

18 IN '18 RACES TO WATCH





As state-level Republicans have reached modern highs in legislative majorities and statewide offices held, the RSLC has brought attention to outstanding Future Majority Project (FMP) and Right Women, Right Now (RWRN) candidates running in critical races by highlighting them through the “Races to Watch” program since 2014. In years past, candidates featured in our campaigns proved to be essential majority makers and this cycle is no different. In Kentucky, 16 in ‘16 featured candidate Melinda Prunty helped Republicans flip the Kentucky House for the first time in 95 years. In Connecticut, 16 in ‘16 candidates Heather Somers and George Logan helped Republicans achieve split control in the state Senate, bringing Republicans to 69 chambers controlled. Meanwhile, candidates in Colorado, Maine, New York and Washington all played integral roles helping Republicans retain crucial Senate majorities in 2016 and expand our map.

This group of candidates spanning 16 states concludes the RSLC’s “18 in ‘18: Races to Watch” list. In total the RSLC featured 72 down ballot candidates who are changing the face of the Republican Party at the state level and are breaking barriers in state legislatures and statewide offices.



ALABAMA

Ginny Shaver

Alabama House District 39

Republicans gained a majority in the state House following the 2010 midterms which was the first time Republicans controlled the chamber since 1868.

www.facebook.com/ginnyshaver4alhouse39



Ginny Shaver is the former owner of Shaver Tax & Bookkeeping and has 17 years of experience in municipal government. Shaver serves as a member of the Alabama State Republican Executive Committee, Vice-Chair of the Cherokee County Republican Executive Committee, and President of Cherokee County Republican Women. In her first bid for public office, she won the Republican Party nomination for the Alabama State House of Representatives for District 39 in the June 2018 primary and faces no opposition in the November 2018 general election. Ginny and her husband of 37 years, Jeff, reside in Leesburg, Alabama, and enjoy riding their motorcycles and spending time with their German Shepherds. They are the parents of three children and experienced the arrival of their first grandchild this year.

Shaver's victory in November will be a pick up for Republicans as the previous Democrat incumbent, who had been in office for over 30 years, did not run for re-election and the Democrats did not field a candidate for this district this cycle.

ARIZONA

Sine Kerr

Arizona Senate District 13

Arizona has been a Republican trifecta state since 2009.

votekerr.com



When her father retired from the U.S. Army, he moved 3-year old Sine and the rest of the family to Buckeye, Arizona. Sixteen years later, she married her high school sweetheart Bill and the two of them have since had one son and three daughters who are all now married. They have ten grandchildren with one on the way. In 1980, Sine and Bill started their dairy business with 15 cows. Thanks to hard work and dedication, today they have 1,100 milk cows and 800 replacement heifers. Sine's passion for agriculture extends beyond their farm and dairy as she has sat on the AZ Farm Bureau's Board of Directors and served as the Women's Leadership Chair. Her other passions include family and children's issues, caring for and serving our veterans (five consecutive generations in her family have served in the military), and education issues. Sine's mother was from Mexico, which has helped connect Sine to every part of Arizona's diverse culture, and it has been a real asset as she deals with issues of trade, water, border security, and jobs, all of which are very interconnected with Mexico and Central America.

40% of legislators in Arizona are female, the highest representation of any state in the country.



CONNECTICUT

Melissa Ziobron

Connecticut Senate District 33

Republicans gained three seats in the Senate in 2016 bringing the chamber to an 18-18 tie.

melissaziobron.com



State Representative Melissa Ziobron is a lifelong resident of the 34th District with an extensive record of community service. She serves as Assistant Minority Leader and continues her role as Ranking Member of the legislature's influential Appropriations Committee, which is responsible for assembling the spending portion of the state budget. Ziobron has notable district accomplishments in the five years she has represented East Hampton, East Haddam, and part of Colchester. She secured an additional \$7 million necessary to complete the East Hampton High School renovation project, successfully lobbied the US Coast Guard and CT DOT to change the opening schedule and provide a notification system for the East Haddam Swing Bridge, advocated for the expansion of the Airline Trail, secured installment of rumble strips on Rte. 66, cleaned up, and reopened river access at Sunrise State Park and camping access to Devil's Hopyard State Park. Her public service began over two decades ago, when she spent a significant amount of time volunteering in her community. She is a former economic development coordinator and also served as a local elected official on numerous boards and commissions in East Haddam and the region.

This highly competitive district, currently held by a Republican, is an important hold opportunity for Republicans to gain a majority in the state Senate.

CONNECTICUT

George Logan

Connecticut Senate District 17

If Republicans flip the chamber it would be the first Republican Senate majority in the state since 1994.

ctsenaterepublicans.com/home-logan



Senator George S. Logan represents the 17th District, which includes Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Hamden, Naugatuck, and Woodbridge. The Senate Republican Majority Whip, Sen. Logan is Co-Chair of the Planning and Development Committee and Vice-Chair of the Public Health and Veterans Affairs Committees. Trained as an engineer but a businessman by profession, Sen. Logan has stressed the state's need to retain and attract young skilled professionals and to create a business-friendly environment. Sen. Logan believes that the state budgeting process starts "with the simple concept that we stop spending more than we take in." Sen. Logan has spent most of his professional life working through the ranks of the largest private water company in the state – Aquarion – where he learned every aspect of providing clean drinking water to customers. During this time, Sen. Logan has engaged in capital projects, sustainability programs, alternative energy programs, watershed maintenance, environmental compliance, natural resources management, and government relations. At each stage of responsibility, Sen. Logan earned the trust of local officials, environmental organizations, property owners, government officials, and businesses. Sen. Logan is a member of the Future Majority Project executive board and was featured on the RSLC's "16 in '16: Races to Watch" list.

Senator Logan's victory by less than 900 votes in 2016 flipped a Democrat-held district which brought the chamber to an even tie with 18 Republicans and 18 Democrats.



FLORIDA

Ardian Zika

Florida House District 37

Florida became a Republican trifecta state following the 1998 elections and has remained that way since then making it one of the longest running Republican trifecta states east of the Mississippi.



www.voteardianzika.com

Ardian is the product of American exceptionalism and a modern-day story of the American Dream. He is deeply-rooted in conservative values. Ardian is an American who immigrated to the United States as a teenager from Kosovo in 1997, leaving behind a civil conflict and political turmoil in the war-torn former Yugoslavia. Ardian arrived in the United States with nothing but a willingness to work hard and a desire to earn an education. He pulled himself up by the bootstraps and emerged as an example of an American Dream success story. Ardian is President & CEO of Guardian Street, LLC., a strategic business advisory practice specializing in small and medium size commercial and industrial middle market companies. In 2015, he was selected and recognized by the Tampa Bay Business Journal for the 40 Under 40 Up & Comer Award, given annually to selected rising business leaders in the Tampa Bay. He had the honor and privilege to receive three Gubernatorial Appointments by Florida Governor Rick Scott to three volunteer boards -the Florida Council on Homelessness, the Pasco-Hernando State College Board of Trustees, and the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Ardian and his wife, Tasha, have been married for twelve years. They have five children, Natalie, Riley, Jed, Zachary, & William.

Ardian is running for Speaker Richard Corcoran's district as Speaker Corcoran is term limited from running for re-election.

KENTUCKY

Savannah Maddox

Kentucky House District 61

In 2016, with the support of the RSLC, Republicans won a majority in the Kentucky state House for the first time since the early 1900s. This electoral shift also included knocking off the former Democrat Speaker of the House Greg Stumbo, who had held office since 1980.



www.maddoxforky.com

Savannah Maddox, a mother, wife, and lifelong Kentuckian, is the Republican nominee for Kentucky's 61st State House District. She graduated from Northern Kentucky University where she studied Political Science and History, and currently serves as Chair of the Grant County Republican Party and Programming Chair for Northern Kentucky Young Republicans. Savannah has been involved with the Republican Party for over a decade, and is passionate about the political process and encouraging others to take an active role in civic engagement. Prior to her own candidacy for State Representative, Savannah served as County Campaign Chair for Senator Rand Paul, and worked to help elect several other conservative candidates on the local, state, and federal level. Savannah is driven to make a difference in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and wants to focus on protecting the sanctity of life, preserving our 2nd Amendment rights, and promoting sound fiscal policies to foster economic development and secure a promising future for all Kentuckians.

Savannah's candidacy has been endorsed by U.S. Senator Rand Paul and Kentucky Congressman Thomas Massie.



MICHIGAN

Lisa Posthumus Lyons Michigan Lieutenant Governor

Michigan was the first state in the country to have a female lieutenant governor when Matilda Dodge Wilson was appointed to office in 1940 by Republican Governor Luren Dickinson.



billschuetter.com/about-lisa/

Lisa Posthumus Lyons was born and raised in Michigan. She grew up in Alto, attended Lowell High School, and graduated from Michigan State University. Lisa is the fourth generation to own her family's farm. Lisa married her high school sweetheart, Brad Lyons, who is a K9 handler and sergeant with the Kent County Sheriff's Office. Together, they are raising their four children: Easton (13), Charlie (12), Gage (10), and Fisher (9). Lisa learned about leadership and service at a young age from her parents Dick and Pam Posthumus. Dick served as Michigan Senate Majority Leader and Lieutenant Governor of Michigan. Lisa ran for the state legislature in 2010, serving three terms in the Michigan House of Representatives. She was named Assistant Majority Floor Leader, chair of the House Education Committee, chair of the House Elections and Ethics Committee, and served on the House Tax Policy, Financial Services, Insurance, and Natural Resources Committees. In 2016, Lisa was elected county-wide to serve as Kent County Clerk/ Register of Deeds, the position she currently holds.

Lyons' father, Dick Posthumus, served as lieutenant governor from 1999-2003 under Michigan Governor John Engler.

MICHIGAN

Margaret O'Brien Michigan Senate District 20

Republicans currently hold a 27-10 majority in the state Senate, their largest majority since the 1950s.



www.margaretobrien.com

State Senator O'Brien is a life-long resident of Kalamazoo County and grew up on local dairy farms with her parents and three brothers. She credits the farm with learning the work ethic she has today. After graduation from Mattawan High School and the James Madison College at Michigan State University, she was hired as a social worker for Catholic Charities. In November of 2014, Senator Margaret O'Brien was elected to represent the 20th Senate District which includes all of Kalamazoo County. She was chosen by her colleagues to serve in a leadership position as Assistant President Pro Tempore and is deeply honored to represent the residents of Kalamazoo. One of her biggest accomplishments this year was her work with the Sister Survivors of Larry Nassar. She worked across the aisle to reform our laws to protect children from child abuse – including sexual abuse and assault. She continues to work on issues such as domestic violence protections, strengthening regulations on clean drinking water, and cleaning up contaminated sites in our state.

Senator O'Brien won her election in 2014 by less than 100 votes despite it voting for Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama by double digits in 2016 and 2012.



MISSOURI

Mary Elizabeth Coleman Missouri House District 97

Since the 2012 elections Republicans have maintained a supermajority in the lower chamber.

www.maryelizabethcoleman.com

Coleman was raised in Georgetown, Texas, a suburb of Austin, with her parents, brother, and sister; her parents are now retired school teachers. She started her first business when she was 11 years old, delivering subscription flowers to attorneys and judges in the courthouse and around the town square. She couldn't afford the agricultural license to buy the flowers whole-sale so she wrote then-Agricultural Commissioner Rick Perry, who personally paid for her license. That interaction with attorneys sparked her understanding of how the law can support the community. She received a BSBA in Management from Saint Louis University, where she met and married her college sweetheart, Chris. They moved to San Antonio where she attended St. Mary's University School of Law. She and Chris moved to Arnold, Missouri in 2009 after the birth of their fourth child to be closer to family. Coleman currently represents Ward 2 on Arnold's City Council where she spearheaded Corridor55 - Missouri's first municipally owned co-working space. She is one of many women the Republican House caucus has recruited for pivotal races this cycle.

Coleman is attempting to flip this district back to Republican control after Democrats flipped control of it in a special election earlier this year.



NEBRASKA

Theresa Thibodeau Nebraska Senate District 6

Nebraska is the only state with a unicameral legislature.

www.votethibodeau.org

Upon graduation from the University of Nebraska Omaha with a degree in Psychology, Theresa spent 8+ years in the Human Resources field. Theresa managed multimillion-dollar accounts, working on the benefits plans of large corporations and was integral in forecasting claims costs for partially self-funded companies. One year after the birth of her second child, Theresa chose to stay at home to raise her family. During this time, Theresa became involved in the Omaha community, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands, Essential Pregnancy Services, the Rose Theater, Christ Child Society, and St. Roberts church and school. In 2014, her dream of helping young children develop a foundation for success in school and life came true with the opening of the Primrose School of La Vista. With a staff of 48 team members, Theresa is actively involved in all aspects of the school. Theresa applied and was appointed to an open position in the Nebraska legislature by Governor Pete Ricketts in 2017. In her first session, Theresa kept the legislature from increasing taxes and led an effort to regulate "Bottle Clubs" to reduce sex trafficking in the state.

Senate District 6 is one of the most competitive in the state as Hillary Clinton carried it in 2016 by 4% after Mitt Romney won it by 10% in 2012.



NEW MEXICO

Lisa Shin

New Mexico House District 43

In 2014, Republicans flipped control of the New Mexico House of Representatives for the first time in decades and are in a prime position to regain their majority this cycle.

lisasfor43.com

Lisa is the daughter of Korean immigrants, who came to America over 40 years ago, to pursue the American Dream of opportunity, prosperity, and freedom for their children. They envisioned success through strong families, hard work, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. After completing her degrees at Wellesley College and the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, she moved to Los Alamos, New Mexico in 1996. She was impressed by the spectacular beauty, world class education, and scientific community of Los Alamos and knew that this would be a great place to build her practice and pursue her dreams. She started with one employee, generating just enough revenue to make rent. Today, her successful practice is a result of the relationships she has built, the trust she has earned, and the business skills acquired over the years.

Shin would become the first Asian-American woman elected to the New Mexico legislature if she is elected in November.



NORTH CAROLINA

Jarrold Lowery

North Carolina House District 47

In 2010, Republicans gained control of the North Carolina House and elected then state Representative Thom Tillis as Speaker of the House. Tillis would go on to be elected to the U.S. Senate in 2014.

www.jarroldlowery.com

A lifelong resident of Robeson County, Jarrod Lowery joined the United States Marine Corps Reserves which initiated his lifelong commitment of service to his country and community. He graduated from UNC-Pembroke with a bachelor's degree in political science and a minor in history. While attending UNC-Pembroke, he became a member of Phi Sigma Nu, Inc., the first American Indian Fraternity established in the United States. With the election of Pat McCrory as Governor of North Carolina, he was afforded the opportunity to serve within the office of the Governor in the position of Community Liaison and later as the Regional Director. During his time as Regional Director, he aided the Governor with the organization of the relief efforts during the Hurricane Mathew disaster in Robeson County and the surrounding areas. While working in the Governor's Office, he was appointed to the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, a position that oversees the AmeriCorps program in the state and promotes volunteerism. Since 2014, he has represented the Prospect and Oxendine communities on the Lumbee Tribal Council where he has focused his efforts on federal recognition and cultural revitalization.

Lowery would become the first Native Nation legislator of the Republican House caucus if he wins in November.



OKLAHOMA

Daniel Pae Oklahoma House District 62

Republicans flipped the Oklahoma House of Representatives in 2004 and have steadily increased their majority in each election since then.

www.danielpae.com



Daniel Pae currently serves as an Administrative Assistant in the City Manager's Office for the City of Lawton. Born and raised in Lawton, Daniel is a proud graduate of Lawton High School's Class of 2013. Daniel recently graduated from the University of Oklahoma with two majors in economics and political science, two minors in history and international area studies, and a master's degree in public administration. Daniel served as OU's Student Body President, along with volunteering his time with The Oklahoma Group, Loveworks Afterschool Leadership, and Generation Citizen. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude with a 4.0 grade point average. Going forward, Daniel plans on pursuing a career in public service centered on the community of Lawton and the state of Oklahoma. Whenever he has free time, Daniel enjoys going on unexpected adventures with family and friends, working out at Planet Fitness, and reading books from the Lawton Public Library.

Pae would become the youngest member of the Oklahoma legislature if he wins in November and would be the first Korean-American legislator in state history.

OREGON

Christine Drazan Oregon House District 39

Republicans are just five seats away from split control in the Oregon House of Representatives.

christinefororegon.com



Christine Drazan is running for the Oregon House of Representatives to improve Oregon's high school graduation rates and reform the state's spending and budgeting process. She is well prepared to hit the ground running in Salem, having served in positions at the local, county, and state level. She has served on the board of her local PTA and worked to establish a student council and a Kid Governor program to improve civics education in our elementary schools. Professionally, Christine has worked for leadership in the Oregon House, including serving as Chief of Staff to Speaker of the House and House Majority Leaders. In this role Christine supported the development of groundbreaking initiatives including the Oregon Salmon Plan, a Rainy Day Fund for schools, and the creation of the Oregon Cultural Trust. Most recently, she was Executive Director of the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon, a statewide nonprofit that supports the preservation of Oregon's arts, history, and culture. She and her husband Dan live in rural Clackamas County with their three children.

This district is one of the only suburban Portland districts that still reliably votes for Republican candidates up and down the ballot.



PENNSYLVANIA

Mary Hopper Pennsylvania House District 162

Republicans flipped control of the Pennsylvania House during the 2010 midterms and have held a steady majority in every election since then.

www.facebook.com/MaryHopperforStateRep



Mary Hopper is a candidate for the Pennsylvania General Assembly and is seeking to serve the 162nd Legislative District. Her legislative priorities include property tax reform, job creation, school safety, education, and working to end the opioid epidemic ravaging our communities. She has spent most of her life in service to others. She is active in supporting her local community in various roles as both a volunteer and public servant. Mary previously served as Sheriff of Delaware County and as the first female President of Ridley Park Borough Council. In both capacities, she proved to be an effective leader that worked to improve the community. While on Council, Mary worked to improve and offer more services to residents. She also formed strong relationships throughout the community to better serve residents. While serving as Sheriff, Mary worked to modernize the office and improve public outreach. Mary Hopper is the proud mother of two sons, Brandon and Tim.

While this district has a history of voting for Democrat presidential candidates it has continued to split tickets to send Republican representatives to Harrisburg.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Pamela Evette South Carolina Lieutenant Governor

This will be the first election where the lieutenant governor and governor will be elected as a ticket after a recent constitutional amendment.

www.pamelaevette.com



Pamela Evette is the president and CEO of Quality Business Solutions. Under her leadership, QBS grew from a small start-up to earning a prominent spot on Inc. Magazine's list of fastest growing businesses in the nation and one of the best places to work in South Carolina. Pamela has been honored with numerous awards for her entrepreneurship. Because of her leadership in the business community, Governor Nikki Haley asked her to serve as a member of South Carolina's Small Business Regulatory Committee. Pamela has long felt called to public service, so when Governor McMaster asked her to join the campaign as his running mate, she did not hesitate to accept. Their complementary skill sets and shared passion for the people of South Carolina makes this ticket one of a kind. When she's not running her business, or out on the campaign trail, Pamela enjoys spending time with her husband David and their three children, Amanda, Joseph, and Jackson, as well as her mother Jennie, who lives with them in Traveler's Rest.

Evette would become the first Republican woman to serve as lieutenant governor in South Carolina history if she is elected in November.



TENNESSEE

Tommy Vallejos Tennessee House District 67

The Republican House caucus increased their majority to 74 members following the 2016 elections making it the largest Republican House majority in state history.

www.tommyfortennessee.com



In September of 2010, Mr. Tommy Vallejos became the first Hispanic in Tennessee history to be elected as a County Commissioner. He currently serves District 14 in Montgomery County, and is finishing his second term. During his tenure he has represented all 95 counties in stopping unfunded mandates while serving as the President of the Tennessee County Commissioners Association. Commissioner Vallejos has been preaching the gospel for 30 years and is known for his commitment to stopping gang violence. He travels around the country teaching gang awareness classes to schools, communities, and churches. He counsels and mentors former gang members, helping them become productive members of their communities. He retired from the Army as a Sergeant First Class, having served as an Infantryman for 21 years. He was a Platoon Sergeant with the 101st Airborne Division during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Commissioner Vallejos has been married for thirty-six years to the love of his life, Caroline. They are the proud parents of four children, and loving grandparents of seven grandchildren.

Vallejos is looking to flip this district to Republican control after Republicans did not contest it in 2016 despite it only narrowly voting for Hillary Clinton.

WASHINGTON

Savio Pham Washington Senate District 38

Republicans have the opportunity to return the chamber to Republican control if they flip two seats in November.

www.savioforsenate.com



Growing up in Saigon, Vietnam under Communist control, he witnessed firsthand life without basic human rights or freedom of speech, religion, and opportunities. It was a life not worth living. Thus, like thousands of other refugees, he fled Vietnam in hope of having a life with freedom of speech, religion, and opportunities. By the grace of God and those in power such as former Washington Governor Dan Evans, who share similar values of freedom and opportunities, Vietnamese refugees were welcomed to resettle in the United States. The moment he set foot on U.S. soil, he promised he would live a life of capitalizing on all the opportunities that came his way, that he would never take freedom for granted, and that he would live a life of service to repay all the blessings he had been given. In the last 28 years, he has embraced all available educational opportunities. With diligence and hard work, he earned two bachelor's degrees, a MBA, and a doctoral degree in Management Organizational Leadership. During this time, he also immersed himself in community service at his local church and the community with special focus on activities and initiatives that support and mentors, give voices and presence to those marginalized. He is blessed with the support of his wife, Dr. Hong-Nhung Nguyen, a family physician and his son, Nathan, a student at the University of Washington.

Pham would become the first Vietnamese-American legislator in state history if he is successful in November.





ABOUT FMP

The Republican State Leadership Committee's (RSLC) Future Majority Project (FMP) seeks to identify, recruit and support candidates who better reflect the full diversity of our nation. Launched in 2011, FMP supports men and women from diverse communities as they run to grow the economy, support job creators and focus on ways to keep more money in the pockets of working families. The efforts are helping to build a strong bench of current and future Republican leaders. In the 2013-2014 cycle, FMP recruited 244 new candidates of all diverse backgrounds and successfully helped elect 43 to office in states nationwide, with an investment totaling more than \$6 million – in partnership with Right Women, Right Now. In 2015-2016, FMP invested \$7 million – in partnership with the RSLC's Right Women, Right Now (RWRN) – to identify and recruit 174 new, diverse candidates in 36 states. Through these efforts, FMP and RWRN saw 22 new candidates of diverse ethnicity elected, as well as 165 new women. FMP also saw 18 diverse elected officials enter leadership. Since its founding in 2011, the RSLC has with an over \$20 million investment helped elect over 500 women and over 100 diverse candidates.



ABOUT RWRN

The Republican State Leadership Committee's (RSLC) Right Women, Right Now (RWRN) initiative serves to identify, recruit and support women candidates nationwide in order to help elect more Republican leaders who better embody the electorate of our country, where women are 53 percent of the voters. RWRN offers candidate trainings, mentorship matchings and digital organizing tools for our candidates' campaigns for state-level office. Since its founding in 2012, RWRN has recruited hundreds of women candidates, elected over 500 new women to office and continues working to grow the largest caucus of Republican elected women in the country. RWRN is co-chaired by Tennessee Speaker of the House Beth Harwell and Arizona Secretary of State Michele Reagan. In the 2015-2016 election cycle, RWRN shattered its recruitment goal of 500 candidates by identifying and recruiting 690 new, women candidates to run for state-level office. RWRN saw 165 of those candidates appointed or elected in 37 states. In partnership with the RSLC's Future Majority Project (FMP), which aims to elect candidates from all diverse communities, RWRN invested \$7 million between 2015-2016 to identify, recruit and support these candidates.

