



Steve Barnes

Age: 43

Political Affiliation: Democrat

Steve Barnes was born in Maryland, but has spent the past 42 years living in Central Florida. Raised in Brevard County, he moved to Seminole County in 1991. He and his wife Vicki have three grown daughters, Genevieve, Amanda and Jessica.

Steve graduated from the University of Central Florida in 2001 with degrees in journalism and political science (international relations).

During his senior year at UCF, he interned for the International Council of Central Florida, (now the World Affairs Council), which is a "citizen diplomat" initiative of the US Department of State. Steve has continued to volunteer for the organization over the years, often serving as a dinner host or guide to visiting dignitaries and young leaders seeking a better understanding of politics, environment issues or journalism in the US.

In 1996, Steve began a career in journalism, serving as a staff writer and photographer at the Sanford Herald where he covered local government and social issues.

From 1997-2007, Steve worked for the Associated Press and the Orlando Sentinel covering a diverse array of subjects including politics, the environment, natural disasters, the space center, crime and various social issues.

In 2007, he left the Orlando Sentinel and accepted an appointment to the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District and was elected to that post the following year. During that time, he also taught journalism at a private high school in Maitland and founded a small business, Seminole Hub, which assisted local non-profits with their social media efforts.

In 2010, Steve ran unsuccessfully for the Florida Legislature. Following that campaign, he was elected Chairman of the Democratic Party of Seminole County. During his tenure, the party helped to elect two Democratic candidates from Seminole to the Florida Legislature. (Steve's term as chairman expired in December, 2012 and he did not seek a second term.)

Throughout his time in Seminole County, Steve has been involved in a number of community organizations, primarily related to education and the environment.

In the mid-1990s, he served as a mentor to disadvantaged youth and as a member of the Goldsboro Elementary School Advisory Committee. Following his children as they progressed through school, he served as a chaperone and classroom assistant at Millennium Middle and Seminole High School and has been a long-time advocate of adequate funding and equal opportunity in education.

Over the past two years, Steve has worked informally with Families in Transition, which serves homeless children enrolled in Seminole County.

Outside of work, Steve enjoys travel, camping, kayaking and sailing. Having lived aboard a boat for a short time as a teenager, Steve has long dreamed of casting off the dock lines and moving aboard cruising sailboat. With the children grown and the election behind, he and Vicki are currently in the market for a vessel that will propel them through the next phase of their lives. They plan to find ways to work with local charities in the ports they visit.