



Florida's Minority Trailblazers: The Men and Women Who Changed the Face of Florida Government (Florida Government and Politics)

Susan MacManus

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“Saves a piece of Florida political history by narrating the personal stories of the state’s ‘minority trailblazers’ from the Civil Rights Movement to the present day.”—**Richard E. Foglesong**, author of *Immigrant Prince: Mel Martinez, and the American Dream*

“Captures Florida’s ongoing political transition from a ‘yellow-dog,’ lily-white state to one where diversity is beginning to make an impact on politics.”—**Doug Lyons**, former senior editorial writer, *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*

Florida experienced a population surge during the 1960s that diversified the state and transformed it into a microcosm of the nation, but discrimination remained pervasive. With the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, along with later rulings on redistricting and term limits, the opportunity to participate in government became more and more possible for previously silenced voices.

Drawing primarily from personal interviews, Susan MacManus recounts the stories of the first minority men and women—both Democrat and Republican—who were elected or appointed to state legislative, executive, and judicial offices and to the U.S. Congress since the 1960s. She reveals what drove these leaders to enter office, how they ran their campaigns, what kinds of discrimination they encountered, what rewards each found during their terms, and what advice they would share with aspiring politicians.

In addition to the words of the officeholders themselves, MacManus provides helpful timelines, photos, biographical sketches of each politician, and election results from path-breaking victories. The book also includes comprehensive rosters of minority individuals who have held state offices and those who have gone on to represent Florida in the federal government. Full of inspiring stories and informative statistics, *Florida’s Minority Trailblazers* is an in-depth rendering of personal struggles—guided by opportunity, ambition, and idealism—that have made Florida the vibrant, diverse state it is today.

A volume in the series Florida Government and Politics, edited by David R. Colburn and Susan A. MacManus

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