

Granite State proud of its prime place in poll position

By **ALENA MASTERSON**
and **KUSUM ARYAL**

The 2020 race for the White House will mark the 100th anniversary of New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation presidential primary. But the honor didn't come easy.

"Being first in the nation was never planned," said New Hampshire Secretary of State Bill Gardner. "It was created to give more people an opportunity to participate."

Prior to 1831, presidential candidates were selected in informal meetings of congressmen from each party. These were known as king caucuses because a small group of elites were acting as "kingmakers," said Christina Cliff, a political science professor at Franklin Pierce University.

But advisers to President Andrew Jackson were pushing for changes in how presidential and vice presidential candidates were selected. They turned to the Granite State legislature, which issued the initial calls for the first major party national convention.

"It was then only fitting," Gardner said from his state-house office in Concord, "that someone from New Hampshire called the convention to order, called the roll of the states and gave the opening address."

In that 1832 address in Baltimore, Frederick A. Sumner explained that New Hamp-

shire simply wanted to have more people be part of selecting the party nominees for president and vice president.

New Hampshire, Gardner said, has had a leadership role in presidential politics ever since.

"We were a barometer for the country," Gardner said.

The first New Hampshire primary was held in 1916, on

the same day as Minnesota and a week behind Indiana, which was the first that year.

But within four years, Indiana had moved its primary further out and Minnesota's was eliminat-

ed. The New Hampshire primary was now the first in the nation, a position it has held firm since.

BAROMETER: Granite State residents, like those voting, above and right, and those campaigning, below, take pride in being first to vote.

And since 1952, New Hampshire voters have been able to cast a ballot for a specific presidential candidate rather than delegates.

"We don't have the Super Bowl or a professional team," Gardner said, "but we do have a political culture that makes people want more of a say."

Alena Masterson of Pelham is a 2018 Pelham High School graduate who will attend Franklin Pierce University in the fall. Kusum Aryal of Jaffrey, N.H., is a sophomore at Dublin School.



STAFF FILE PHOTOS, ABOVE, BY ANGELA ROWLINGS; BELOW, BY NANCY LANE; BOTTOM, BY CHRISTOPHER EVANS



Participants share thoughts

Students participating in Franklin Pierce University's The Presidency and The Press program offer up their ideas on having Republicans and Democrats work better together:

"If both parties get over their stubbornness and mutual hatred for each other I feel that with the right amount of effort on both sides, working together successfully will be an attainable goal." — **Autumn Braley of Alexandria, N.H.**

"I think that if an urgent situation occurs, we will all be able to forget the negativity. ... I strongly believe that we will put all of our differences aside and truly band together to focus on what really matters, which is national security. Otherwise, I don't think that the two parties will come together anytime soon. It will take a long time, but I think that eventually we will all get sick of fighting and try to change the negativity circling around politics." — **Jackson Morgan of Hooksett, N.H.**

"Our country cannot thrive off our government always butting heads. There will always be conflicts between the two sides due to the differences in opinion and we will always have that, but our government should use these conflicts to strengthen the country and not divide us." — **Kathryn Anderson of Hampton, N.H.**