



Introducing Sabrina Salomon

By Terry Coble



New LWV of Miami-Dade board member Sabrina Salomon combines her training as an attorney with multi-cultural sensitivity in her work on behalf of Haitian immigrant victims of domestic violence and other crimes. A *cum laude* graduate of the University of Miami School of Law, Sabrina heads the Nou Kab Project (roughly translated as, “We Can” or “We Are Capable”) at the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center

in Miami. The project provides legal representation to low-income Haitian women who are victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and other crimes, and advocates on their behalf before agencies that implement U.S. immigration laws.

Sabrina serves as the co-chair of the Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Council of Miami-Dade County, and spearheaded the Haitian Domestic Violence Initiative, a coalition of local service providers brought together to diminish incidents of abuse within the Haitian community through education and advocacy. She is the recipient of the 2006 Marie Claire Heureuse Justice Award, and conducts educational presentations in the areas of immigration law, domestic violence and human trafficking.

Sabrina hosts a monthly radio show in Creole to educate the Haitian community about domestic violence and the protections offered to victims by Florida and U.S. law, and to encourage Haitian women to participate in classes geared to self-empowerment. Her aim: To strengthen the South Florida Haitian community as a whole.

LWV M-D TO CO-HOST JANUARY FORUM

On January 20, 2010, the LWV of Miami-Dade County will co-host a debate on Hometown Democracy with the Urban Environment League at the Rusty Pelican on Virginia Key. This hotly contested voter initiative (Amendment 4 on the November 2010 ballot), aims to require voter approval of substantial amendments to local comprehensive development plans.

Speaking in support of the initiative will be its author and movement co-founder, Lesley Blackner. Speaking in opposition will be Jeffrey S. Bercow, a local land use attorney. Moderating the event will be well-known TV host Helen Ferre of WPBS Channel 2. The evening begins with cocktails at 6 pm (cash bar), followed by dinner at 6:30 pm (\$20 for LWV and UEL members; \$25 others), and the program itself at 7:30 pm (free of charge). Those not wishing to attend dinner should arrive at 7:15 pm and wait downstairs until 7:30 pm. **RSVP required 786-472-0011 or uelinfo@bellsouth.net.**

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GO GREEN! HELP US REACH YOU VIA E-MAIL

If you are receiving this issue of *The Voter* by U.S. mail, please send us your e-mail address if you have one! Help us lower our mailing expenses by sending you *The Miami-Dade Voter* and other timely information and notices via e-mail! Please send an e-mail to Terry Coble, Associate Editor, *Miami-Dade Voter*, at terryarose@bellsouth.net so we can add you to our e-mail distribution list. **Thank you!**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Hometown Democracy

Wednesday, January 20th
6:00—9:00pm

Rusty Pelican Restaurant
3201 Rickenbacker Causeway
Virginia Key

Dinner—\$20 members

\$25 non-members

RSVP 786-472-0011

uelinfo@bellsouth.net

LWV of Miami-Dade Board Meeting

Monday, January 18th
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

United Way of Miami-Dade
3250 SW 3rd Avenue
Miami, FL

President's Corner

These are difficult but exciting times for our country, our state and our county: We are being challenged to meet the needs of the future with renewed vigor. While we confront revenue scarcity at all levels of government, we are also tackling tough issues which, in many cases, will have far reaching implications for our long-term prosperity.

As I write this message, Congress is debating how to safeguard our national health through universal health care coverage, an issue which has been on our country's agenda for the past 65 years! Meanwhile, the Florida legislature has approved funding for our rail transit with the hope that federal dollars will follow and bolster this long neglected element of our infrastructure, so crucial to our state's early development.

Next November, several initiatives that may have a major impact on our state will be considered by Florida voters: Approved for the ballot is Hometown Democracy, which would make it more difficult for development to contravene comprehensive plans by requiring local referenda on major changes. Also up for a vote will likely be Fair Districts Florida, a measure supported by the LWV of Florida which would establish criteria for legislative redistricting to prevent districts from being drawn solely to favor particular candidates or parties. In addition, the Florida legislature has placed referenda on the ballot that would repeal our state public campaign financing system and adopt additional homestead tax exemptions.

This spring, well before the November election, the legislature must adopt a balanced budget funded by ever shrinking revenues that meets the escalating needs caused by our state's real estate crisis and economic downturn.

Your board is participating in these great national and statewide debates by doing what the LWV does best—helping to present reliable information and promote reasoned discussion through educational forums, and working to support issues on which we have established positions such as fair redistricting. Please join us at the upcoming January forum on Hometown Democracy! I look forward to seeing you there!

Terry A. Coble

WELCOME NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS!

Eleanor Aibel	Rita Clark
Ruth Balestra	Violette Durand
Karen Bradley	Barbara Holtzman
Martha Bryan	Cindy Lerner
Kate Callahan	Nathalie Shortal

Our League

LWV of Miami-Dade County Board of Directors - 2009-10

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JOIN THE LWV M-D!
SEE PAGE 4 FOR A MEMBER-SHIP APPLICATION!

The **Miami-Dade Voter** is published every two months by the League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County.

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LWV M-D TO HOST SOUTH AMERICAN VISITORS - by Helene Dudley

The Miami Chapter of the League of Women Voters has been selected as the host city to welcome 12 Colombian and Brazilian future legislators who will participate in internships throughout the United States during April, 2010.

Thanks to a grant from the Office of Citizen Exchanges of the U.S. Department of State, The League of Women Voters Education Fund will sponsor a two year program called 'Connecting Future Legislators with Civil Society.' The purpose is to strengthen the participants' understanding of legislative processes in the United States, Colombia, and Brazil, and to deepen their understanding about the role civil society plays in the process.

Participants will range from 25-35 and represent their nations' diversity. This is the first of 4 exchanges, ending in May, 2011, which will provide internships for 18 Colombians and 6 Brazilians in the U.S and 12 Americans who will intern in Colombia or Brazil.

Dorrit Marks and Annie Betancourt will coordinate the month long program in Miami which will include an April 5th orientation for all 12 fellows as well as internships with local government entities for the two fellows who will intern in Miami. All participants will also travel to Washington D.C. for a 2-day enrichment program.

Further information on the April activities will be forthcoming. In the meantime, mark your calendars for the April 5th evening reception. This will be an excellent opportunity to showcase the work of the local League of Women Voters. Members are encouraged to invite others who might be interested in this particular initiative and in possibly joining the League.

Anyone who would like to assist with transportation or contribute expertise to this program are encouraged to contact Annie Betancourt at 305-446-0880 or abribit@yahoo.com, or Dorrit Marks at 305-661-3906 or dkmarks@sprynet.com.

HOT TOPIC LUNCHEON HELD ON HEALTH CARE REFORM - by Terry Coble

The LWV of Miami-Dade County held a stimulating Hot Topic luncheon on health care reform entitled "Making It Work" on October 28th at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant. The impressive list of speakers included John Rock, M.D., the Dean of the new Florida International University College of Medicine, Laura Goodhue, Executive Director of Florida CHAIN, a health care advocacy organization, and Professors Mary I. Coombs and JoNel Newman of the University of Miami Law School. Long time Miami Herald reporter and columnist Robert Steinback moderated the event, and began the discussion by presenting the health insurance situation faced by self-employed people such as himself. Professor Coombs then provided an overview of the health care delivery system in the United States and how it compares to those of other industrialized countries. Professor Newman described the gaps in our system and how this has a particularly negative effect on low income people. Dr. Rock emphasized the need to view health from a broad perspective as including healthful living and choices as well as medical care. Finally, Laura Goodhue provided an up-to-the-minute update on the health care reform proposals being debated in Congress.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

We want to express our deep appreciation to the following people and organizations for their generous donations to the LWV of Miami-Dade County Education Fund:

Kathleen Close
Judith Cohen-Blecher
Florida Power & Light

Darlene Polo-Kramer
Sain Orr Foundation
Dorothy Serotta

Membership: Our Lifblood



**Making
Democracy
Work**

**League of Women Voters
Of Miami-Dade County**

The League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade Wants You!

The League of Women Voters has stood for good government for almost ninety years – no individual can take your place in helping us make democracy work. Since 1920, the League has worked at local, state and national levels to generate democratic conversation among members, educate the general public and policy makers on pressing issues, and take concerted action to bring about social change.

The League of Women Voters is the most trusted not for profit organization in America. As such, League chapters are often called upon to convene community issue forums as well as host candidate debates.

- The League is nonpartisan; we do not support or oppose candidates.
- The League registers and mobilizes people to vote.
- The League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County is one of 25 local Leagues and two Member-at-Large Units functioning in 31 of Florida's 67 most populous counties, and one of 850 local Leagues nationwide. There are Leagues in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong. In addition to the numerous grass roots efforts that local Leagues are known for, the League of Women Voters of Florida represents League positions in Tallahassee, while the League's National Lobby Corps represents League positions on Capitol Hill.

"No chance, no destiny, no fate can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul."
Carrie Chapman Catt, founder, the League of Women Voters.

LWV of Miami-Dade County, Inc.

5794 Bird Road - Box 146
Miami, Florida 33155

Visit us on the Web!

www.lwvmiamidade.org

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2009 / 2010 TODAY!

If you became a member in response to a letter from the national League of Women Voters, please renew your membership with your local League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County—you will still be a member of the national League, but some of your dues will be paid to our local League! Help support your local League!

_____ \$ 35 STUDENT MEMBERSHIP _____ \$250 CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT SOCIETY
_____ \$ 65 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP _____ \$500 IRON JAWED ANGELS
_____ \$105 CORNERSTONE MEMBERSHIP

NAME/NAMES _____ STREET _____
CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____ E-MAIL _____
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**Checks are payable to the League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County, Inc.
Membership dues are not deductible as a personal or business expense.
Mail to: 5794 Bird Rd. #146 Miami, FL 33155 (305) 666-0186.**