

## Message from our Chair

Ok, I get it – politics for Democrats in Manatee County sometimes sucks!

However, that doesn't mean that the work we do as volunteers isn't valuable. Rather, because the demographics are stacked against us, it makes the work we do that much MORE important. Our work holds the line on values that matter. We alone are tasked with ensuring a voice of opposition that is crucial for a healthy democracy.



Our voice continues to grow; we have expanded outreach and visibility to new levels. We added left-leaning voters with no party affiliation to our outreach, and we invested heavily in African-American and Hispanic communities. We remain 80,000 strong in Manatee County, and we are working tirelessly to increase that number.

I will admit, redistricting was a kick in the gut this cycle, and accounted for local losses in districts that have historically been more accessible to our candidates. But remember, both defeats and wins in politics are often short lived. We are already organizing for 2024!

Thanks to all the volunteers to pulled us through this cycle. Manatee is a tough county, but the work we did here was part of the tide has created the most diverse, most representative government in the history of our country.

Ceilings were broken in many states allowing for openly LGBTQ representation, female representation and racial minority representation in unprecedented numbers. Three states have added reproductive rights to their constitutions, and another state still pending at the time of this writing.

We are still holding our breath on congressional seats, but the alt-right trend that Republicans were counting on to turn America solidly red never came. Activists in every state came out to protect individual liberties, equality and voting rights, and we will continue to join them.

***Tracy Pratt, Chair, Manatee County Democratic Party***