



35<sup>th</sup> Annual  
National Conference  
Orlando, FL

## 2019 Professional Practices Program

*Encouraging Young Voices: Alachua County  
Supervisor of Elections' Partnership with the  
University of Florida*

**Alachua County, Fla.**

Submitted by:

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VoteAlachua.com

Being located in the same county with a top 10 public university comes with its perks and its challenges. Through collaboration between Alachua County and University officials — and similar efforts by other groups — Alachua County saw more than double the turnout of voters ages 18-25 in the 2018 General Election compared to the 2014 General Election. During the 2018 General Election, 20,514 voters between 18 and 25 turned out, whereas only 8,289 eligible voters ages 18-25 voted in the 2014 General Election.

In hopes of engaging more student-aged individuals in the electoral process, the office of Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Kim A. Barton sought to make it easier for students at the University of Florida to register and vote in the 2018 General Election. Our office hosted voter registration drives throughout the 2018 election cycle on the University of Florida campus. These drives were highly successful and made it possible for more students to become engaged in the election and vote at a higher rate. With the introduction of Florida's online voter registration system in October 2017, the process of updating voter registrations or registering to vote for the first time was easier than ever for students. Throughout 2018, the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections office made information available to students in their residence halls, common meeting spaces and academic colleges.

In April 2018, University of Florida President Kent Fuchs and Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Kim A. Barton spent an afternoon promoting voter registration to students on campus. The event was called "Cookies with Kim and Kent," and a video promoting voter registration was created using clips from the event.



Later in the year, a federal court's preliminary injunction allowed for early voting on college campuses, something that, prior to the injunction, was prohibited in Florida.

The Supervisor of Elections office established the student union at the University of Florida, the J. Wayne Reitz Union, as an early voting location. To promote the new location, the university and elections office developed a comprehensive communications plan, which included a video (which amassed 24,000 views on Facebook, along with 354 likes, 36 comments, and 230 shares), on-campus signage, and an email to all students, faculty and staff announcing the location and outlining important information about registering to vote. With nearly 8,000 ballots cast at the location, it was the most popular early voting location at a Florida college or university. This was achieved at minimal cost to both the university and the Supervisor of Elections office and it provided students and other people at the university a location to conveniently cast their ballots.

Many students at the University of Florida had the opportunity to vote in their first election during the 2018 General Election. It is important to the Supervisor of Elections office that students at the University of Florida have a positive first-time voting experience. Whether it be through the helpful and courteous service our team provides during voter registration drives — or the convenience of voting early at the Reitz Union — the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections office is committed to the positive experience of students. The Alachua County Supervisor of Elections office has established a strong relationship with the University of Florida and its administration and looks forward to fostering this relationship for years and elections to come.



July 24, 2018

W. Kent Fuchs, Ph.D.  
University of Florida  
226 Tigert Hall  
Gainesville, FL 32611

Dear President Fuchs:

I am writing to you regarding U.S. District Court Judge Mark Walker's recent decision to temporarily strike down language within Florida law that prohibits Supervisors of Elections from using facilities on college campuses as early voting locations.

With this change to the law, my office would like to set up an early voting location on the University of Florida campus for the 2018 General Election. Given that it is a polling place on Election Day and is situated in the heart of campus, the J. Wayne Reitz Union is the building we desire to use. Early voting for the 2018 General Election begins Monday, October 22, and ends Saturday, November 3.

It is my responsibility to provide every voter in Alachua County access to an early voting site. Voters who do not attend or work at the University of Florida will need to have an unrestricted ability to access the room in the J. Wayne Reitz Union where early voting is taking place.

Understanding that the university's daily operations do not easily provide such access, there are certain requests that would need to be met for my office to use the J. Wayne Reitz Union for early voting.

- Forty monitored parking spots in the J. Wayne Reitz Union parking garage from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Monday, October 22, to Saturday, November 3. We cannot charge voters to park, and any voter who would like to vote early at the J. Wayne Reitz Union would need to have the ability to do so.
- Access to a secure room within the J. Wayne Reitz Union where voting can take place and equipment can be stored from Thursday, October 18, to Saturday, November 3. The room could not be used for any other purpose during the early voting period and would need to remain locked when election workers are not there.
- Access to the room where voting will take place at least a month before the early voting period so that my office can test equipment and ensure the location is ready.
- Signage at all entrances to the J. Wayne Reitz Union directing voters to the room where early voting is taking place.

The day that gives me the biggest cause for concern is Saturday, November 3, the day the Gators play the University of Missouri in football. The last Saturday of early voting is generally one of the busiest days, and it is important that access to the early voting location not differ from any other day, even if there is a football game happening.

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Additionally, I would ask that the university undertake a continued effort to encourage students, faculty and staff to vote in the November election and future elections through its communications channels. We want voters who live and work at the University of Florida to be aware of the access that the additional early voting location would provide.

At your earliest convenience, I would like to set up a time to discuss this with you or a designee so that we can be sure we are serving your students, faculty and staff.

I can be reached by phone at 352-374-5252 or by email at [kbarton@alachuacounty.us](mailto:kbarton@alachuacounty.us).

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter, and I look forward to continuing our discussion.

Sincerely,

Kim A. Barton  
Supervisor of Elections  
Alachua County

cc: The Honorable Lee Pinkoson, Chair, Alachua County Board of County Commissioners  
Charlie Lane, Ph.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, University of Florida  
Mark Kaplan, Vice President for Government and Community Relations, University of Florida  
Susan Crowley, Assistant Vice President of Community Relations, University of Florida

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**From:** All UF Students List <[ALL-UF-STUDENTS@LISTS.UFL.EDU](mailto:ALL-UF-STUDENTS@LISTS.UFL.EDU)> on behalf of UF President Kent Fuchs <[President-Fuchs@UFL.EDU](mailto:President-Fuchs@UFL.EDU)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 25, 2018 10:26 AM  
**To:** All-UF-Students  
**Subject:** Encouragement to Vote

September 25, 2018

Dear faculty, staff and students,

In just a few weeks, on Tuesday, Nov. 6, Americans will have the opportunity to make key decisions about our nation's future in the midterm elections.

Here in Florida we will elect a new governor, choose Congressional, state and local representatives and decide important ballot issues.

I urge everyone in the University of Florida community to register to vote, and to vote, if you are eligible. The registration deadline is Tuesday, Oct. 9.

In celebration of National Voter Registration Day, there will be six voter registration [locations](#) on campus today from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. sponsored by the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections and Bob Graham Center for Public Service.

You can also register to vote through [TurboVote](#) or the [Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Office](#).

Voters who are registered in Alachua County and wish to vote during the early voting period will for the first time have the opportunity to do so on campus starting late next month.

Early voting provided by the Supervisor of Elections will be available at the Reitz Union, Room G-50, every day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Oct. 22 through Nov. 3. On Election Day itself, voters must vote in their assigned polling place.

You can also request a vote-by-mail ballot from [any](#) Florida county. Voters registered in another state may have similar options.

At UF, our guiding aspiration is to be "a premier university that the state, nation and world look to for leadership."

Voting offers each of us the opportunity to personally exercise that leadership, and I hope you will join me in registering and voting in the Nov. 6 elections.

Warm regards,

*Kent*

W. Kent Fuchs



## Julia Schack, Shea O'Malley and Jacob Kovach: Make a plan to vote

By Julia Schack, / Shea O'Malley and Jacob Kovach / Special to The Sun

Posted Oct 22, 2018 at 2:00 AM

We are ruining everything. At least that's what we're often told. There's a perception that young people like us are lazy, entitled, disengaged and the list goes on.

We think that perception is wrong, and this November, we want other young people to help us prove it. There's an easy way to do that, and that's by voting. Vote on Election Day, early vote, vote by mail — the choice is yours as long as you choose to vote.

Voting is your way of making your voice heard, of expressing your opinion. It's the basic way we participate in our system of democracy. Voting is a right, a privilege and a civic duty — something we all hopefully remember from social studies. It's also the best way to address the issues that are important to us.

All that we care about is that you vote, not the party or political leaning of the person for whom you are voting.

We think that our system works a lot better when all of us are participating and engaging with the process, regardless of where you sit on the political spectrum. Engage with one another. Have difficult conversations. Don't make the mistake of shouting past one another, and remember that it's possible to disagree with someone civilly.

The Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Office and offices like it exist to help voters, including students, ensure that their voice can be heard through elections.

Since the start of the semester, we've been working to spread awareness of voter registration and the importance of casting a ballot.

We don't know if you've heard, but this election is kind of a big deal. Voting in this year's midterm elections is kind of like buying Apple stock in 1980: It's not something you want to miss out on. We are entering adulthood and becoming of a voting age at an interesting time in our nation's history, when there are many opportunities to get involved in the democratic process. The foundational piece of that involvement, however, is simply voting.

And here's the thing about voting: It's easy.

These are some important dates and pieces of information you need to know in order to make sure your voice is heard in this election:

— Any Alachua County voter can vote at any Alachua County early voting site. There are six of them, but the one that is of most interest to students is the Reitz Union, where voting will take place in Room G-50. Early voting in Alachua County runs from Oct. 22 to Nov. 3. Early voting locations are open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day during that period.

— All vote-by-mail requests must be received by 5 p.m. Oct. 31 statewide. It's recommended, however, that you request your ballot at least a week before that, because all ballots must be in the Supervisor of Elections office (regardless of the county) by 7 p.m. on Election Day.

— Election Day is Nov. 6. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and you must vote in the polling place to which you are assigned.

— Photo and signature ID are required to vote. If you don't provide ID, you'll be required to cast a provisional ballot. More information on accepted forms of ID — there's a long list — can be found at [VoteAlachua.com](http://VoteAlachua.com).

Don't miss your chance to make your voice heard. Don't be part of the proof that young people are lazy. Let's show everyone that young people care.

*Julia Schack, Shea O'Malley and Jacob Kovach are outreach/communications interns for the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections.*



## Early Voting at UF

 University of Florida

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**Alachua County Supervisor of Elections**

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