



Poll Results, Panelists and Moderator Announced for the “Decision 2018: Before You Vote” Statewide-Televised Gubernatorial Debate

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Leadership Florida and the Florida Press Association today announced the poll results used to determine candidate eligibility, as well as the panelists and moderator for the October 24 “Decision 2018: Before You Vote” statewide-televised gubernatorial debate.

A Mason-Dixon poll was used to determine candidate eligibility as outlined in the Criteria for Participation found at beforeyouvote.org/participation-criteria/. The poll was conducted from September 24, 2018, to September 27, 2018, with a sample size of 815 likely Florida voters with a margin of error ± 3.5 percentage points. When Floridians were asked who they would vote for in the 2018 election for governor, Mayor Andrew Gillum received 45 percent, Congressman Ron DeSantis received 44 percent, and other candidates received a combined total of three percent. Only eight percent of Floridians polled were undecided. Based on these results, Mayor Andrew Gillum and Congressman Ron DeSantis have qualified for the debate pursuant to the criteria for participation and will face off on October 24.

The debate will be produced by one of America’s most experienced and decorated network news producers, Phil Alongi. Alongi will serve as the executive producer of the debate as he did in 2016 for Leadership Florida’s General Election U.S. Senatorial Debate. Alongi is a multi-Emmy Award winner and spent much of his career as the executive producer of Specials and Politics at NBC News. He served as the executive producer of production for both the 2012 and 2016 Republican National Conventions, for which he has received universal praise. For the upcoming debate, he will coordinate all elements of the debate production, including, but not limited to, working with the campaigns on the debate format, overseeing an editorial team to identify topics and develop questions in coordination with the debate moderator and panelists.

The panelists selected for the gubernatorial debate are Isadora Rangel and Anthony Man. Rangel is the public affairs and engagement editor at *FLORIDA TODAY*, part of the USA TODAY Network. She previously spent six-years at Treasure Coast Newspapers in Stuart, Florida, where she covered politics and the legislature with a focus on environmental and Everglades restoration policy. A graduate of Florida International University, she interned at *The Miami Herald* and was a member of the New York Times Student Journalism Institute in 2011. She was born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil.

Man is the *Sun-Sentinel's* political writer. Concentrating on local political people, parties, and trends, he also covers state and national politics from a South Florida perspective. He previously covered Palm Beach County government and made repeated reporting trips to Tallahassee, as well as covered state and local politics in Illinois.

The panelists will be working with veteran WPBF 25 News anchor and multi-Emmy Award winner Todd McDermott, who is the debate moderator. McDermott previously did national correspondent work for CBS in New York, as well as anchored at the CBS flagship station there. Prior to that, he anchored and reported at stations in Washington D.C., Baltimore, and Wichita. McDermott also moderated the 2016 U.S. Senate Debate, which was broadcast statewide, on C-Span and NPR.

“We are excited that this gubernatorial debate will help inform millions of voters about the views and vision of the candidates for governor — just days before the general election,” said Wendy Spencer, president of Leadership Florida. “The panelists and moderator will do an amazing job facilitating the debate, and we are eager to work with them.”

President of the Florida Press Association, Dean Ridings added, “McDermott is a seasoned professional with the debates and we are looking forward to working with him again. We are also delighted to have Rangel and Man join our team as panelists to work with us to get answers to the issues important to Floridians.”

Underwriting sponsors of the debate include the Florida League of Cities, Broward College, AARP, the Claude Pepper Center, and the Claude Pepper Foundation.

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About The Florida Press Association

The Florida Press Association is a nonprofit organization with a purpose to protect the freedoms and advance the professional standards of the press in Florida, with a membership of Florida's daily and weekly newspapers and online local media. Visit www.flpress.com to learn more.

About Broward College

Serving more than 63,000 students annually, Broward College provides residents with certificate programs, two-year university-transfer degrees, two-year career degrees, and baccalaureate degrees in selected programs. The mission of the college is to provide high-quality educational programs and services that are affordable and accessible to a diverse community of learners. For more information, visit www.broward.edu.

About WPBF 25

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