Studies.

Pioneered and developed 14 Legal Studies Program courses, including Wills, Trusts, and Probate, Family Law, Legal Research Writing, and Administrative Law offered in online settings; drive program improvement continually update content to track changes in the law and law practice and to incorporate current events in the legal arena. Revise with regard to improved online teaching techniques and program and course learning outcomes.

Developed a training manual for the State of Florida Statewide Uniform Poll Worker Curriculum, in conjunction with the John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government at Florida State University, one of the first manuals of its kind in the nation. Leveraged Florida law and best practices to align with the Federal Help America Vote Act of 2002.

Developed curriculum focused on the local government to enrich younger students' understanding of local government functions and the concept of "Home Rule" for the Florida League of Cities, 2004.

PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS

SAFE STEPS: TO PROTECT FLORIDA'S CHILDREN, **Spokeswoman**, 2006:

Collaborated with partners including *The Florida Attorney General's Office, The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, The Florida School Boards Association, Macy's, Royal Caribbean Ltd. and Celebrity Cruises, and American Initiatives*, to introduce an initiative educating families on keeping children safe from Internet and other predators.

CENTER FOR FLORIDA'S CONSUMERS **Executive Director**, 1998 – 2001: Oversaw programs designed to advocate and educate consumers on rights and duties under the law. Leveraged website, news conferences, editorial visits, and written communications to publicize and inform the public about consumer credit and teen driving. Planned and conducted multiple news conferences on Tort Reform Advocacy.

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FLORIDA'S NEWS CHANNEL, THE FLORIDA ROOM **Panelist**, 1998 – 1999:

Contributed to discussions focused on Florida politics, economic, educational and consumer issues. Guests included statewide elected officials such as the Florida Secretary of State and Commissioner of Agriculture.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Juris Doctorate

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, COLLEGE OF LAW – Gainesville, FL

Bachelor of Arts in Social and Behavioral Sciences

NEW COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA– Sarasota, FL

Florida Bar Member since 1986

LEGISLATIVE AWARDS 2008-2016

- American Cancer Society, Legislative Award
- Aquilina Howell Foundation, Award of Valor
- Bethel Empowerment Foundation, Community Leadership Award
- Children's Home Society of Florida, Legislator Appreciation Award
- Florida Consumer Action Network, Consumer Champion Award
- Florida League of Cities Legislative Appreciation Award
- Florida Public Pension Trustee Association, Leadership Award
- Florida Renewable Energy Producers Association, Champion Award
- Florida State University, True Seminole Award
- Foundation for Florida's Future, Honor Roll
- Jefferson County Legislative Committee Award
- Tallahassee Community College SGA Lifetime Achievement Award
- The National Political Science Honor Society Psi Theta Chapter, Distinguished Service Award

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

- Electric Infrastructure Security Summit VII, London/EIS Council, London 2016
- Texas Grid Security Summit 2016
- Congressional EMP Caucus: Advisory/Task Force on National and Homeland Security 2014
- Cyber security and Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Legislative Working Group 2014
- National Conference of State Legislatures 2009 to present
- National Conference of Environmental Legislators 2009 to present
- Oxford Roundtable, Oxford, England 2011
- Big Bend Anti-Bullying Task Force, founder 2010
- Clean Energy Congress I & II, founder 2010 and 2012
- Florida Film, Entertainment, and Television Caucus 2009-2012
- Florida Stands Against Human Trafficking Legislative Working Group 2014-2016
- Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce