

Presidential Search

Candidate's CV

JOHN E. THRASHER

110 Aegean Vista Way • St. Augustine, Florida 32080

LEGISLATIVE AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Florida Senate; Chair, Rules Committee, Vice Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Higher Education Appropriations; Committee Member, Education Committee, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, Policy Steering Committee on Ways and Means, Select Committee on Florida's Economy, Policy Committee on Commerce and Industry, Budget Conference on Higher Education, and the Joint Legislative Budget Commission

2009 - Present

As a State Senator I have successfully advocated for several Florida State University (FSU) education policy and funding projects. Working with FSU leadership, I have engaged the Seminole Caucus – a network of legislators, lobbyists, boosters, and supporters that are a part of a coalition to generate grassroots support for FSU. Each year of my legislative service I have worked with this network to craft an effective legislative agenda. This year the legislative agenda was designed to support performance standards for preeminence and secure a \$75 million multi-year legislative funding commitment for FSU. We were able to acquire an additional \$5 million, for a total of \$20 million annually. I persuaded my Senate colleagues to support these important priorities.

County Legislative Delegations; Chair, Duval County (2010-11), Flagler County (2010-11, 2014), St. Johns County (2011-12), Putnam County (2012-13), and Volusia County (2011-12)

2010 - Present

As chair, I worked with city, county, and other local officials, as well as community organizations and local residents to ensure that their concerns are heard and represented in the legislature. This bipartisan collaborative effort has required extensive listening, learning, and engagement with individuals and groups offering public testimony on legislative issues, appropriations and local bills. These local delegations are crucial to implementation of local policy initiatives at the state level as well as garnering funding for specific county programs and constituent based services. As delegation chair, I work closely with diverse constituencies and have gained experience translating these concerns in the policy arena.

St. Johns River Legislative Caucus; Founding Member

2011 - Present

Founded and formed the St. Johns River Caucus made up of legislators representing counties that border this 310-mile American Heritage River. I developed collaborative support and a network of local, state and federal advocates to formulate statewide programs to restore and protect the St. Johns River. This bipartisan caucus has effectively brought attention and funding for programs to enhance the long-term preservation of the St. Johns River.

Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce; *Of Counsel*

Jacksonville, FL

2009

Provided voluntary strategic direction to the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce in this appointed civic position. The Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce is a network of both large and small business owners as well as industry, government and community leaders.

Foundation for Florida's Future; *Board Member*

Tallahassee, FL

2008-09

Engaged in education policy development with Foundation in their efforts to improve quality education in Florida. Participating on the Board with other members who were advocating educational achievement and accountability on behalf of students. The foundation advocates support for policies based on seven core principles: rigorous academic standards, standardized measurement, data-driven accountability, effective teachers and leaders, outcome-based funding, school choice and digital learning.

Clay County Commission; *Commissioner*

2007-2008 (Gubernatorial appointment to fill unexpired term)

Part of 5-member commission responsible for development and approval of an annual budget for the operation of county governmental units, as well as the funding of capital projects, such as road paving, drainage projects, and construction of facilities. County services range from indigent health care to public branch libraries, recreation to road, bridge and drainage maintenance, from building permit issuance and inspections to fire and rescue.

FSU Board of Trustees; *Chair*

2001 - 2005

As the first chair of the FSU Board of Trustees, I assisted in overseeing several initiatives and was honored to enjoy constant interaction with the faculty, staff and students at the university. I participated in all of the Board's standing committees and we addressed issues such as civic responsibility, recruitment of Eppes Professors, budget oversight, increased enrollment, student retention, minority recruitment, student success initiatives, unprecedented facility construction, athletics controversies, Pathways of Excellence initiative faculty hiring, recruiting the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, additional student parking, expanded national student fellowships, increased university financial reserves, as well as assisting with a major capital campaign. The Board of Trustees also reviewed and approved legislative budget requests for additional resources and we provided advocacy for the issues through the Board of Governors and to the Legislature. I also met regularly with the direct support organizations and their leadership, including the FSU Foundation, Alumni Association, Seminole Boosters, and the Research Foundation. I kept an "open-door" policy for hearing faculty and student concerns. My enthusiasm for interacting with the university community was fueled by the exposure to constant, many new ideas and areas of discovery and scholarship in all of our disciplines. I also worked with the Board of Governors and other universities presidents and chairs to lobby for the State University System legislative priorities.

Florida House of Representatives; *Speaker (1998-2000); Committee Member, Education Committee, Education Appropriations Committee and the Select Committee on Education Facilities & Others*

1992 - 2000

As a member, and later Speaker, I was able to build bipartisan coalitions around important education policy, as well as developing strong relationships to be effective. As Speaker, I was responsible for setting a legislative policy agenda and leading the 120-member House of Representatives. I learned the importance of ensuring professional pay levels and the benefit of a modernized working environment. Staff members were given regular pay raises and their offices, and the House chambers, were renovated and modernized. I worked with a leadership team to accomplish several policy goals as well as developing smooth procedures in a bipartisan manner. Education was my top priority as Speaker and we were able to infuse the education system with new funding, working with the Senate and Governor.

Clay County School Board; *Chairman 1989 - 1990*

1986 - 1990

Elected as a member of a 5 person school board. Responsible for developing and approving an annual budget, conducting meetings to hear the concerns of parents, teachers and administrators. Worked with the Superintendent of schools on all aspects of county school operations, facilities, funding, accountability, and performance. Assisted the Superintendent with resource distribution and personal appointments.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Southern Strategy Group; *Partner*

Tallahassee, FL 2001 - 2009

Southern Strategy Group is one of the largest governmental relations firms in the Southeastern United States. As a partner, I worked with the other partners to formulate a strategic business plan, oversee the budget, and negotiate with administrative officials and network with business organizations to develop plans and strategies. I served as an advocate for an assorted group of clients providing assistance with legislative, executive and regulatory challenges. Working with diverse group of colleagues and interest groups on a variety of public policy issues was stimulating and productive. I worked with all levels of government officials in navigating complex regulations, licensure laws and legislation. Leading a large complex organization while representing a combination of different clients with numerous challenges required hard work and extensive communication. It was incredibly rewarding to build consensus between clients and stakeholders to achieve successful outcomes.

Smith Hulsey & Busey; *Of Counsel*

Jacksonville, FL 1996 - 2001

As an attorney, *Of Counsel*, for Smith Hulsey & Busey, I assisted a variety of clients on numerous cases. I also developed strategies and provided advice to businesses on regulatory

and other matters. I mentored junior attorneys and enjoyed troubleshooting challenges for clients.

Florida Medical Association; *General Counsel*

Jacksonville, FL

1976 - 1996

As General Counsel, I provided legal counsel to the association and its members in areas such as medical records, subpoena compliance, balance billing and advertising. I also actively monitored state agency and board actions on rules and regulations and handled complaints from physicians and was extensively involved in the legislative process. I learned to importance of building coalitions, developing partnerships with various stakeholders on legislative issues, and negotiating the diverse viewpoints of professionals on particular policy issues.

Florida House Select Committee on Impeachment; *Attorney*

Tallahassee, FL 1975

As an attorney, I worked with legislative staff in the House Select Committee on Impeachment on the case of three Florida Supreme Court Justices.

Raymond, Wilson, Karl, Conway and Barr, P.A.; *Attorney*

Daytona Beach, FL 1973 - 1975

As an attorney, I performed legal research, drafted legal documents, and developed client relationships. I also assisted the senior attorneys in court, participated in litigation, and represented clients in administrative matters.

EDUCATION

FSU, Tallahassee, FL

Bachelor of Science, Business - 1965

FSU, Tallahassee, FL

Juris Doctorate, Law, with honors - 1972

SELECTED HONORS AND AWARDS

- FSU Circle of Gold Award (The Bernard F. Sliger Award)
- FSU Faculty Senate Torch Award
- FSU Athletic Hall of Fame (Moore-Stone Award)
- Phi Kappa Phi

- Florida Association of School Administrators Raymond B. Stewart Gavel of Authority Award
- The Florida School Board Association Legislator of the Year 1996 and 1997
- Duval County School Board Award for outstanding leadership 1997
- Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida Liberty Bell Award for Outstanding Service to Higher Education
- Florida Association of District School Superintendents Legislator of the Year 1997
- Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges - Champion of Students
- The True Seminole Award - FSU Student Government

MILITARY SERVICE

U.S. Army 1966 - 1970

Captain, Honorable Discharge

Served in Germany & the Republic of Vietnam

Decorations:

Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster
 Army commendation Medal
 Vietnam Service Medal
 Vietnam Campaign Medal
 National Campaign Medal
 Various Campaign and Unit Awards

MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING Florida Bar, 1973 - present

PERSONAL

Born in Columbia, South Carolina

Moved with my parents to Florida at age four

Attended public schools in Jacksonville, Florida

Married to Jean Moore in 1964

Children: Jennifer, Jon and Julie (2 FSU graduates)

Grandchildren: eight