

Faces of Democracy

A campaign of election officials and poll workers to strengthen U.S. elections



Natalie Adona

Natalie Adona is the clerk-recorder/registrar of voters for Nevada County, California. She is a deputy member of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) and the County Records Association of California. She currently serves as the chair of the CACEO Constitution and Bylaws Committee and the co-chair of the California Ballot Design Advisory Committee. She is also an advisory board member of the Election Official Legal Defense Network, a member of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Elections Task Force, and a member of the Editorial Board for the Journal of Election Administration Research and Practice.

Prior to joining the Nevada County Clerk-Recorder's office, she was the senior research and learning associate for the Elections Program at Democracy Fund. Adona began her career as a poll worker trainer in the San Francisco Bay Area. She has also worked for MapLight.org, Project Vote, and the Fair Elections Center.



Cisco Aguilar

Francisco "Cisco" Aguilar was elected as Nevada's secretary of state in 2022 and assumed office on January 2, 2023.

Prior to being elected, Aguilar served as general counsel for Agassi Graf, the management company for Andre Agassi and Stefanie Graf, and the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education. He was responsible for communications and media, marketing and brand management, strategic partnerships, and legal and government affairs. He also served as special counsel to the chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education, Jim Rogers, and as a lawyer for the parent company of the Las Vegas and Reno NBC affiliates.

He also launched a sports technology startup company, Blueprint Sports & Entertainment, connecting athletes and brands where they live and play. In recent years, he worked at Adidas Global Headquarters in Herzogenaurach, Germany as a member of the brand sustainability team through a transatlantic fellowship with the Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH.

Aguilar is the founding chairman of Cristo Rey St. Viator College Preparatory High School. Cristo Rey serves students in one of Las Vegas' most vulnerable neighborhoods, and provides an innovative work-study program designed to prepare them for future careers. Governors Jim Gibbons and Brian Sandoval appointed him to the Nevada Athletic Commission, which regulates boxing and mixed martial arts. He served on the commission for eight years, two of which he served as chairman.



Aaron Ammons

Aaron Ammons was elected Champaign county clerk in 2018. Prior to that, he was an Urbana alderman and co-founder of a grassroots organization, Champaign Urbana Citizens for Peace & Justice. Aaron worked at the University of Illinois for 17 years and served as president of SEIU 73 Chapter 119. He served as a trustee for the \$22 billion State University Retirement System for 6 years and is married to state Representative Carol Ammons of the 103rd District. Clerk Ammons is the first African-American man to ever be elected as county clerk in the state of Illinois. He has led the way on mail-in voting and making voting more accessible in his state. Aaron is passionate about family, participatory democracy, voting rights, enacting our citizenship, economic and social justice, gardening, fishing, and basketball.



Shenna Bellows

Secretary of State Shenna Bellows is Maine's 50th secretary of state, and the state's first female secretary of state. She previously served as a state senator for four years. Prior to elected service, she worked as a nonprofit executive and as the executive director of the ACLU of Maine. She was a leading advocate on the ballot campaigns to pass marriage equality in Maine, the campaign to restore same-day voter registration, and the effort to pass ranked choice voting.



Jocelyn Benson

Jocelyn Benson is Michigan's 43rd Secretary of State. In this role, she has ensured elections are secure and accessible, and has dramatically improved Secretary of State driver and customer experiences for all Michiganders.

Benson oversaw Michigan's 2020 and 2022 general elections, both of which drew record-breaking turnout and were more secure than any prior election in state history. She also implemented new voting rights for all eligible Michiganders prior to the 2020 election, including the right to vote absentee, and oversaw more than 250 audits after the election, all of which affirmed its integrity and accuracy.

Benson is the author of *State Secretaries of State: Guardians of the Democratic Process*, the first major book on the role of the secretary of state in enforcing election and campaign finance laws. She is also a co-founder and former president of Military Spouses of Michigan, a network dedicated to providing support and services to military spouses and their children. In 2015, she became one of the youngest women in history to be inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. She received the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award and the Presidential Citizens Medal for her work in protecting democracy.



Dave Bjerke

Dave Bjerke is the director of elections & general registrar of voters for the City of Falls Church, VA. Bjerke has worked in elections for 16 years. First, he worked as an election specialist for Fairfax County, VA in 2007 with primary responsibility for the county's voting system, election equipment, and polling places, which included managing a team of 20-30 rovers. After successfully implementing a hybrid voting system using both DRE's and optical paper ballot scanners for the 2008 General Election, which was the highest turnout election up to that point.

He is a CERA graduate and has co-chaired the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Election Officials Liaison Committee, the Voter Registrar's Association of Virginia (VRAV) Region 5, and has served on the VRAV legislative committee for over a decade.



Karen Brinson Bell

Karen Brinson Bell became the executive director of the North Carolina State Board of Elections on June 1, 2019. As the state's chief elections official, she leads about 95 full-time employees at the agency, which is charged with administering elections, overseeing the 100 county boards of elections, and monitoring campaign finance compliance.

In her time as executive director, Brinson Bell has overseen more than 10 elections. She has spent most of her career in elections administration. From March 2011 to March 2015, she served as director for the Transylvania County (North Carolina) Board of Elections. Prior to that, she worked for five years as a district elections technician for the State Board of Elections, where she supported 12 county boards in western North Carolina in almost all facets of elections. Before her appointment as executive director, Brinson Bell was deputy director of the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center. In that role, she assisted election administrators on a national level, providing expert testimony and educational tools for conducting elections.



Bruce Brown

Bruce Brown is the secretary and lead member of the three-person City of Alexandria Electoral Board, a jurisdiction of 160,000 residents with 101,000 registered voters. He was first appointed to the board in 2010.

Prior to serving on the board, Brown spent 35 years at the U.S. Department of State. In 2006, he was appointed deputy assistant secretary for legislative affairs by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. After his service in the federal government, Brown worked as a senior management consultant for STG, Inc. of Reston Virginia.



Barb Byrum

Barb Byrum is currently serving in her third term as Ingham County Clerk, acting as the county's chief elections official. As clerk of one of the most populous counties in the state of Michigan, Byrum has successfully conducted 30 elections. Since 2016, she has been credentialed as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator by Election Center. In 2017, she served on Election Center's Security Task Force. Byrum lent her expertise to Michigan's Election Security Commission, the secretary of state's team of advisors tasked with strengthening and better securing elections in the state.

Byrum is a member of the Overseas Voting Initiative, a collaboration between the Council of State Governments and the U.S. Department of Defense to improve the process of voting by members of the military and civilians living abroad. Byrum previously served three terms as a Michigan State Representative in House District 67. During her time in the Legislature, Byrum served as the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Redistricting and Elections.



Leigh Chapman

Leigh M. Chapman is the former acting secretary of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, serving in that role from January 8, 2022, to January 2023. In this role, Chapman led the Pennsylvania Department of State. Previously, Chapman served as executive director of Deliver My Vote. She also held senior leadership positions at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and other nonpartisan, non-profit election reform and advocacy organizations. From 2015 to 2017, Chapman served as policy director at the Pennsylvania Department of State, advancing key agenda items including the implementation of electronic voter registration.



Virginia Chau

Virginia Chau supervised a local Voter Service and Polling Center in Denver, CO, which is one of the highest in-person voting and ballot drop-off sites in Denver County. She is also a corporate attorney by trade, AmeriCorps VISTA alumnus, and a 2022 Outstanding Woman in Business Award nominee presented by Good Business Colorado. Since transplanting from the East Coast, she has served for just about every election, including the most recent presidential election. She is unaffiliated with a political party, but cares deeply about voting rights and access for every eligible voter. As a first-generation American, her immigrant and refugee parents fled the cultural revolution in China without these rights.



Jim Condos

Former Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos served in that role from January 2011 to January 2023. He has an outstanding record of achievement from more than 30 years of elected public service. Prior to becoming secretary of state, he served on the South Burlington City Council for 18 years and as a Vermont State Senator from Chittenden County for 8 years.

Former Secretary Condos was raised in the Burlington area, and worked his entire private and public career in Vermont. His business background includes working for a Fortune 100 company, a \$30 million family-owned Vermont business, and a regulated utility company.



Kristin Connelly

Kristin Connelly was first elected as Contra Costa County, CA Clerk-Recorder-Registrar in 2022. Connelly's priorities for the office include increasing access to voting, ensuring transparency about elections processes, and battling misinformation about voting. She also wants to support and promote the important work of the Clerk-Recorder Division, which handles hundreds of thousands of property transactions and vital records each year.

Most recently, Connelly served as the president and CEO of the East Bay Leadership Council (EBLC) and the executive director of the Contra Costa Economic Partnership (CCEP). EBLC is an employer-led public policy advocacy organization focused on improving economic vitality and quality of life for all in the East Bay.

A native of Martinez, CA, Connelly earned a law degree from Fordham, a master's in public policy from Georgetown, and a bachelor's from UCLA as a Frank H. Buck Scholar. She practiced employment law at the firm Sidley Austin LLP in New York City. Connelly is grateful to be raising her two teenage children in Contra Costa with her husband, T.J.



Nedra Cooper

Nedra Cooper is a trainer for poll workers for the Clark County Elections Department, running a vote center over the past 16 years.

She has worked in the community as an activist since her youth, and is a member in many civil organizations, including as a founding member of the MLK Community, founded in 1981, focused on education. Cooper was instrumental in securing a building for after-school tutoring run by members. She is also a life member of the Las Vegas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, acting as the state social action coordinator and the chapter social action chair. In 2020, just before the pandemic, she organized and coordinated a reenactment of the Selma March for voting rights. She received a letter from President Clinton as a nominee for the President's Volunteer Service Award, and has volunteered for the Red Cross and received Congressional Recognition as a member of the Disaster Action Team.



Isaac Cramer

Isaac Cramer serves as the executive director of the Charleston County, SC Board of Voter Registration and Elections. Cramer has played a significant role in advocating for election reforms in South Carolina. He has actively worked towards improving election administration and accessibility, earning respect within the state's election community. He serves as the first vice president for the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials and completed the national Certified Election Registration Administrator program in 2023.

Cramer's commitment to excellence has garnered prestigious recognition, including the receipt of the 2022 EAC Clearinghouse Award for Partnership at the Polls and the 2023 South Carolina Association of Counties J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award. He has twice been honored with the State of South Carolina's "Excellence in Elections" award: first for his efforts in expanding absentee voting and enhancing voter engagement through the impactful initiative "Your Vote, Our Veterans," and second for his instrumental role in implementing a Satellite Voting Unit for early voting, coupled with outreach endeavors.

Additionally, he serves as vice chair on the National Association of Counties' elections subcommittee and as one of the legislative chairs for the National Association of Election Officials. He also serves on the Board of Advisors for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

He received his BA in Political Science from Wheaton College (IL) and continues to work towards protecting every citizen's right to vote while supporting election officials in their work.



Nick Custodio

Nick Custodio has served as deputy city commissioner for Philadelphia City Commissioner Lisa Deeley since 2018. In that role, he has led the most aggressive election modernization efforts in the history of the city of Philadelphia. This includes: upgrades to the city's legacy DRE voting system to a modern system with a voter verifiable paper ballot, preparing and implementing a \$10 million grant to both conduct the 2020 general election in a safe manner and build a mail-house to prepare and receive new no-excuse, mail-in ballots. Custodio oversaw the relocation of the city's ballot counting operations for the 2020 general election to the Pennsylvania Convention Center to ensure safety during a COVID-19 spike. Custodio also oversees budgeting and communications for the Department of the Philadelphia City Commissioners.



Dustin Czarny

Dustin M. Czarny is a longtime political activist in Syracuse, NY, and has served as Onondaga County's election commissioner since January 1, 2013. He quickly became known as a behind the scenes political operative specializing in GOTV. During his political career, he was often called upon to serve as an advisor in electoral law and parliamentary procedure.

In 2017, his fellow Democratic commissioners in the New York State Election Commissioners Association selected him to serve as caucus chair, and he continues to serve in that capacity. As caucus chair, he organizes and leads the Democratic election commissioners from the diverse 62 counties throughout New York state. In this role, he often appears in front of the New York State Legislature, advocating not only for his caucus but for all county boards of elections. He has been proud to be part of successful campaigns to bring direct funding to local boards since 2019. He also has worked on vital reforms such as early voting, the unified June primary, voter registration reform, absentee ballot canvassing reforms, and electronic poll books.

During the 2020 census and redistricting period, he advocated for citizen-led redistricting to New York State. In 2019 he led a successful effort to change the City of Syracuse's charter to bring citizen-led redistricting to New York for the first time. In 2022 the Syracuse Common Council made history by passing these maps to be in place for the 2023 election. He hopes this success will lead to similar reforms in Onondaga County and New York State.



Josh Daniels

Josh Daniels served as the clerk of Utah County, Utah, from June 2021 to January 2023. From January 2019 until he was appointed clerk, he served as Utah County's chief deputy clerk/auditor. During his time with Utah County, the clerk/auditor's office implemented performance-based budgeting and piloted mobile voting for overseas, elderly, and disabled voters. In 2020, Government Technology magazine named Daniels among its "top 25 doers, dreamers, and drivers."

Prior to his roles with Utah County, Daniels served in several public policy and government relations roles at the federal, state, and local levels. He served as a key advisor to a member of Congress, advising on energy and transportation issues, and oversaw the growth and public policy for an international charter school company. He also previously worked as the policy director at the Libertas Institute, a libertarian think tank in Utah. He earned a bachelor's degree at Brigham Young University and a law degree at the University of Houston. From 2001 to 2010, Daniels served in the Marine Corps, with deployments in Iraq and Morocco.



Cathy Darling Allen

Cathy Darling Allen has been the elected county clerk and registrar of voters in Shasta County, California, since 2004. A DC native, elections and politics have been a constant in her life. She has a deep appreciation for the importance of election administration, and works daily to serve her community by facilitating access to the ballot. She lives in Redding with her husband and granddaughter.



Lisa Deeley

Lisa Deeley is the chairwoman of the Philadelphia City Commissioners. She was first elected in 2015 and has made it a priority to make voting and elections easily accessible to the citizens of Philadelphia. She led the department through the administration of the 2020 presidential election, unwavering in her responsibilities while under the critical scrutiny of the entire world during a devastating pandemic. She successfully instituted mail-in voting for Philadelphia, and has continued to champion for its continuation so that she may bring elections to our entire voting population.



Adrian Fontes

Adrian Fontes was elected as Arizona's 21st Secretary of State in 2022. Secretary Fontes is a proud Arizona native, an honorable veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and the father of three daughters, who has spent a lifetime fighting for justice and defending our Democracy. Fontes served on active duty from 1992 to 1996 and was nominated for a meritorious commission. His service to our country taught him the importance of dedication, discipline, and sacrifice to forcefully fight for the American dream.

He's spent his career advocating for justice and fighting for those who are disadvantaged — first as a prosecutor with the Denver District Attorney and then at the Maricopa County Attorney's office. He later led the International Prosecution Unit at the Arizona Attorney General's Office. He practiced law for 15 years before running for office in 2016 when he was elected Maricopa County Recorder.

As Recorder, Fontes revolutionized the election system by ensuring that every eligible Arizonan had the access they needed to vote. He enhanced ballot tracking technology and increased process transparency, winning recognition and awards from nationwide election organizations.

Fontes is committed to preserving integrity in our elections, making voting easier for registered voters, and ensuring that Arizona's business community has a non-partisan partner in the Secretary's office. He serves as a member of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission Standards Board, and as a member of its Standards & Practices and Voluntary Voting System Guidelines committees.



Tate Fall

Tate Fall currently serves as the Director of Elections for Cobb County, Georgia. She has previously served as the Deputy Director of Elections for Arlington County, VA, a Communications Specialist for the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC), and as a Voting Rights Advocate for the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program. While serving as the Deputy Director in Arlington, the office went through several implementations of new laws including Same Day Voter Registration and Ranked Choice Voting.

Tate's focus in her new role as the Director for Cobb County is to inject transparency into every piece of how Cobb administers elections. Tate has her B.S. in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, a Master of Public Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Election Administration all from Auburn University. War Eagle!



Bill Gates

Bill Gates was reelected to another four-year term on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors in 2020 in Maricopa County, Arizona. He was first elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2016. Gates served as the chairman of the board in 2022, a position he held in 2019 when, among other things, he negotiated a reorganization of the Maricopa County Elections Department with then-Maricopa County Recorder Adrian Fontes. Prior to joining the Board of Supervisors, Gates served on the Phoenix City Council from 2009-2016, including a stint as vice mayor in 2013. Gates has been a lifelong Republican. He led the Arizona Republican Party's election integrity efforts in 2006 and 2008, organizing a cadre of poll watchers and attorneys to ensure that every eligible vote was counted. He testified on October 7, 2021, before the U.S. House Oversight and Reform Committee about election integrity in regards to the results of Maricopa County's 2020 General Election, and expressed concerns with the "audit" of Maricopa County ballots and equipment by Arizona Senate contractors.



Ken Hamm

Ken Hamm is a poll worker in Las Vegas, Nevada. He trains other poll workers and has worked at the polls in several positions for years. He believes deeply that elections are a core part of American culture, and works in a nonpartisan, nonpolitical manner to ensure that every voter has the chance to cast their ballot.



Neal Kelley

Neal Kelley was the registrar of voters for Orange County, California, the fifth largest voting jurisdiction in the United States, serving more than 1.9 million registered voters. Kelley served as the registrar of voters from 2005 through 2022 and led the office through the largest cycle of elections since Orange County was founded in 1889. In his role as the county's chief election official, he led an organization responsible for conducting elections, verifying petitions, and maintaining voter records.

Prior to joining Orange County, Kelley developed and grew several companies of his own, employing hundreds of people from 1989 to 2004. He was also an adjunct professor with Riverside Community College's Business Administration Department, and served as a police officer in Southern California during the mid-1980's.



Carly Koppes

Carly Koppes is the county clerk and recorder in Weld County, Colorado. She has been working in the clerk and recorder's office for 18 years. She has mostly worked in the Election Department, but has also worked in the Recording and Motor Vehicle Departments. She received her Colorado Election Official Certification from the Colorado Secretary of State in October 2007 and finished her national designation of Certified Elections/Registration Administrators (CERA) through the Elections Center's Professional Education Program at Auburn University in July of 2014. Koppes is a 2016 graduate of the Leadership Program of the Rockies and in 2019 she received her Public Leadership certification from Pepperdine University through the International Association of Government Officials.

Koppes is the youngest person to be elected to the position of Weld County Clerk and Recorder. Carly is also currently serving as the past president for the Colorado County Clerks Association.



Brianna Lennon

Brianna Lennon is the county clerk for Boone County, Missouri. She was elected to the position in 2018. Prior to her election as Boone County clerk, Lennon served as an assistant attorney general in the consumer protection division of the Missouri Attorney General's Office before joining the Missouri Secretary of State's Office under former Secretary Jason Kander. As the deputy director of elections and first coordinator of the Election Integrity Unit in the Secretary of State's Office, she worked closely with local election authorities across the state to ensure that elections were simple, secure, and accessible for voters.



Edward Lindsey

In addition to being a member of the Georgia State Election Board, Edward Lindsey is a partner in Dentons' public policy practice and serves as the head of the firm's Georgia state government affairs team. His focus is on advancing the public policy interests and objectives of clients in the transportation, infrastructure, health care, and education sectors.

Edward has more than 39 years of legal, political, and leadership experience, including 10 years as a Georgia state representative and three terms as the Georgia House majority whip. He also served on the state's House Appropriations, Judiciary, Education, Ways and Means, and Rules Committees. In addition, he served as a member of the Uniform Law Commission and the Georgia Commission on Family Violence. *James Magazine*, a statewide political journal, recognized him as one of Georgia's most influential legislators while in office and has recognized him as one of the state's top lobbyists and political lawyers since leaving office.

Edward has also been actively engaged in election law issues over the years representing candidates and elected officials in election-related matters. In January 2022, he was appointed by Georgia Speaker David Ralston to the Georgia State Election Board.



Amber McReynolds

Amber McReynolds is one of the country's leading experts on election administration and policy. In 2021, McReynolds was appointed by the president and confirmed by the United States Senate to serve as a governor for the United States Postal Service. She is the former director of elections for the city and county of Denver, Colorado, and the former CEO for the National Vote At Home Institute and Coalition. McReynolds also served on the Colorado Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission in 2021.

McReynolds was recognized as a 2018 Top Public Official of the Year by Governing Magazine for her transformational work to improve the voting experience in Denver and across Colorado; she was recognized as one of the Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business in Colorado in 2020; and was named as a 2021 Titan CEO. McReynolds serves on the National Task Force on Election Crises, National Council on Election Integrity, City Year Denver Board of Directors, Represent Women Board of Directors, Election Reformers Network Board of Directors, and the Women's Foundation of Colorado Empowerment Council.



Denise Merrill

Denise Wright Merrill served as Connecticut's 73rd secretary of the state from 2011 to 2022. In that role, Merrill served as chief elections official and business registrar for the state of Connecticut. As the state's election officer, Merrill supported and expanded democratic participation, ensuring that every citizen's rights and privileges were protected and that every vote was counted accurately. In 2016, she served as president of the National Association of Secretaries of State. In that role, she helped institute the first committee on election security with the Department of Homeland Security.

Prior to her election as secretary of the state, Merrill served as a Connecticut state representative from the 54th General Assembly district for 17 years, representing the towns of Mansfield and Chaplin. First elected to the General Assembly in 1994, she rose to House majority leader, the second most powerful position in the Connecticut House of Representatives. She also served as the House chair of the budget-writing Appropriations Committee and vice chair of the Committees on Education and Government Administration and Elections. In 2009, Denise Merrill was named by her colleagues in the legislature as "Most Respected by the Other Side of the Aisle" and "Most Effective Legislator" in a poll by Connecticut Magazine.



Spenser Mestel

Spenser Mestel is an independent journalist and poll worker based in Brooklyn, New York. He first started working the polls for the 2012 election, and since then he's worked two more presidential elections, two primaries, and a municipal election when both early voting and e-poll books were introduced for the first time. His work has appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, The Intercept, The Atlantic, VICE, and Bolts.



Roxanna Moritz

Roxanna Moritz has been a public servant for more than 20 years. She most recently served as auditor and commissioner of elections for Scott County, Iowa. Moritz worked closely with voters, other government agencies, outside organizations, and a variety of other strategic thinkers and stakeholders. She was selected by her peers to serve as president of the Iowa State Association of County Auditors in 2020. During her tenure, she worked to ensure a safe and secure election despite extraordinary circumstances, and provided leadership, support, and guidance to colleagues across the state facing similar challenges.



Kathy Placencia

Kathy Placencia is the Director of Elections for Rhode Island Secretary of State Gregg M. Amore. Before joining the Department of State, Placencia served as the Administrator of Elections for the City of Providence for seventeen years.

Placencia is a member of the National Association of State Election Directors (NASD) and the Elections Assistance Commission (EAC). Placencia's leadership led to her starring in the esteemed documentary "No Time to Fail," which showcased election officials during the historic 2020 Election. She frequently travels the nation to speak on panels to discuss the documentary and her expertise in Elections.

Placencia previously served as a board member for Omni Development Corporation on the advisory board for R.I.S.E (Realizing Inspiration & Sustaining Excellence) Women's Leadership Conference and as a Board Member of the Providence YMCA. She received her Bachelor of Science with a Concentration in Human Services from Springfield College.



Brad Raffensperger

Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger is the CEO and owner of Tendon Systems, LLC. Tendon is a specialty contracting and engineering design firm with nearly 150 employees. The firm has operated in 35 different states. Raffensperger also owns and operates a specialty steel manufacturing plant based in Forsyth County. Additionally, he served two terms in the Georgia General Assembly from 2015 to 2019.

He is a licensed professional engineer in over 30 states. Brad and his wife, Tricia, have been married for 42 years and live in Johns Creek. Brad is a member of North Point Community Church.



Stephen Richer

Stephen Richer is the elected Maricopa County recorder, statutorily responsible for document recordings, voter registration, early voting, and provisional ballots in Maricopa County — home to 4.6 million residents in the greater Phoenix, Arizona, area.

Prior to being elected Recorder, Stephen worked as a lawyer and businessperson.

Stephen was named “Arizonan of the Year” in 2021 by The Arizona Republic and “Republican Politician of the Year” in 2021 by The Phoenix New Times.

Stephen likes fantasy books, sports, cats, and Diet Coke. And his wife. A lot.



Rob Rock

Rob Rock currently serves as Rhode Island’s deputy secretary of state/director of administration. He began working at the Rhode Island Department of State as an intern in the summer of 2005. Rob was an elections assistant from 2005 to 2013 when he left to become the town administrator in the town of Richmond, RI. In 2015, Rob returned to the RI Department of State to serve as Secretary of State Nellie M. Gorbea’s director of elections.

Rob currently serves as the incoming president of the National Association of State Election Directors’ (NASED) Executive Board and, in 2020, was the chair of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist states to improve the accuracy of voter rolls.



Justin Roebuck

Justin Roebuck serves as the chief election officer for Ottawa County, Michigan, overseeing the elections process in 23 local cities and townships and for the county’s 220,000 voters. Roebuck’s passion is to build trust, with honesty and transparency, in the elections process. He was honored by his colleagues as Michigan’s “County Clerk of the Year” in 2021.

Roebuck currently serves as vice chair of the Standards Board of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, as the chair of the Michigan Council of Election Officials, and co-chair of the Legislative Committee of the Michigan Association of County Clerks. He was appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court to the Michigan Judicial Council, formed in 2021 to create a statewide strategic plan for the judicial branch. He has been appointed by Governors Snyder and Whitmer to the Michigan Electronic Recording Commission, governing the standards for real property documents recorded in Michigan, where he is currently serving as chair.



Omar Sabir

Omar Sabir was sworn in as city commissioner of the county of Philadelphia on January 6, 2020. His primary goal as commissioner is to empower and enable all Philadelphians to participate in the voting process by addressing voter apathy and educating communities about the importance of civic engagement. Prior to his election, Sabir served as a senior staffer in the Office of Pennsylvania State Senator Vincent Hughes and held senior roles at the Nathaniel Sabir Memorial Scholarship Fund, Citizens for State Representative Louise Williams Bishop, and the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania.

Sabir is committed to increased voter turnout across Philadelphia, particularly in historically disadvantaged communities. He has been honored by former U.S. Rep. Robert Brady for his work as the Founder of Vote Philly Vote, an initiative that aims to increase voter turnout across the city of Philadelphia until more than 90% of all registered voters participate in all city elections. Recently, Sabir was commended by President Joe Biden for his exceptional work in supporting voter participation in Philadelphia elections.



Al Schmidt

Al Schmidt was sworn in as secretary of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania on June 29, 2023. He previously served as city commissioner of Philadelphia for ten years. As city commissioner, Schmidt — a Republican — was one of three members on the bipartisan Board of Elections where he served as vice chairman. Since first being elected in November 2011, he worked to modernize election operations, improve efficiency, and bring greater integrity to the election process. Schmidt is an advocate of open data initiatives and releasing previously unavailable election data to the public. He has also produced a number of election-related reports, including investigations that have exposed vulnerabilities in the election process and voting irregularities. He has been an outspoken critic of threats against election workers — testifying in front of Congress and speaking out in the media on the threats he received during and after the 2020 election. Originally from Pittsburgh, Schmidt is a former senior analyst at the non-partisan U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and served as a policy analyst for the Presidential Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States.



Shane Schoeller

Shane Schoeller is the county clerk for Greene County, Missouri. He was first elected in 2014. Now in his second term, it is his privilege to continue working alongside a tremendous team of public servants who work diligently to ensure all Greene County citizens are well served in the various duties of the office. In his role as the chief election official for Greene County, Schoeller was appointed by U.S. Senator Roy Blunt in early 2015 to serve as a member of the advisory board of the federal Election Assistance Commission.

Before serving as Greene County's chief election official, Schoeller served in the Missouri House of Representatives from a district covering parts of northern Greene County, including the city of Springfield. He was unanimously chosen by his peers as the House's second-ranking official in 2011 and eventually served as speaker. Schoeller was the Republican nominee for Missouri secretary of state in 2012, winning a competitive three-way primary with strong support from grassroots conservatives across Missouri.



Steve Simon

Steve Simon is Minnesota's 22nd secretary of state. He was sworn into office on January 5, 2015, and as Minnesota's chief elections administrator, pledged to "work with anyone, of any political affiliation, from any part of our state" to protect, defend, and strengthen the right to vote in Minnesota. As secretary, he partners with township, city, and county officials to organize elections on behalf of Minnesota's nearly four million eligible voters, and to ensure that the election system is fair. His goals include expanding access and removing barriers to voting, making business services as streamlined as possible, strengthening protections for victims of domestic violence and, most importantly, being a secretary of state for all Minnesotans.

Before being elected secretary of state, Simon served in the Minnesota House of Representatives for ten years representing the communities of St. Louis Park and Hopkins.

Simon spent much of his time in the legislature immersed in elections issues, including serving as the chair of the House Elections Committee in 2013 and 2014. He led on many of the election reforms over the last several years, including no-excuse absentee voting, online voter registration, and easier access to voting for Minnesotans overseas, including those in the military. Simon also served as assistant attorney general of Minnesota and worked as a lawyer in private practice.



George Stern

As the former county clerk and recorder in Jefferson County, Colorado, George Stern oversaw one of the most public-facing offices in Colorado government, affecting almost every person in the large and diverse county. The clerk's office conducts elections, runs the county's DMV, and carries out many other important administrative tasks, including issuing marriage licenses and recording public documents. Stern came to the clerk's office after gaining extensive professional experience in both the public and private sectors. He was a public high school teacher and baseball coach before studying voting rights and policy implementation in law school. He served in the Obama White House, focusing on health care, veterans issues, and government ethics, and in Governor John Hickenlooper's office, focusing on everything from marijuana regulation to marriage equality and government accountability. Stern also worked as a business consultant with McKinsey, helping Fortune 500 companies and various governments improve their strategies and operations.



Natalie Tennant

Natalie E. Tennant served eight years as West Virginia's elected Secretary of State earning the reputation as an innovative and visionary leader who was recognized nationally as a pioneer in elections administration, business development and financial accountability.

In the Fall of 2022, Tennant was a Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics Resident Fellow where she mentored students in public service, community involvement and policy development. She is also a voting rights advisor for the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law and a member of Issue One's National Council on Election Integrity.

Natalie Tennant (cont.)

A respected voting rights leader, she helps expand and influence voter registration opportunities across the country. Tennant testified in front of U.S. Senate and Congressional committees and state legislative committees about the importance of improving the election process and access to voting.

She is the first West Virginian chosen to participate in the highly respected Aspen Institute's Rodel Fellowship for Public Leadership that brings together a select group of America's most promising political leaders for bipartisan discussion and problem solving. Tennant was a television anchor and reporter in her home state for more than a decade.

**Tonya Wichman**

Tonya Wichman began her career at the Defiance County Board of Elections in May 2015. She's worked with her team to implement new election voting, transitioned from paper poll books to electronic, enhanced security at her office through the directive of the Ohio SOS, and built a team of election specialists, seasonal employees, vote location manager, and poll workers who deserve much credit to the successful election in Defiance County.

Wichman is certified as an Ohio Registered Elections Official, has completed a Master's Certificate in High Performance Leadership through NACo, and completed national certification as a Certified Election Registration Administrator through Auburn University in Alabama and the Election Center in Texas.

She has served for 17 elections in Defiance County, including two presidential years. She is also a member of the Ohio Association of Elections Officials and serves on the legislative committee. Wichman has been a mentor for four other counties through the Ohio Secretary of State Mentorship Program. Before serving on the board of elections, Wichman managed two businesses with her husband for 17 years.

She enjoys spending time through outreach programs with local schools, nursing homes, and organizations in the Defiance County area. Along with her husband, she founded the Election Ambassadors Scholarship program through the Defiance Area Foundation as a way to engage and educate future leaders of Defiance County.

**Wesley Wilcox**

Wesley Wilcox, a nationally Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA), is the supervisor of elections for Marion County, Florida. He was first elected on November 6, 2012. He was originally hired in 2001 as the systems administrator and promoted to assistant supervisor, a position he held for seven years, before being elected. He possesses over 30 years of experience in the elections industry, and is a Master Florida Certified Elections Professional. Wilcox is a member of the Florida Supervisors of Elections Association representing Florida's 67 election supervisors and is past president of the association as of May 2022. He was notably the first recipient of the President's Award in 2016 for outstanding service to the association.

Wilcox currently serves as the chairman of the Elections Infrastructure Center for Information Sharing and Analysis Center. He was recently selected to serve on the Local Leadership Council of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, as well as the Advisory Board of the Election Official Legal Defense Network.



Julie Wise

Julie Wise was elected director of King County Elections in November 2015. King County is the 13th largest county in the nation with over 1.4 million registered voters and is one of the largest vote-by-mail jurisdictions in the world. In her twenty years of service to King County voters as an election administrator, Julie has been a champion for increasing both accessibility and security in our elections.

A state and nationally certified election administrator, Wise has been recognized at many levels for her contributions to elections, including: Washington's Korean American Coalition's Rocky Kim Pioneer Award, the national Election Center Democracy Award, 2019 Fix Democracy First Elected Official of the Year, and the Voter Outreach Award in 2017 and 2021 from the secretary of state.

Wise was the first election administrator in the country to invite the Department of Homeland Security to do an audit of King County Elections' ballot processing facility and the physical security of ballots throughout the chain of custody. She was the first county elections leader in the state to ask the Washington State Auditor's Cybersecurity Team to partner with Elections' dedicated cybersecurity staff to assess the department's cybersecurity.

Driven to remove barriers while prioritizing accuracy, security, and transparency, Wise has pursued significant reforms and innovative solutions. She expanded voter outreach and education, increasing voter access through the Voter Education Fund, a first-of-its-kind public philanthropic partnership that provides funds to community organizations doing vital grassroots voter education and engagement work in underserved communities. Wise massively expanded ballot drop boxes from 10 to over 70 and successfully added two languages, providing access to election services and complete voting materials in five languages total. Her push for prepaid postage in King County led to statewide action resulting in prepaid postage for all Washington voters.



Claire Woodall

Claire Woodall has been the Executive Director of the City of Milwaukee Election Commission since July 2020. Before becoming director, she was with the Election Commission for eight years, except for a brief stint as city clerk in a small Milwaukee suburb in 2019. Woodall was born and raised in Birmingham, AL, and attributes her passion for voting rights to her upbringing in the South by progressive parents who instilled the importance of inclusion and representation in her from a young age.

During 2020, barriers to voting were exacerbated for communities of color who were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in Milwaukee. Woodall and her staff worked to maximize voting opportunities and voter education so that no citizen felt like they were forced to choose between their vote and their health. The Election Commission continues to work towards its mission of ensuring that every eligible voter who wishes to cast a ballot has the means and information to do so. Woodall holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and a Certified Public Manager (CPM) certification from the University of Wisconsin.

About Faces of Democracy

Election officials and poll workers are our neighbors and friends — and they make our democracy work. Issue One's Faces of Democracy campaign, powered by election workers themselves, aims to strengthen our country's critical election infrastructure by winning sufficient, regular, and predictable federal funding for state and locally-administered elections, bolstering protections for election workers and facilities, and building trust in our system of free and fair elections.