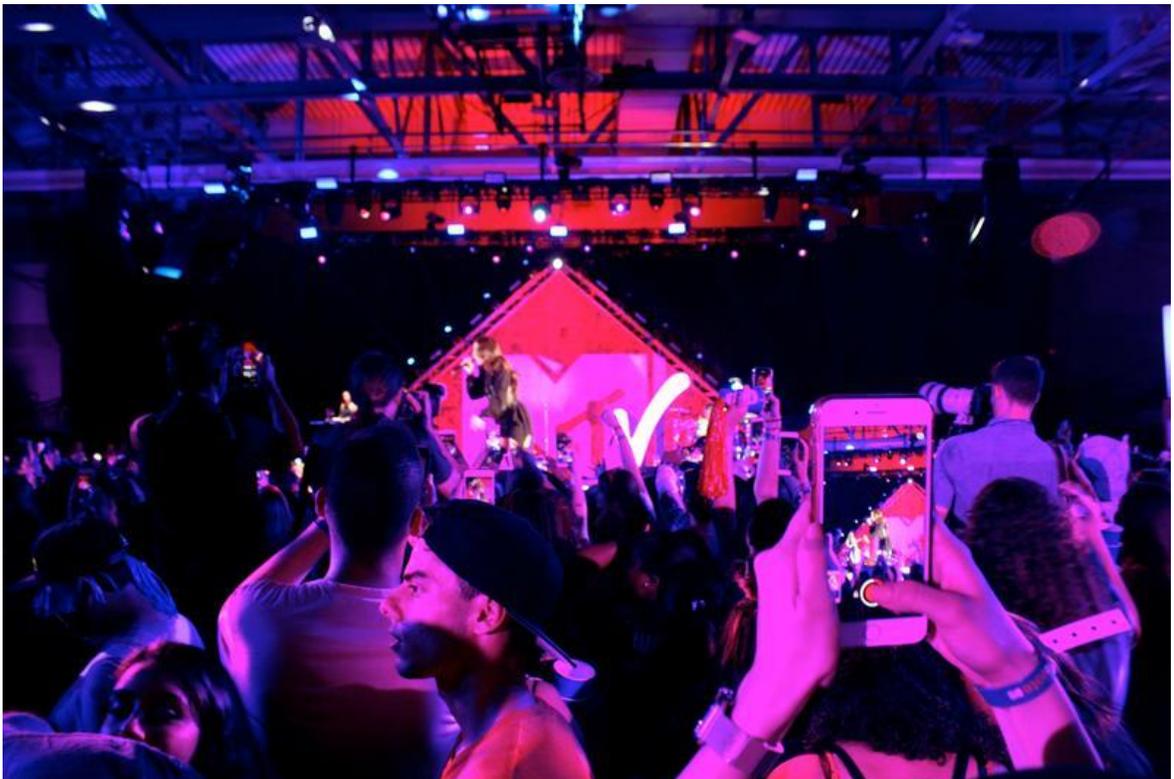


# "This Is Why We Tell People, Every Vote Counts:" MTV Election Afterparty Takes Over Kendall

By [LILY OPPENHEIMER](#) · 20 HOURS AGO



*Thousands of South Florida youth voters took over the Miami-Dade College gym in Kendall for MTV's official Election Afterparty on election night, Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018.*

LILY OPPENHEIMER / WLRN

Thousands of South Florida young voters decided to wait for the midterms results -for many the first time they voted- together in an MTV Election Afterparty in Kendall.

YouTube comedian Liza Koshy and hip-hop iHeartRadio host Charlamagne Tha God co-hosted a party in the Miami Dade College campus gym that lasted well after the Florida election results were called.

“If you didn’t vote in this election, don’t worry, we’re not gonna shame you,” Koshy said. “We’ll just direct you to the back of the hall where you can register to vote for the next one.”

Koshy talked about how important it is to cast a ballot and reminded the audience that they could have a say in issues like climate change and legalizing weed.

“I know half of y’all already think it’s legalized, and you’re looking at me like, it’s not?,” she laughed.



The [MTV campaign “+1 the Vote”](#) aimed to mobilize the youth voters by encouraging young people to bring friends to the polls. Just a week before the election, research compiled by [MTV/AP-NORC Youth Political Pulse](#), a series of polls surveying political attitudes of young voters, showed that 62% said they had already encouraged someone to register to vote over the past few months.

According to [exit poll results](#) from ABC News, young and first-time voters between ages 18 to 29 accounted for 13 percent of the national vote. In 2014, that number was 11 percent. More than 3.3 million of those voters also cast their votes early, making that a 188 percent increase from 2014.

As the line to get into MTV’s Election Afterparty inched forward, Miami International University of Art & Design student Valentina Pardi said she went to dance with her girlfriend and classmate, Gabby Arauz, who works as a graphic designer at Telemundo.

“I’m actually not a citizen, so I couldn’t vote, but I’m here supporting,” Pardi said. “I did as much as I could.”



*Miami International University of Art & Design students Valentina Pardi and Gabby Arauz talked about the complications of voting, supporting each other and their hopes of Gillum beating DeSantis on election night, Thursday, Nov. 6, 2018.*

CREDIT LILY OPPENHEIMER / WLRN

Pardi fled Venezuela when she was a child with her family, lived in Argentina for 10 years, and moved to the U.S. almost four years ago. She says people shouldn’t take voting for granted.

“I’m looking forward to staying here in the future, I hope it gets better,” she said. “But I think this is a country of opportunities if we are actually able to appreciate them, and actually do something with them.”



*Thousands of young voters poured into the Miami Dade College gym in Kendall for MTV's official Election Afterparty on election night, Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018.*  
CREDIT LILY OPPENHEIMER / WLRN

Another MTV-fanatic in the line, Johnathan Garcia, was born and raised in Miami. He said he found the process of early-voting for the first time confusing and sometimes overwhelming. But he still took the time to do it after he realized what was at stake in this election.

“What I feel very strong about is gun safety after the whole thing that happened in Broward,” Garcia said. “And I feel like more security should be enforced in schools.”



*Thousands poured into the Miami Dade College gym in Kendall for MTV's official Election Afterparty on election night, Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018.*

CREDIT LILY OPPENHEIMER / WLRN

NPA-registered voter Daniel Rueda said he is 27-years-old, a bit older than most of the crowd gathered at the party. This was his third time voting, and he was born and raised in Miami.

“Definitely one of the things on my mind was the Amendment 4 to allowed former convicts to vote,” Rueda said. “I think it’s very important that they have their full freedom restored.”

But while people snapped selfies, danced to 'Suavemente' and screamed for performers like PRETTYMUCH and Lauren Jauregui, the governor’s race flipped from favoring Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum to opponent and Republican Ron DeSantis.



*Young voters refreshed their phones to see Florida election results during MTV's official Election Afterparty in Kendall on Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018.*

CREDIT LILY OPPENHEIMER / WLRN

As people started refreshing their phones, a different energy took over for those who supported Gillum.

People like Democrat Andrew Martinez left the party annoyed.

“I think we’ve been working so hard, especially the younger generation,” Martinez said.

“This is why we tell people, every vote counts. This is why people get mad if you don’t vote, or if you vote for a third party. Not to say that you’re wasting your vote, but when it’s this close, it really does matter to give into the bigger party.”

DeSantis won the Florida governor’s race, derailing Gillum’s chance to become Florida’s first black governor.