

Racial Justice | COVID Research | Taking Action Against Assault

# MIAMI

THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI MAGAZINE | FALL 2020



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New technology was purchased, classrooms and common areas were retrofitted, and signs were erected, all to provide safe spaces for teaching, studying, and living.



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Using various endeavors, from pursuing a vaccine to generating essential materials for front-line workers, researchers are working to assess and stymie the advance of COVID-19.



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Silence will never be an option for an alumna who is a survivor of sexual abuse. She speaks out to protect and help children.

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## MIAMI

The University of Miami Magazine

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STUDENTS WEAR MASKS AND PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING WHILE ATTENDING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES. PHOTO EVAN GARCIA

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## Sylvester Receives \$126 Million Gift

Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center will use the anonymous gift—the largest in the University’s history—to propel into its next chapter of excellence



DAVID SUTTA

A landmark gift of \$126 million to the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of UHealth and the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, will accelerate advances in finding cures for cancer and expand innovative treatment options for cancer patients. The groundbreaking donation—the single largest in the University of Miami’s 95-year history—will further propel Sylvester’s standing as one of the nation’s preeminent cancer centers.

The unrestricted gift was made in honor of Stephen D. Nimer, director of Sylvester and the Oscar de la Renta Endowed Chair in Cancer Research. “I am truly humbled by the magnitude of this gift,” says Nimer. “I never expected

to experience such immense generosity for simply answering the call to serve those in need.”

The gift is an anonymous bequest from a member of a family Nimer has known for decades. When facing several health challenges, including cancer, the family and those in their immediate networks turned to Nimer for guidance and support.

“I’ve dedicated my life to excellence and serving the well-being of others,” says Nimer, who is also a professor of medicine, biochemistry, and molecular biology at the Miller School. “I now want to honor this donor. With a gift of this size, it’s our goal to maximize its impact, ensuring that we invest in

“With expanded treatment options and opportunities to develop more cures, our patients can benefit from this landmark gift to our cancer center.”—Stephen D. Nimer



programs and people who can change outcomes for as many patients as possible. That will mean a legacy that lasts for generations to come.”

Recognized as one of the world’s premier leukemia and stem cell transplant researchers and clinicians, Nimer led the multiyear effort to secure National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designation in 2019, making Sylvester the only NCI-designated cancer center in South Florida, and one of only two in Florida.

“Sylvester is a leader in cancer care and research, and this tremendous act of generosity will have a profound impact on our work in this field,” says University of Miami President Julio Frenk. “The gift is an affirmation of the extraordinary vision and leadership of Dr. Stephen D. Nimer and our talented and passionate team of researchers, clinicians, faculty, and staff who are changing the way we prevent, diagnose, and treat cancer.”

The gift also maximizes impact by matching additional donations of \$1 million or more to Sylvester. To date, philanthropists, including The Pap Corps Champions for Cancer Research, Paul J. DiMare and the DiMare family, Steven Dvoskin (Dvoskin Charitable Trust Foundation), Eric and Elizabeth Feder, and Annette de la Renta have met the challenge, donating \$21 million, to accelerate innovative cancer research and bolster endowment funds for faculty chairs. This matching program will also establish a strong pool of resources for necessary investments in infrastructure, including a new research facility.

Based on the donor’s previous interest in Nimer’s research priorities, a part of the gift will be dedicated to advancing research in cancer epigenetics and Sylvester’s experimental therapeutics program. “This will help the people in this community get greater access to more novel treatments,” says Nimer.

The gift has already allowed Sylvester to recruit a leader in the field of experimental therapeutics. Funds from the donation will support Sylvester’s continued efforts to attract

and retain top-tier scientists and clinicians.

“What is most exciting about this gift is the tremendous impact it will have on cancer care for the people of South Florida,” says Hilarie Bass, J.D. ’81, chair of the University of Miami Board of Trustees. Ultimately, anyone seeking cancer care at Sylvester is the true beneficiary.”

“This anonymous gift is a game-changer for Sylvester and represents the kind of historic generosity that often defines the course of disease treatment and management,” notes Stuart Miller, J.D. ’82, chair of the UHealth Board of Directors and former chair and current member of the University of Miami Board of Trustees. “We are now prepared for the next level of innovation in research and clinical care, while building the infrastructure and engaging the talent required to sustain these efforts.” Miller, who is also the CEO of Lennar Corporation, leads a vibrant tradition of philanthropy for the Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine.

“Sylvester’s preeminent national reputation is due in part to the single-minded dedication our physician-scientists have to those they serve,” says Jayne S. Malfitano, member of the University of Miami Board of Trustees, vice chair of Sylvester Board of Overseers, and president of the Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester Foundation board. “The donor saw in our institution, and in Dr. Nimer, in particular, the conviction and talent required to alleviate the suffering of so many battling cancer. I am grateful for the trust they had in our work.”

Malfitano’s involvement with Sylvester dates back more than 35 years when her father, Harcourt Sylvester, Jr., first pledged a multimillion-dollar naming gift to the University of Miami to build a cancer center in honor of his parents.

Today, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of UHealth—the University of Miami Health System and the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, combines the strength of more than 300 cancer experts and researchers. Sylvester discovers, develops, and delivers more targeted therapies, providing the next generation of cancer clinical care—precision cancer medicine—to each patient.

# 'Canes Central Offers Student-Centered Assistance

New service brings financial aid, student accounts, and other operations into a centralized location



Registration information. Records. Billing and payments. Financial aid. 'Cane Cards. All at your fingertips.

Nestled in the new 30,000-square-foot Student Services Building on the northeast side of campus, 'Canes Central features a highly trained staff who can address student questions across a myriad of topics. It is the centralized location where students can make payments to their student accounts, lift a hold from their academic records, receive information regarding financial aid and course registration, and complete other transactions such as obtaining a 'Cane Card. New technologies help improve the user experience on student information systems and websites.

"Part of our goal in transforming the student experience is to minimize hassles, eliminate roadblocks, and enable students to access resources," says Jacqueline A. Travisano, executive vice president for business and finance and chief operating officer.

The 'Canes Central team is ready to help students by phone, online, or in person. Students who opt to visit the 'Canes Central website can navigate through self-help tools or find answers among frequently asked questions.

"The University of Miami provides a world-class academic experience for its students, and now we offer a world-class on-campus experience," says Jeffrey Duerk, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost. "This new department empowers them to take full advantage of the unparalleled academic and extracurricular experiences available at the U."

Student Government President Abigail Adeleke says the new department has been a tremendous help to her and her peers since its opening.

"One of the most positive pieces of feedback I have heard from my peers is that the wait times are very low," says Adeleke. "In between classes, students are able to walk into 'Canes Central

and get their issues resolved fairly quickly."

In the event that a student is unable to find an answer on the 'Canes Central website, Mariana Valdes-Fauli, assistant vice president for service and experience excellence, says students can submit a case, which opens a virtual ticket in the system where students can track progress updates. There are five easy ways to connect with the team, office hours are student-friendly, and no appointment is necessary.

"We collectively strive to provide world-class service and student-centered care to every student at the University," says Sean Kilpatrick, A.B. '06, M.S.Ed. '10, executive director of 'Canes Central. "Our mission is to deliver a transformational and compassionate experience so that students feel valued and empowered to reach their full potential."

The second floor of the Student Services Building houses the Camner



Center for Academic Resources, which relocated from its location in the Whitten University Center. With its core focus on supporting students academically and working directly with faculty, the new space provides for expanded and enhanced programming and affords the center the opportunity to serve more students with a variety of customized academic services that includes the Peer Tutoring program, the Office of Disability Services, and learning specialists.

"Our new center incorporates technologies that enable students to access our services in many new ways," says Mykel Billups, assistant dean for academic support services. "And with a blend of group and individual study

areas, the new space is tailored to meet our center's programming needs as well as the needs of our students."

During the summer, Adeleke was having trouble with accessing her financial aid. 'Canes Central was

able to assist her throughout the entire process and encouraged her to reach out to IT for additional help.

"I am so glad we have this system in place on campus," said Adeleke. "I personally love the concept."

Designed for growth in both staff and programming, the third floor of the building exclusively houses the Counseling Center. In this new space, the center is able to host workshops and group sessions, provide training of doctoral students through its American Psychosocial Association accredited training program, and offer other services.

"Colleges and universities across the country have seen an increase in mental health challenges their students

are facing, and the University of Miami is no different," says Patricia A. Whitely, Ed.D. '94, vice president for student affairs. "This new facility, combined with other student services, will allow the Counseling Center staff the ability to provide the best care to our students."

Counseling Outreach Peer Education, whose members are undergraduate students with a passion for tackling college mental health issues, are also gaining much-needed programming and meeting space in the new building.

"The new center continues our efforts to destigmatize the need for mental health support for students," says Rene Monteagudo, director of the Counseling Center. "We have designed our new space to allow our counselors, other staff members, and peer educators to be innovative in their approach to supporting the campus community."

Visit [canescentral.miami.edu](https://canescentral.miami.edu) to learn more.

## Initiative Advances Gender Equity

University takes a critical look at challenges women face across the academy

In a year that marks the passage of the 19th Amendment, and on the day after International Women's Day, the University launched the Flagship Initiative for Women and Gender Equity—created to assess and address issues of inequity that women continue to confront across the academy.

The initiative, announced March 9, examines ways in which the institution can support female students, faculty, staff, and other members of the University and broader community in achieving gender parity in leadership.

"We know firsthand the difference women in leadership can make," says President Julio Frenk, noting that for the first time in its history, the University has women leading at every level. "Yet this initiative recognizes that

more remains to be done to ensure that women have opportunities to lead in every sector of society."

Hilarie Bass, J.D. '81, chair of the University's Board of Trustees; Jacqueline Travisano, executive vice president for business and finance and chief operating officer; Rebecca Fox, dean of continuing and international education; Claudia Grillo, associate vice president for strategic philanthropy; and select student leaders will spearhead the new strategy.

"As we approach our centennial, we want to take a critical look at an issue that has been fundamental to the University since its founding—the status of women," Bass says. "We want to put the University at the center of an institutional and national conversation



about equality and inclusion."

"We're undertaking this initiative in a way that's relevant, authentic, and consistent with who we are," says Fox. "We're a young university, nimble and innovative, and we can find new ways of looking at and dealing with issues."

## New Trustees Named

Appointees bring varied expertise to the Board of Trustees



Six new members offering professional experience in business, finance, law, technology, and strategic planning were welcomed to the University's Board of Trustees at the spring meeting in mid-June.

"We are pleased to welcome these well-respected leaders to the Board of Trustees," says Hilarie Bass, J.D. '81, chair of the board. "The new members bring a top level of insight, expertise, and excellence that is crucial in moving

the institution's goals forward and ensuring these are aligned to better address pressing global and local issues."

*The following are the new trustees.*

**Patricia Menendez-Cambo**, B.B.A. '86, deputy general counsel of SoftBank Group International and general counsel of the SoftBank Latin America Fund. Prior to SoftBank, she served most recently as former vice chair of Greenberg Traurig.

**Adam E. Carlin**, M.B.A. '94, managing director and senior portfolio management director at Morgan Stanley Private Wealth Management and senior partner of The Bermont/Carlin Group at Morgan Stanley.

**Jose R. Mas**, B.B.A. '92, M.B.A. '94, CEO of MasTec, Inc. and director of the Mas Family Foundation. Prior to 2010, Mas was chairman and CEO of Neff Corp.

*The following are the new alumni trustee members.*

**Alice S. Vilma**, B.B.A. '99, managing

director of Morgan Stanley's multicultural client strategy team who has worked in various roles in the global capital markets division.

**Carolyn B. Lamm**, J.D. '73, a partner at White & Case in Washington, D.C., where she specializes in international arbitration, trade matters, and commercial litigation.

*The following is the new student trustee member.*

**Jordan Rhodes**, third-year School of Law student and president of the Student Bar Association. In her first semester, she received the Dean's List distinction.



Visit [news.miami.edu/stories/2020/06/new-members-added-to-the-university-of-miami-board-of-trustees.html](https://news.miami.edu/stories/2020/06/new-members-added-to-the-university-of-miami-board-of-trustees.html) for full bios.

## Leader in His Field

Pioneering scientist named dean of the College of Engineering

Pratim Biswas—whose knowledge of applying aerosol science and engineering to areas such as energy and environmental nanotechnology, solar energy, air pollution control, and medicine is world renowned—this summer was named the new dean of the University's College of Engineering.

A member of the National Academy of Engineering, Biswas began transitioning to the University this fall and fully assumes his post in January 2021. He comes from Washington University in St. Louis, where he held multiple academic positions during a 20-year career.

"Pratim Biswas is a leader in his field—a skilled academician, scholar, and researcher who is deeply dedicated to helping both students and faculty members to excel," says President Julio Frenk.

At the University, Biswas plans to work closely with the Frost Institute of Chemistry and Molecular Science, mentoring both students and investigators;

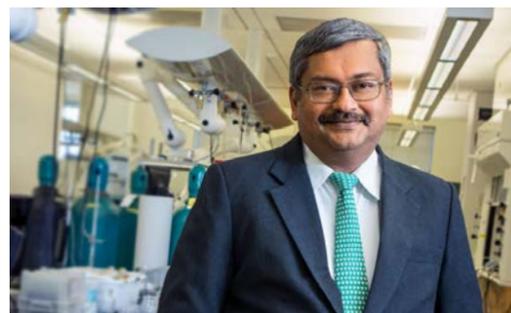
forge closer ties with alumni; and further enhance programs in all of the school's departments—areas such as health systems engineering, sustainability and resilience, data and computer science, and space science and engineering.

The new dean highlights the fact that the College of Engineering has one of the highest enrollments of women in the nation.

"Diversity has historically been a challenge in our discipline," he says. "But the University of Miami is a step ahead in that regard, and it is critical to support and enhance that diversity at the undergraduate and graduate levels and within the faculty."

He notes, too, the University's strong foundation in aerosol science and air quality, especially through the Rosenstiel School's Department of Atmospheric Sciences, where he will have a dual appointment.

Biswas suggests that the applications of his specialty—aerosol science and engineering—are numerous. As the novel



World-renowned aerosol scientist Pratim Biswas is named dean of the College of Engineering.

coronavirus has spread throughout the world, he has endeavored to demonstrate his bailiwick by conducting research to develop wireless sensors to be carried by health care workers in emergency rooms to detect COVID-19 aerosols, among other innovative virus-related studies.

"Engineers, because of our knack for problem-solving," he says, "can reach out to communities and work with them collaboratively to help develop solutions to many problems."



## Entertainment Adapts

Student and alumni artists creatively pivot to new platforms

As the pandemic swept into our lives months ago, the entertainment industry suffered an abrupt and pervasive shut-down. Movie theaters fell silent, concert hall doors shuttered, and film production spiraled into indefinite delay.

Yet entertainment thrives on creativity and innovation, and slowly but persistently the lights have flickered back on as performers experiment with new ways to share their talents.

At the University, the Frost School of Music has been teaching students to adapt. With virtual as the new normal,

the school has transitioned its popular "Hire a Musician Program"—connecting Frost musicians with community for-hire events—to a digital platform.

"COVID-19 has curtailed live, in-person performances and caused financial hardship, but gigging is the lifeblood of our students and alumni," says Dean Shelton Berg.

Alumni, like Michael Menendez, A.B. '11, a stand-up comedian, are finding new ways to share their creative craft.

"Stand-up comedy relies entirely on an audience—that's part of the reason

I love it, and it's excruciating to be away from it," says Menendez. "As long as people live and breathe, they're going to want someone to make them laugh."

Michael Bush, assistant professor of practice in the Department of Theatre Arts, suggests the pandemic offers new ways to tell stories—and he's confident traditional theater will persist.

"Plays on Broadway are being adapted to be performed on Zoom," says Bush, noting that during the plague, theaters shut down for years, then reopened to delight audiences again.

"We may not be able to get an audience in a theater for a while. But when the audience is ready to come, there will be people onstage ready to tell amazing stories," he says.

Betsy Helf Mateu, a lecturer in the Department of Cinema and Interactive Media in the School of Communication, urges students looking to enter the industry to continue to think creatively.

"I don't know the new playbook, but there will be many future opportunities," Helf Mateu says. "And we're preparing our students to have the skills to adapt as the industry emerges from this."

## Group Helps Businesses Recover

Volunteer program matches new graduates with nonprofits

The Miami Volunteer Corps, a virtual initiative, matches the skill sets of recent Miami Herbert Business School graduates with the needs of mostly local nonprofit organizations that are struggling to navigate the economic crisis. Launched this summer, the corps is supporting five projects, and others are progressing to partnership.

"We want to be a player in the recovery of our community, and these students—who want to give of themselves and who have wonderful talents—want to be part of that effort," says Ginger Baxter, director of Ziff Graduate Career Advancement.

"It's our community responsibility as the leading business school in South Florida to help local businesses recover," adds Dean John Quelch.

Fanyi Zhang, M.S. '20, who earned

her degree in business analytics this past May, jumped at the opportunity to put her newly honed business skills to work.

"Joining the Volunteer Corps was really a win-win. Because of COVID-19, I've had more time at home while I'm job searching, and we're excited to do what we can to help these nonprofits survive," says Zhang.

Zhang and three other recent grads were selected for the corps' first project with 305 Pink Pack, a nonprofit that provides free healing support services for women in Miami-Dade County undergoing cancer treatment. Students are helping to analyze business strategy and develop comprehensive outreach.

The corps is open to all recent graduates of the Miami Herbert



Business School's M.B.A. program or its multiple specialized M.S. degree programs. Students must fill out an application and be willing to volunteer 20 hours or more of virtual time per week for between two and 12 weeks. The students are then paired with nonprofit companies, and projects are supervised as they progress.

"Working with nonprofits offers wonderful experience and is so important for our community," Baxter says. "Students realize that the same skill set is needed to lead a nonprofit as it is for a multimillion-dollar corporation."

# Brand Icons Topple Amid Rising Awareness

University experts assess consumer power in the marketplace

The Black Lives Matter movement, which continues to stir racial justice awareness throughout the United States, has prompted upheaval in the marketplace. Long-standing icons depicting racial stereotyping—Uncle Ben’s, Mrs. Butterworth’s, Cream of Wheat, Eskimo Pie, and Aunt Jemima, among others—have tumbled off the shelves to seek new identity in rebranding.

For Claudia Townsend, an associate professor of marketing at the Miami Herbert Business School, rebranding prompted by cultural shifts and consumer critique is nothing new. “But the speed of the awakening—all that’s happened within such a short time—and the awareness spurring the changes are all very different,” she says.

Townsend, whose expertise focuses on aesthetics and visual presentation in consumer choice, points out that the past 10 years have heralded a period of rethinking gender roles, and that companies have responded.

She referenced Target, which previously marketed separate toy sections for boys and girls that they have since merged, and television commercials for home cleaning and childcare products that previously showed only women and now regularly show men mopping, cooking, and caring for toddlers. Townsend also points to Dove’s “Campaign for Real Beauty,” which expanded the company’s imagery of beauty to include women of different ages, sizes, ethnicities, and hair type and style.

Yet these changes are often met with resistance by consumers ready to exercise their purchasing muscle.

“Consumers just don’t like change,” Townsend says. “They are often fiercely loyal to their favorite products. And even when they may support a branding change, there’s always backlash when a company changes an asset.”

This fierce loyalty, she explains,



stems from anthropomorphism, a concept key to marketing where products assume human characteristics. “With Aunt Jemima, even people who understand what’s wrong with this imagery are challenged,” she said, “because the image feels like a person—like the sweet aunt they grew up with.”

Another practice that has gained traction is cause-related marketing, where companies partner with a nonprofit and contribute a portion of their product’s purchase price toward the cause.

Michael Tsiros, Patrick J. Cesarano Faculty Scholar and chair of the Department of Marketing, published an article recently in the *Journal of Marketing Research* that explores consumer interest in cause-related marketing.

“The consumer’s personal contribution and the impact they make is definitely important; they want to be involved and feel that they’re making a difference,” Tsiros explains.

Companies can benefit by being vocal and visible about the causes they support, he suggests, but they must

understand that consumers are closely attuned.

“In the pandemic we’ve seen a lot of companies doing commercials, telling how they’re supplying personal protective equipment and helping front-line workers,” he says. “Companies need to be in the news—yet there is a stigma that they may be seen as tooting their own horn.”

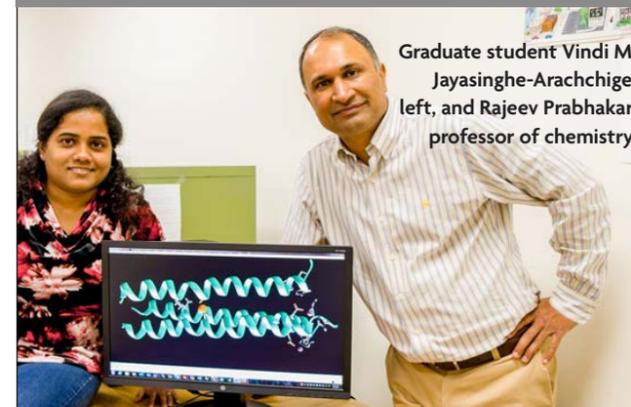
Perception of authenticity also plays a key role in the response to rebranding, Townsend points out.

“Consumers, especially those willing to do research behind any branding changes, will question if the rebranding is authentic,” she says. “These same customers are also going to demand that the companies do more, in essence that they put their money where their mouth is and take real action—contribute to a cause, promote diversity in leadership, or increase employee salaries.”

Townsend says research shows that millennials—with their considerable purchasing power—are exceptionally cause-driven and ready to financially reward companies they respect.

—Michael R. Malone

## R+D Update



Graduate student Vindi M. Jayasinghe-Arachchige, left, and Rajeev Prabhakar, professor of chemistry.

### New Artificial Enzymes

The field of biomimetic chemistry has emerged in recent decades with the goal of designing artificial enzymes that can mimic the powers of natural enzymes—found in every living organism and that serve to trigger thousands of biological functions. Artificial enzymes could, for example, convert corn into ethanol or help create new drugs more quickly, cheaply, and effectively.

Rajeev Prabhakar, a computational chemist at the University of Miami, together with researchers at the University of Michigan, moved a step closer to that goal, having created a novel, synthetic, three-stranded molecule that functions just like a natural metalloenzyme, or an enzyme that contains metal ions.

“This is an incremental but important step in the development of artificial enzymes, long considered chemistry’s Holy Grail,” Prabhakar explains.

For their groundbreaking study published in *Nature Chemistry*, he and graduate student Vindi

M. Jayasinghe-Arachchige have explored techniques with Michigan collaborators that might reveal a new strategy for creating artificial enzymes.

Jayasinghe-Arachchige, in the final year of her doctoral studies, designed the new molecule on the University’s supercomputer with Prabhakar’s guidance.

### Better Hurricane Forecasting

Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science researchers David Nolan, Brian McNoldy, and James Hlywiak are using sophisticated supercomputer simulations to study how different landscapes, from suburban settings to large city centers, affect hurricane sustained winds and gusts.

Their research, part of a federally funded study, has far-reaching impacts, promising not only to upgrade forecast models to account for wind speeds over land but also to predict how buildings disrupt and modify winds.

“Trees, houses, a densely packed cluster of skyscrapers—they all

have an impact on wind speed and direction,” explains Nolan, professor and chair of atmospheric sciences and co-principal investigator of the study. “And wind velocity can differ from one area of a city to another, even from one side of a building to another. We’re trying to better understand such variations.”

To do so, Nolan and others turned to the Institute for Data Science and Computing and its powerful Pegasus supercomputer, analyzing data gleaned from 24 simulations of Hurricane Wilma making landfall over South Florida.

The study could lead to the creation of extreme-weather apps that yield detailed data. “You’d simply punch in your address and get information on what the wind speeds will be in a given area throughout the course of a storm,” Nolan says.

### Early Autism Marker

In the first study of its kind, University of Miami researchers have determined that infants with familial risk for autism and who also exhibit early

social difficulty with their parents are far more likely to be diagnosed later with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) than high-risk infants with secure attachments.

“One of the cornerstone impairments of ASD is the difficulty in forming and maintaining social relationships, and attachment security is the key measure of the infant-parent relationship. So, it made sense to look at how attachment security relates to ASD diagnoses,” explains Katherine Martin, the study’s lead author who initiated the research as a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Arts and Sciences under the guidance of psychology professor Daniel Messinger.

Published in *Developmental Science*, the study looks at how 15-month-old babies react when they are briefly separated and then reunited with a parent, and it builds on Messinger’s extensive previous research on infants whose older siblings have been diagnosed with ASD.

“While we can’t stop a future ASD diagnosis, these findings suggest we should consider attachment-related interventions for high-risk infants who show insecurity,” Messinger points out.





D'Eriq King

MIAMI ATHLETICS

## 'Canes Football Starts Strong

The Miami Hurricanes are off to a fast start to a football season that many weren't sure would even take place because of the COVID-19 uncertainty. The 'Canes kicked off the Atlantic Coast Conference season—only one of two major conferences that launched on time—with an impressive 31-14 win against the University of Alabama Birmingham.

Quarterback D'Eriq King sparked the attack with electrifying runs and pinpoint passes that herald a bright future for the up-tempo offense directed by new coordinator Rhett Lashlee. Behind a fortified offensive line, the 'Canes rushed for 337 yards—their 2019 average was just 118—led by speedy Cam'Ron Harris.

The team unveiled "The Crib" touchdown rings, and Harris earned the first pair of brass four-fingered rings

that signify hometown 305 after a 66-yard touchdown scamper.

Florida State visited Hard Rock Stadium the following week, and the 'Canes were ready, dominating their archrivals 52-10. Miami was up 38-3 at halftime, and the final score marked the first time in 65 meetings that either team scored more than 50 points.

With the win against FSU, the 'Canes moved into a No. 7 national ranking. While the team faces a tough ACC schedule, expectations remain high.

Coach Manny Diaz praised the University and the athletics department administration for their guidance and the players' discipline for persevering against the backdrop of the virus. "The credit has got to go to our players, who have been remarkable in the way that they take care of each other and take care of themselves," says Diaz.

## Sprinter Brittany Ellis Nominated for Top Award

Middle-distance sprinter Brittany Ellis, B.S.N. '19, has already gotten her name in the Miami record books. Now the three-time ACC Championships champion, five-time silver medalist, and a four-time ACC team champion is positioned for even greater acclaim.

Ellis is one of two women nominated by the ACC for the 2020 NCAA Woman of the Year Award.

She has blazed a trail on the University track. The 400-meter runner is a two-time U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCA) All-America second-team selection and twice earned the association's honorable mention accolades.

She concluded her illustrious Miami career in the top five of three different categories.



MIAMI ATHLETICS

An academic standout as well, the Illinois native earned her bachelor's degree in nursing and is completing her master's degree in health informatics with a 4.0 GPA. She was a five-time All-ACC Academic Team member and two-time USTFCCA All-Academic team honoree.

Ellis was also tapped into Iron Arrow Honor Society and was inducted into the Omicron Kappa Fraternity, a testament to her all-around excellence.

The 2020 season had a record number of 605 school nominees, represented from 21 different sports spanning all three NCAA divisions. The NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics will select the 2020 Woman of the Year from nine finalists.

## Freshman Amato Comes Ready to Row

Unlike many rowers who do not discover the sport until high school or sometimes

even college, Gabrielle Amato brings a wealth of experience and talent to the 'Canes crew.

The Miami native first learned to row at summer camp when she was 11, and she fell instantly in love with the sport and the community of people around it.

Rowing soon became one of the most important parts of her day, and Amato worked diligently to get stronger and faster. She attended her junior year of high school online and kept a rigorous daily schedule of training and academics.

The hard work paid off. In 2018, Amato was invited to the Youth Olympics Qualification and the finals of the Pan American Junior Remo Competition in Chile—the first female to ever represent her home country of Haiti in an international rowing competition.

"I was a little scared at first because I didn't want to let them down," Amato says. "But then I



Gabrielle Amato

MIAMI ATHLETICS



Mia Atrio

let everything go and told myself, 'You're here for this, you're here for your country, just have fun.'"

Amato chose to stay in Miami to be near her mother, who lives on Miami Beach, and is excited to join a new crew team on the water. She will be majoring in dentistry and continuing to train in hopes of potentially representing Haiti at a future Olympic Games.

## Mia Atrio Has Her Eyes on Goal

When freshman forward Mia Atrio, a scoring standout who helped her Miami high school win its first state championship, gets her goal in sight, she rarely misses.

Over a decorated four-year high-school career, Atrio was a three-time Miami Herald First-Team All-Dade member, two-time Miami Herald All-Dade soccer player of the year winner, and the 7A-5A All-Dade female athlete of the year recipient.

And when it came time to decide where to bring her soccer skills, Atrio was on target. She grew up just a few miles away from the Coral Gables Campus; her father, Andy, played wide receiver for the Hurricanes in the mid-'90s; and the U was always at the top of her collegiate list.

"It was like a dream come true, since it was my dream school for soccer, and it was what I was aiming for all my life," says Atrio, who launched her 'Canes career with the team's first game in early September.

WHERE OTHERS SEE A CHALLENGE,  
WE SEE AN OPPORTUNITY.



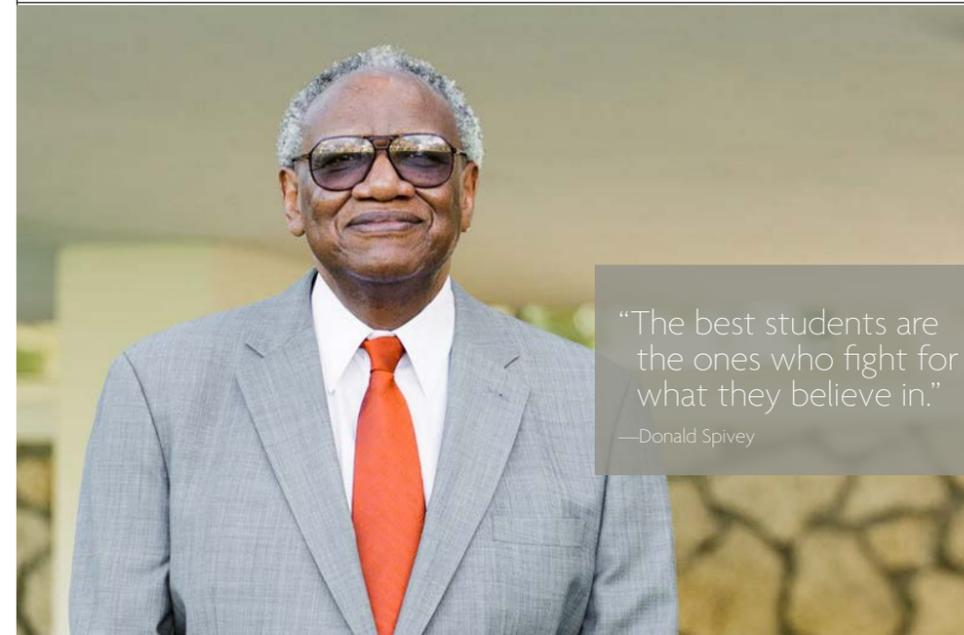
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## Faculty Files



“The best students are the ones who fight for what they believe in.”

—Donald Spivey

### A Champion for Civil Rights

Donald Spivey has been fighting for racial equality for most of his life, using his lectures, teachings, and exhaustive research as a distinguished professor of history and Cooper Fellow in the College of Arts and Sciences to help foster change.

In recognition of his work as a civil rights champion, Spivey was named special advisor to President Julio Frenk as part of the University’s 15-point plan to improve “racial justice on campus and beyond.” This plan was introduced as the nation struggles to eradicate systemic racism and police brutality that especially targets people of color.

Spivey plans to pursue specific goals, such as helping to increase the number of Black faculty members at the institution and ensure that the University admits and—

more importantly—retains more Black students.

“These are issues we have to wrestle with,” says Spivey. “Action without thought is empty, and thought without action is blind,” he says, quoting Kwame Nkrumah, the Ghanaian nationalist leader and revolutionary who led the Gold Coast to independence from Britain in the late 1950s.

Spivey grew up poor on Chicago’s West Side, raised by Mississippi-born parents who were part of the Great Migration—that massive movement of some six million Blacks who fled the rural South between 1916 and 1970 in search of a better life in the northern states.

His father worked in Chicago’s steel mills, and his mother in a clothing factory.

“As a kid, I held every job you can think of,” Spivey recalls. “Back then, parents believed you should work for things. No one was going to

give you anything.”

A history teacher at his inner-city high school “who made things relevant to the moment and showed us that we all had first-rate minds” sparked his love for history.

That passion has persisted and translated into a dedication to academic service. Spivey went on to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees, then a Doctor of Philosophy. All in history.

His research and achievements at the University are legendary, including nine authored or edited books. While he was trained as a labor historian, his body of research runs the gamut—everything from the history of education to Black music to sports. In 2019, he was awarded the University’s Outstanding Teaching Award and Provost Award for Scholarly Activity.

Spivey’s team-taught

“The Sixties” course is one of the most popular at the University, with more than 1,000 students having taken the class since it started 10 years ago. That decade of tumultuous change and incredible optimism was particularly formative for Spivey.

“So many things were happening, and my social consciousness was growing. The many, many fights, protests, demonstrations, and social and political skirmishes of the era are very much a part of who I am today,” he says.

At the time, he attended the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign on a full football scholarship but hung up his cleats to focus on his studies and burgeoning activism. He joined the Black Students Association on campus, making the hiring of more Black faculty members a priority.

The very history department through which Spivey took courses toward his major had no professors of color. He and his fellow students met regularly with school administrators, pushing for that to change.

School officials labeled him a troublemaker because of his spirited activism. But Spivey didn’t mind. That’s the way he wanted it. “The best students are the ones who fight for what they believe in,” he says. “And we fought for everything.”

In his new post, Spivey vows to use his cabinet-level platform to continue to push for racial and ethnic equality at the University.

—Robert C. Jones Jr.

## Degree Tackles Big Data

The Master of Science in Data Science tailors its curriculum for multiple fields

Data science—extracting knowledge and insights from structured and unstructured data—continues to blaze new trails as an exciting new career path. To prepare graduate students to excel as data mining and programming specialists, the College of Arts and Sciences established the Master of Science in Data Science.

The interdisciplinary degree launched this fall with 15 students, featuring tracks in technical data science, data visualization, smart cities, and marine and atmospheric science.

“Most data science degrees are based on engineering or computer science, and we wanted to go beyond that to offer an interdisciplinary program that utilizes the University’s diverse resources,” says Maryann Tobin, A.B. ’01, M.F.A. ’04, Ph.D. ’09, assistant dean for professional education.

An undergraduate data science track offered through the Department of

Computer Science was approved in early fall, and plans continue for additional tracks in the program, according to Tobin.

“This degree is open to everyone—a tech background is certainly not required—and we want to help students be ready to succeed,” says Tobin.

Many of the students in this first cohort enrolled in one or more of the three preparatory mini-courses—linear algebra, calculus, and computer programming—which were offered this summer.

The Department of Computer Science spearheaded the program’s design in coordination with the Miami Institute for Data Science and Computing, and the curriculum invites collaboration from the School of Architecture, School of Communication, School of Education and Human Development, College of Engineering, and Rosenstiel School of Marine and



Atmospheric Science.

The new degree benefits from the fact that the University is home to one of the nation’s fastest supercomputers—the \$3.7 million Triton—and likewise the University’s agreement with AT&T to become the first academic institution to deploy AT&T’s 5G+ and Multi-access Edge Computing technology.

“We have fantastic resources and wanted to offer a unique degree that allows students to explore the breadth of data science across the entire University curriculum,” Tobin says.

## Restored Corals Observed Spawning

First-ever event provides hope for restoration efforts



For the first time, staghorn corals grown in a nursery and replanted at a reef restoration site off Key Biscayne have spawned, signaling hope that fragmenting corals and outplanting them to reefs is a viable approach to help rebuild Florida’s valuable marine ecosystems.

Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science scientists and collaborators from SECORE International observed restored staghorn corals

(*Acropora cervicornis*) at Rainbow Reef releasing healthy spawn on Aug. 6 and Aug. 7, marking a first for nursery-grown corals outplanted on a reef restoration site in Miami-Dade County.

“It’s a very rare phenomenon to witness, so it’s great that we were able to capture this scientific breakthrough to share with our local community and people around the world,” says Diego Lirman, Ph.D. ’98, associate professor of marine biology and ecology and founder and director of the University’s Rescue a Reef program.

The scientists were able to collect eggs and sperm from about a dozen different colonies during the spawning, which they then fertilized to raise thousands of coral larvae that can also be grown out and replanted as part of a cyclical approach to helping reefs rebuild themselves and remain resilient.

“Spawning in the wild is a critical

observation that shows that these restored corals now have the ability to naturally replenish reefs through their own reproductive efforts,” says Andrew Baker, Ph.D. ’99, professor of marine biology and ecology and director of the University’s Coral Reef Futures Lab.

The scientists also observed, collected, and fertilized coral spawn at their underwater coral nursery. In addition, the research team observed several wild mountainous star coral colonies (*Orbicella faveolata*) spawn at Rainbow Reef.

The coral spawning and restoration activities are part of the \$6 million Southeast Florida Coral Restoration Hub, which has a goal to restore 125 acres of reef habitat in Miami-Dade and Broward counties over three years. Florida’s Coral Reef is the only nearshore reef in the continental United States, and coral cover has declined by at least 70 percent since the 1970s. —Diana Udel

## Student Spotlight

### The Power of a Phone Call

Nicolas Hernandez provided more than 1,000 Spanish-speaking families in the Carolinas with vital information about the novel coronavirus.

In the age of text and email, Nicolas Hernandez, a public health student in the School of Nursing and Health Studies who hopes one day to be a physician, has discovered the satisfying personal rewards and immeasurable solace that a phone call can bring.

Since he began volunteering with the organization Curamericas Global in May, the University of Miami junior has logged 10 hours weekly and talked to more than 1,000 Spanish-speakers in the Carolinas, providing them with vital information about the novel coronavirus. The nonprofit is dedicated to reducing maternal and child mortality, and Hernandez uses the phone and his Spanish-language skills to connect Hispanic families with desperately needed services.

“I’ve learned a lot about the power of a simple phone call,” says Hernandez, the son of Colombian immigrants who moved to the United States before he was born. “At the end of the call, a lot of people say, ‘I don’t have any friends or family here, and it’s nice to know that someone out there actually cares.’”

Ordinarily Hernandez would have spent the time shadowing doctors at Jackson Memorial Hospital’s south campus, just as he has every summer since his junior year of high school at Miami’s TERRA Environmental Research Institute. But, after the pandemic forced the hospital to bar non-essential personnel, he jumped at the opportunity to reach out to Spanish-speakers in the Carolinas and made the calls while social distancing and working from his home in Miami.

“As a first-generation American, I know how hard my parents’ first years here were because they didn’t know English,” he says. “Drawing on their experience, I wanted to help these families connect to the resources they need to weather this virus a little bit better.”

Before he started, Hernandez wasn’t aware of the Carolinas’ Hispanic population, many of whom are food industry, agriculture, or

domestic workers. Nor was he familiar with Curamericas. But as a public health student in Miami, he was very familiar with the health disparities that last year prompted the nonprofit to partner with the new Guatemalan Consulate in Raleigh, N.C.

“Even though the Hispanic population there is a lot smaller, they make up almost half of the COVID-19 cases and are the ones suffering most from chronic diseases and not having health insurance or access to doctors on a regular basis,” Hernandez explains. “These are not just issues in a textbook but what people are living day to day.”

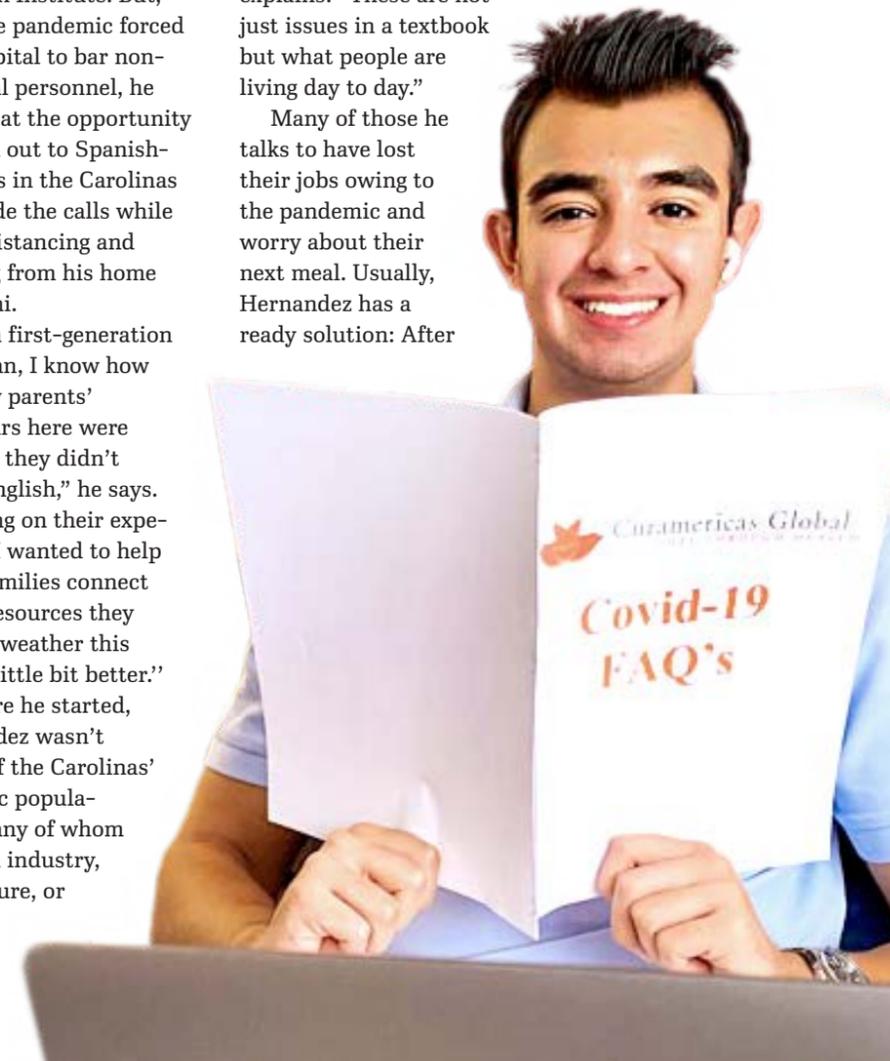
Many of those he talks to have lost their jobs owing to the pandemic and worry about their next meal. Usually, Hernandez has a ready solution: After

learning where they live, he sends them a list of nearby food banks, soup kitchens, or other food resources. But that option doesn’t work for many of the migrants who never learned to read or write.

So Hernandez calls and calls until he’s able to locate a food bank or some other needed service that can offer basic relief.

“As long as the program is ongoing, I’ll keep calling,” he says. “Classes have started. But I can still find an hour or two, three times a week, to continue making them.”

—Maya Bell



# A Whole New Back to School

**Following an adaptive and responsive model, the University of Miami takes every step to safeguard the 'Canes community while providing students the opportunity to attend classes on campus amid the ongoing pandemic.**

BY MICHAEL R. MALONE

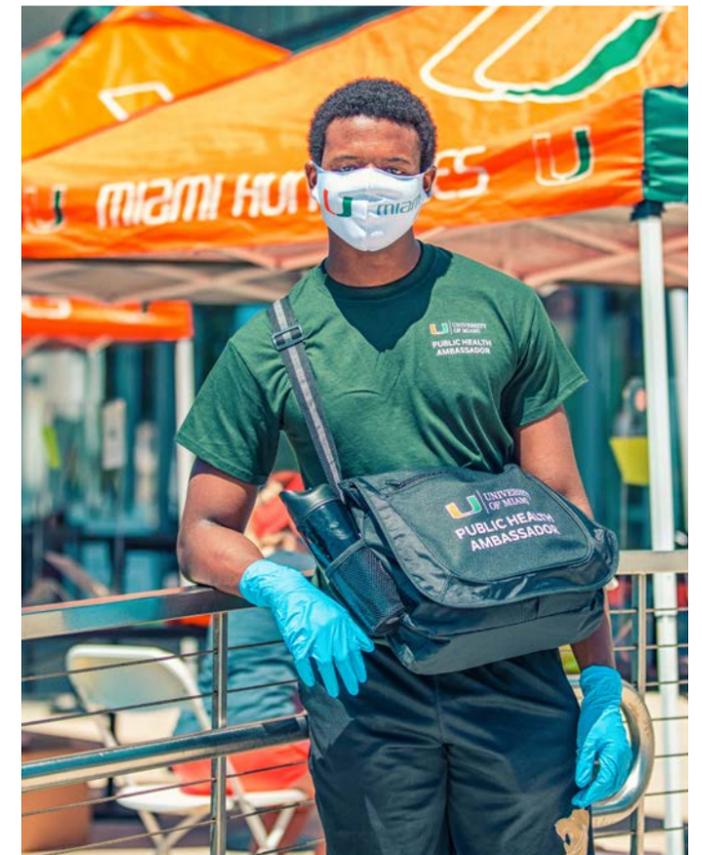
**CHLOE BEACH, A FIRST-YEAR PUBLIC RELATIONS MAJOR FROM AURORA, ILLINOIS, SAT ALONE IN FRONT OF THE DONNA E. SHALALA STUDENT CENTER AFTER FINISHING HER FIRST CLASS OF THE 2020 FALL SEMESTER—ENGLISH 105—IN THE NEW LAKESIDE VILLAGE.** The moment for Beach—feeling a mix of first-day elation and jitteriness, savoring being in college, and starting a new adventure in learning at a whole new level—was indeed wondrous. And the fact that she was here at the University of Miami, together with nearly 7,000 other students, starting classes on time and in person for the fall semester—in the midst of the pandemic that has wreaked havoc worldwide and was still surging in South Florida—was itself a small miracle. One made real by extraordinary dedication, colossal effort, and the University's willingness to prioritize the purpose and value of education.



PRESIDENT JULIO FRENK TOURS CAMPUS FACILITIES BEING USED IN NEW WAYS TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING.



ABOVE, NEW TECHNOLOGY WAS PURCHASED AND DEPLOYED TO ENHANCE INNOVATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUES, AND CLASSROOMS WERE RETROFITTED WITH PLEXIGLASS. RIGHT, JACQUES CALIXTE, A FIRST-YEAR SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES STUDENT, IS A PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADOR ON THE CORAL GABLES CAMPUS.



“The choice before us is not a binary one—keep campus closed or just open it. Instead, we must creatively devise intermediate solutions, which are both adaptive to the current circumstances and responsive to the varying needs of our students,” President Julio Frenk said in a July 15 message to the University community about the decision to bring students back to campus in the fall. He also emphasized that “providing an exceptional educational experience is the why of our decisions.”

The announcement came four months after the University vacated the campus in mid-March to stem the spread of the virus. Throughout the summer, leadership teams went to work across every facility and unit, scrutinizing details to prepare for the safest possible return for students.

Millions of dollars were invested to retrofit classrooms and common areas into safe spaces for teaching, studying, and living. Signs were erected to remind people to protect themselves and those around them by wearing facial coverings and by keeping 6 feet of distance. New technology was purchased and deployed to enhance innovative teaching techniques.

Meanwhile, quarantined in homes around the country and throughout the world, students and faculty members wrestled with decisions on whether to engage in the fall semester through in-person learning, remotely, or through a combination of both, described as hybrid learning. Split nearly evenly, about a third of students chose each mode of learning.

Frenk’s steady hand, founded on 36 years as a global public health expert, guided the path forward. As the University

proceeded with its reopening plans, the president was regularly consulted by national media for his insights and strategic thinking. The stakes were high for universities around the country to bring students back, and many were watching for a successful model.

On campus, senior leadership exercised transparency and delivered consistent messaging that emphasized the four pillars—testing, tracing, and tracking; cleaning and disinfecting; protecting personal space, distancing, and the use of face coverings; and vaccinating—while modeling an adaptive and responsive approach to the evolving situation.



## Public Health Ambassadors

Recognizing the effectiveness of peer influence, Patricia A. Whitely, Ed.D. ’94, vice president for student affairs, urged the creation of a student-led team of public health ambassadors to promote and monitor for adherence to COVID-19 health and safety precautions.

More than 270 students submitted applications for the program that, when launched, quickly drew national attention. Andrew Wiemer, director of the Butler Center for Service and Leadership and the program’s organizer, alongside Lindsey Woods, the center’s assistant director, interviewed nearly 120 students and ultimately selected 75 of them—including team leads.

“This new team of student-leaders is the embodiment of our ‘Canes Care for ‘Canes philosophy,” says Whitely.

Camila Treptow, a biology major pursuing a career in medicine, was among those selected. Her entire family had tested positive for the virus, and she felt a duty to apply to serve.

“Thankfully, we had only mild symptoms, but I knew after my experience that I wanted to do everything possible to stop the spread because I personally know how bad it makes you feel and how easily it spreads,” Treptow says.

New ‘Cane Jacques Calixte was also excited to be an ambassador. “I really wanted to do something that would be able to help the community, so applying for this job felt like the best option,” he says.

“I really wanted to do something that would be able to help the community, so applying to this job felt like the best option.” —Jacques Calixte

Sawyer Garrity, a sophomore music therapy major with a minor in psychology and songwriting, was inspired by the chance to do what she could to help.

“I love Miami, and education is really important to me, along with the safety of my peers and professors,” Garrity points out. “I wanted to help keep Miami safe so we could continue to be at the U while taking the measures needed to make sure COVID doesn’t spread.”



## The Countdown Continues

As June turned into July, the countdown to the new semester grew more visible. Huge white tents were erected on the green in front of the Otto G. Richter Library to add classroom space so students and teachers could learn while maintaining physical distancing. Residential living areas were cleaned and prepared for students.

In advance of students returning, all faculty and staff were directed to complete the We Are One U: COVID-19 Safety Principles training module—developed by diverse experts at the University and UHealth—the University of Miami Health System—which conveyed evidence-based public health guidelines.

New technology tools were introduced that required everyone visiting campus—students, faculty, and staff—to use a daily symptom checker and respond appropriately to its guidance. An online location density monitor began providing updates in real time with reports on capacity at popular locations on campus.

The student government executive board elected in the spring—Abigail Adeleke, president; Shirly Gelman, vice president; and Amanda Rodriguez, treasurer—continued its active engagement with University leadership, serving as a critical liaison to parlay students' concerns.

"We are in a unique position where we talk directly with people making the decisions," Gelman says. "I want to make students aware that if they are confused, if they need to ask anything, we are people that they can come to."



## Move-in Week

The Coral Gables Campus was buzzing Monday, Aug. 11, as hundreds of new 'Canes arrived, eager to move into their residence halls. The process included an additional day for arrivals; staggered, scheduled check-in appointments to prevent crowding; and the requirement to test negative for COVID-19 prior to coming to campus. By mid-week, 1,700 first-year residential students were settled, with returning students moving in later in the week.

The Watsco Center Fieldhouse served as a check-in hub. Students confirmed their pre-arrival COVID-19 test result, and received their 'Cane Card, on-campus housing assignment, and a Safe Return to Campus Kit—which included a face covering, disposable gloves, antibacterial wipes, a hand sanitizer, a thermometer, and more.

Nathaniel Valentine, a first-year student from Brooklyn, New York, was among the first group of students to step onto campus. "It was kind of surreal and bittersweet arriving," says Valentine, a business major. "I felt good because of how welcoming and homey campus feels and look forward to getting to know my classmates and hopefully having a good time despite this coronavirus thing."

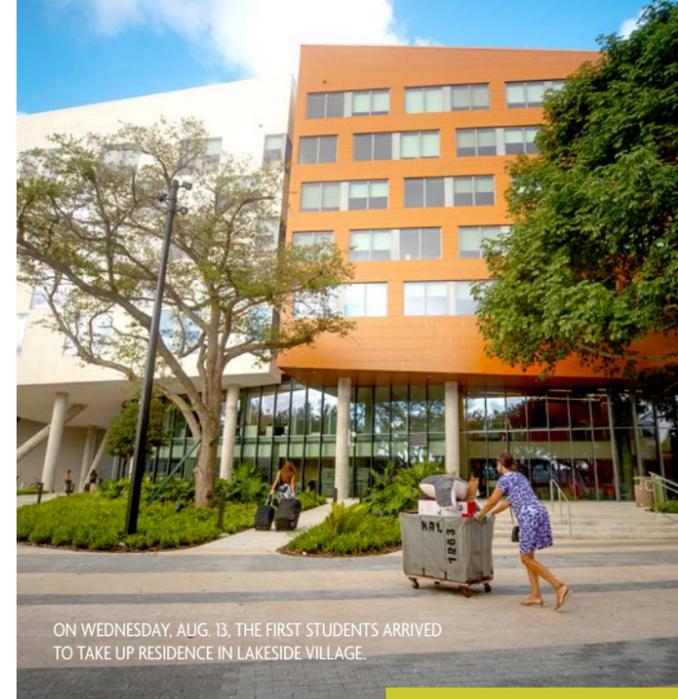
Eleanor Parks, a first-year musical theatre major, says the welcoming atmosphere helped her adjustment. "I'm really excited about walking around and seeing all that the campus has to offer," she says.

Parks' mom, Meredith, was excited to meet President Frenk for the first time, having closely tracked his social media posts regarding the University's reopening plans.

On Wednesday, Aug. 13, the first students arrived to take up residence in Lakeside Village, the new 12-acre, transformative housing complex on the shores of Lake Osceola.



FIRST-YEAR STUDENT ELEANOR PARKS—WITH HER MOM, MEREDITH—SHOWS OFF HER 'CANE CARD.



ON WEDNESDAY, AUG. 13, THE FIRST STUDENTS ARRIVED TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN LAKESIDE VILLAGE.



CAMPUS DINING LOCATIONS ADOPT NEW SAFETY MEASURES, INCLUDING LIMITED SEATING AND ENHANCED CLEANING PROTOCOLS.

Many stopped outside the entrance, gazing up at the inspiring six-floored structure before entering to locate their apartment or suite. The impact was unanimous: "Beautiful." "Gorgeous." "The architecture is so Miami." "Amazing."

"There are so many things in here to see and explore," says Alexander Miller, a sophomore neuroscience major. "I had a good on-campus living experience last year but am looking forward to apartment living and a more mixed-living experience."

Natalie Rodas, who will share an apartment with roommates she met while living in Hecht Residential College last year, appreciated Lakeside's centralized location. "I can be everywhere I need to go within a short walk," says the sophomore majoring in marketing and finance. "And the view from my room is even better than I expected."

## Let the Learning Begin

The first day of classes on Monday, Aug. 17, had all the South Florida look and feel of a start to the University's fall semester—searing South Florida heat and blazing sun. Candace Sukie, a nursing student from Miramar, Florida, had three classes on campus her first day and was happy to be able to attend in person.

"Everything feels clean and organized, and the campus is really pretty," Sukie remarks. "I also like how they assigned seats and spaced out the desks so there was no confusion."

Nouf Behbehani, a first-year student from Kuwait, was excited to begin her environmental engineering studies.

"I really want to become an inventor," she says. "I hope all the things I can learn this year will benefit me to become an engineer and later an inventor, so I can make a good change in my life and make changes for the environment."

Donald Henry, a nursing student who hails from Haiti,

had a super start to his first college classes. He noted the many safety measures that had been put in place. "Everything—from the bus stop to the classrooms to the cafeteria—was so clean. I believe this was planned out very well."

"Everything feels clean and organized, and the campus is really pretty." —Candace Sukie

## A First-Quarter Update

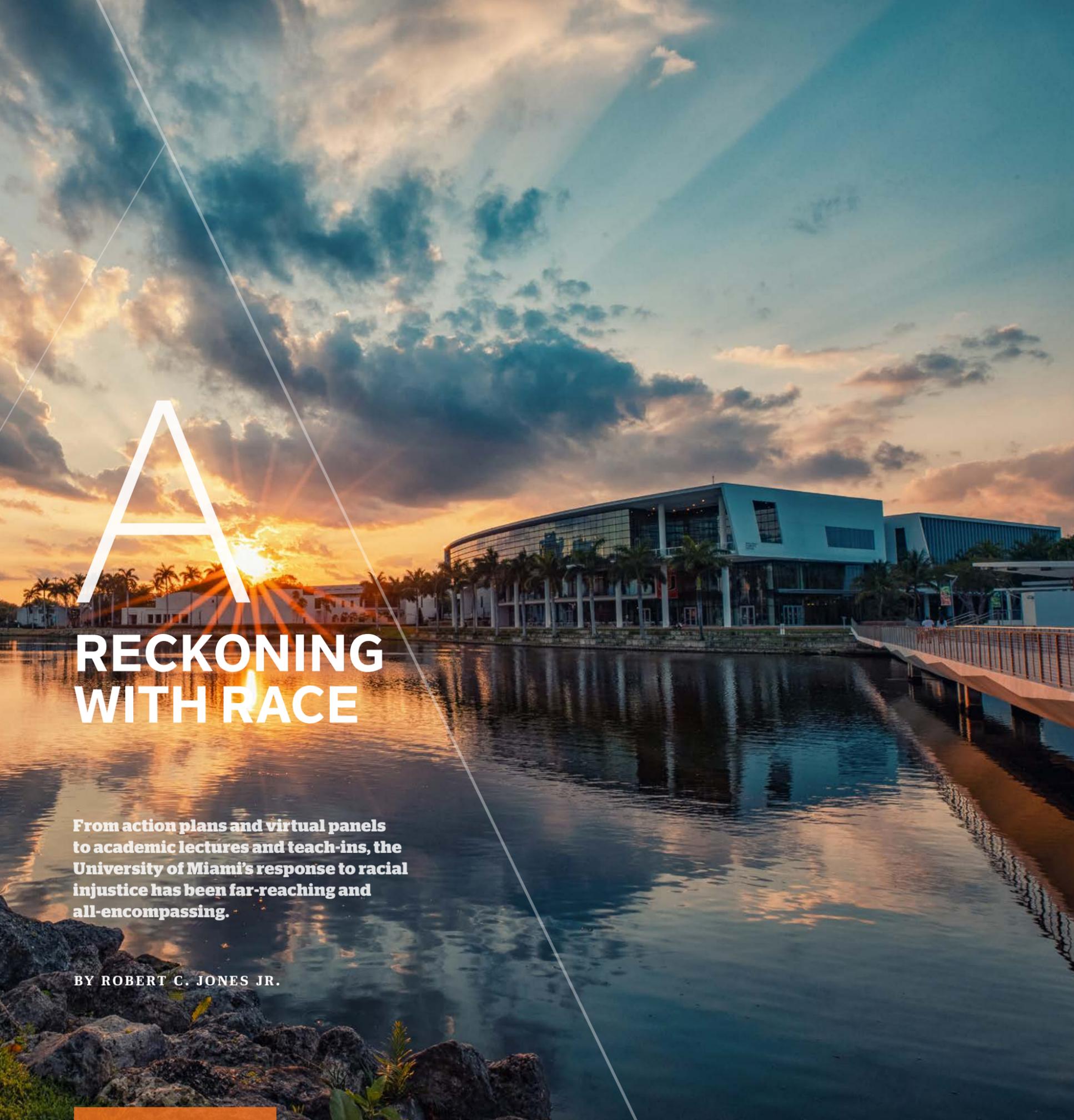
On the last day of August, Frenk and Erin Kobetz, vice provost for research and scholarship and professor of public health sciences and responsible for leading the tracking and tracing efforts on campus, offered a candid appraisal of the scenario on campus.

Both agreed that the trends were positive, and both heartily urged that vigilance continue and that accurate data remains indispensable to navigating the way forward.

"Our priority is to keep the community safe, and it's very early in the semester. But what we're seeing indicates that our plan is working," Kobetz states. "We're pleased by students' willingness to accept these new norms while also encouraging one another to adopt and maintain them."

On Sept. 11, the day after the 'Canes football team played its first game of the year—another formerly unthinkable feat—Frenk offered a "first-quarter update" on progress, praising the collective effort. He noted that "the trends both on campus and in the community so far continue to be encouraging," but cautioned that most experts expect an increase in cases in the fall.

"So we must redouble our efforts to make sure we all remain healthy and can successfully complete the semester," he says. —Ashley A. Williams, Janette Neuwahl Tannen, and Amanda M. Perez contributed to this article. ■



# A RECKONING WITH RACE

**From action plans and virtual panels to academic lectures and teach-ins, the University of Miami's response to racial injustice has been far-reaching and all-encompassing.**

BY ROBERT C. JONES JR.

**The only thing Ronnie Graham really remembers about May 25 is turning on his television set and seeing the disturbing cellphone video of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin pressing his knee into George Floyd's neck as the handcuffed Floyd pleaded, "I can't breathe." Up until then, "everything else about that day was pretty much a blur," the third-year University of Miami law student recalls.**

It was late Memorial Day evening, and the Floyd video had already gone viral, sparking nationwide protests and demonstrations. But Graham, preparing to bed down in his Miami apartment after a long day of studying, was just getting his first look at the footage. "My initial thought was, 'How could anyone who was standing there not have done something,'" he says.

During his first two years of law school, the Lake City, Florida, native wrestled with all sorts of pressing legal issues—from sentencing guidelines to the erosion of the Voting Rights Act to whether the death penalty constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. But the question of what he would have done had he been at the intersection of 38th Street and Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis on that day in May especially gnawed at him.

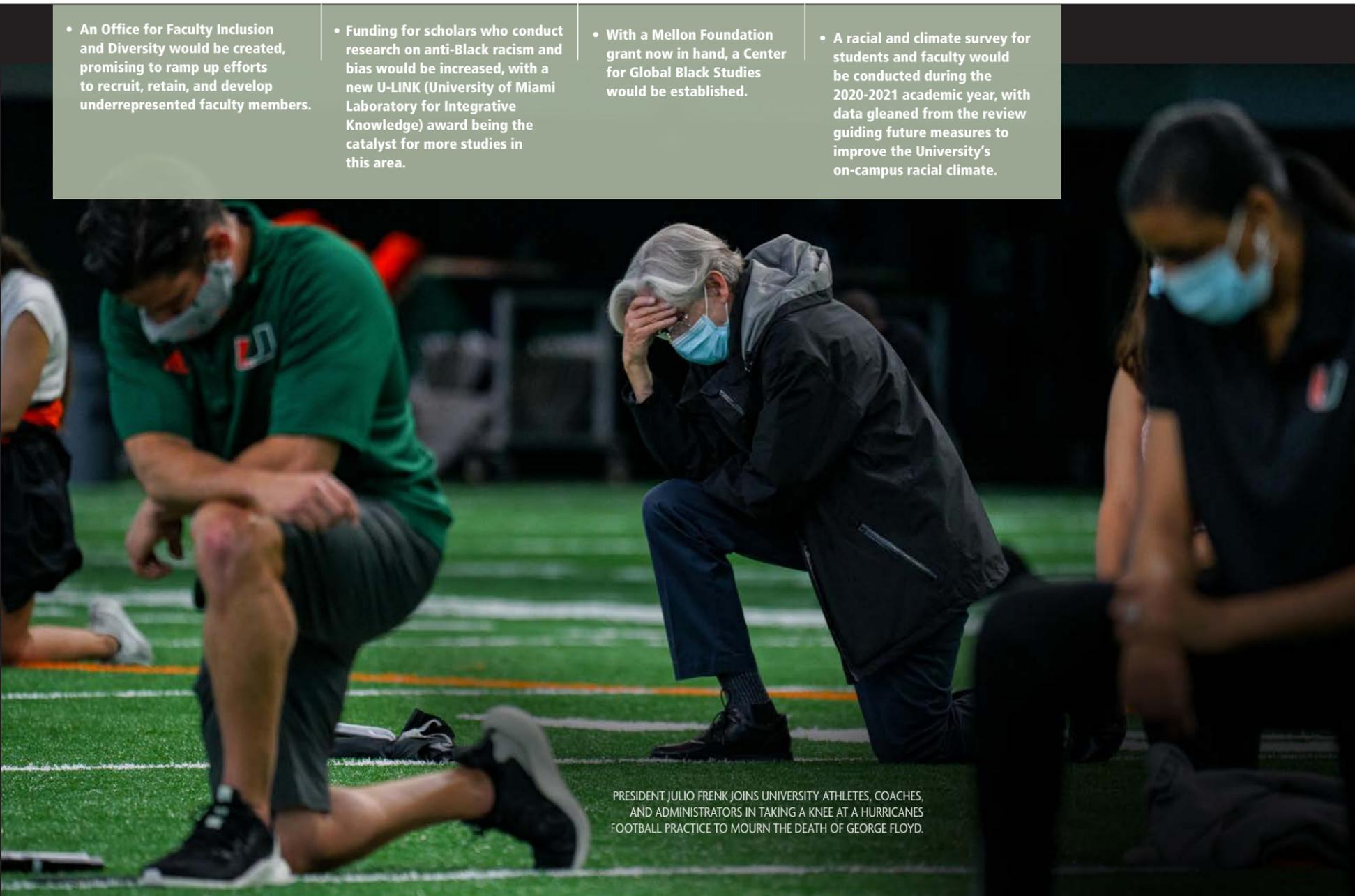
Though Graham, president of the Black Law Students Association, wasn't there for Floyd, he took action in another way, organizing a virtual teach-in that explored issues of systemic racism in policing.

**H**is effort was part of a University-wide response to calls for racial justice in the wake of Floyd's death. From virtual panels that explored the inequities experienced by marginalized groups to a list of student recommendations on how to "address the current state of affairs surrounding the Black student community" to a 15-point action plan initiated by President Julio Frenk to improve and build upon diversity and inclusion at the institution, the University of Miami's response has been far-reaching and all-encompassing. "We have been taking a hard look at how we can help heal the pain we see manifest in our communities," Frenk wrote in a letter to the University community on July 1. "We have the opportunity—and the responsibility—to channel that indignation into urgent and useful action, rather than divisive or destructive behavior." If anyone knows about the importance of diversity and inclusion, it is Frenk, who was born in Mexico to a German-Jewish father who at 6 years old escaped the persecution of Nazi Germany.

## A PLAN FOR ACTION

The following are some of the key measures Frenk outlined in a 15-point action plan.

- An Office for Faculty Inclusion and Diversity would be created, promising to ramp up efforts to recruit, retain, and develop underrepresented faculty members.
- Funding for scholars who conduct research on anti-Black racism and bias would be increased, with a new U-LINK (University of Miami Laboratory for Integrative Knowledge) award being the catalyst for more studies in this area.
- With a Mellon Foundation grant now in hand, a Center for Global Black Studies would be established.
- A racial and climate survey for students and faculty would be conducted during the 2020-2021 academic year, with data gleaned from the review guiding future measures to improve the University's on-campus racial climate.



PRESIDENT JULIO FRENK JOINS UNIVERSITY ATHLETES, COACHES, AND ADMINISTRATORS IN TAKING A KNEE AT A HURRICANES FOOTBALL PRACTICE TO MOURN THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD.

"We are living in a unique moment when people are open to learning about the racial injustice that plagues our society."

—Charles Eckman



The plan came on the heels of a letter drafted and signed by student leaders from across the University that contained an extensive list of recommendations on how the institution could improve the way it supports Black and other diverse communities. Creating new departments and ramping up support for existing infrastructure that serve marginalized and underrepresented communities; revising hiring and admittance practices to bring in more underrepresented faculty members and staff, as well as increase and retain the number of Black students; and allocating more resources to ensure an inclusive environment were among the proposals.

Meanwhile, University Libraries employed the power of the pen in its efforts to combat racial injustice, creating a Racial Justice Resources online guide of books, e-books, films, websites, archives, reading lists, and more "designed to assist our community in educating themselves in figuring out ways to advocate for improved conditions, especially along the lines of race and ethnicity," says Roxane Pickens, librarian assistant professor and director of the Learning Commons.

"We are living in a unique moment when people are open to learning about the nature and origins of the racial injustice that plagues our society," says Charles Eckman, dean of libraries and university librarian. "Learning tools such as this guide are critical resources to those seeking understanding and solutions."



THESE HISTORIC BUTTONS ARE FROM THE DR. JOHN O. BROWN AND MARIE FAULKNER BROWN PAPERS, A UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ARCHIVE LISTED ON THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES' RACIAL JUSTICE RESOURCES ONLINE GUIDE.

## GIVING THE COMMUNITY A VIRTUAL STAGE

In addition to letters and action plans, much of the University's initial response to addressing racial disparities came in the form of virtual panels where faculty members and students, still sheltering in place because of the novel coronavirus that was spreading across the country, discussed everything from systemic racism in policing to the injustices and inequities faced by people of color in every other aspect of life.

During the online teach-in organized by Graham and held less than a week after the George Floyd incident, School of Law Dean Anthony E. Varona intoned the names of several Black people killed by police officers in then-recent controversial shootings, setting the tone for an event in which more than 1,000 virtual attendees debated such issues as the reallocation of police resources, the establishment of civilian review boards, and whether qualified immunity—which shields officers from lawsuits—should be terminated.

“George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Dominique Clayton. Botham Jean. Eric Reason. Stephon Clark. Philando Castile. Atatiana Jefferson. Alton Sterling. Sandra Bland. Jamar Clark. Freddie Gray. Walter Scott. Tamir Rice. Laquan McDonald. John Crawford. Michael Brown. Eric Garner,” Varona read.

There were others, to be sure. But Varona just didn't have enough time to intone them all. “It was important to me that our African-American students be front and center in this event, and that they take a controlling role in its planning and execution,” Varona says. “We do not shy away from convening difficult conversations in which we hold ourselves and each other accountable as we look to the law as a vehicle for social change and reform.”

In an effort to spark action, the Black Student Leadership Caucus, in collaboration with the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, brought students together in early June for a Black State of the Union virtual dialogue, leading a conversation on how the University community can create change. During that event Student Government President Abigail Adeleke proposed several ideas to strengthen morale at the University, including the need for comprehensive diversity and sensitivity training. “Words have so much power,” she says. “They have the power to destroy and, alternatively, the power to build. We all have a part to play in learning how to better interact with one another.”

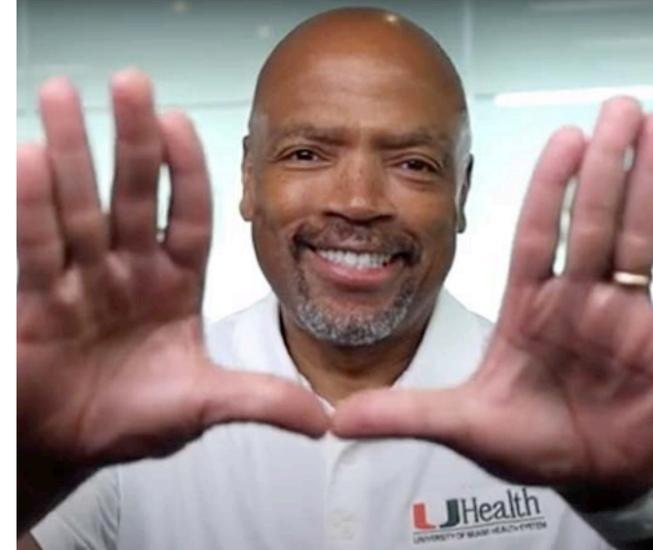
“Words  
have so  
much  
power.”

—Abigail Adeleke



STUDENT GOVERNMENT PRESIDENT ABIGAIL ADELEKE BROUGHT STUDENTS TOGETHER FOR THE BLACK STATE OF THE UNION.

In July, the Miller School of Medicine hosted a virtual panel that explored how the school could work to create a more inclusive atmosphere for Black students, faculty, staff, and for Black and brown patients in health care settings. “The singular focus of the Miller School of Medicine is to become one of the preeminent research medical schools and academic



MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE DEAN HENRI R. FORD CONVENED A TASK FORCE TO CHAMPION RACIAL JUSTICE TO FOSTER A MORE WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE FOR BLACK STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND PATIENTS.

health systems in the country, if not the world, but if UM is to live up to its goal, we must also confront and denounce racism and uproot it,” Dean Henri R. Ford says. “We must recognize that the problem of racism is multifaceted in nature and reflects a fundamental lack of diversity, especially in terms of Black students, fellows, residents, and faculty.”

Ford convened the Task Force to Champion Racial Justice, charging the initiative with working to foster a more welcoming atmosphere for Black students, faculty, staff, and patients on the medical campus. Seven subcommittees worked to encourage racial justice policies in admissions, student affairs, residents and fellows, curriculum, faculty, research, and community engagement, presenting their suggestions to the Miller School in October.

## TEACHING ABOUT RACIAL JUSTICE FROM THE LECTERN

Later, as the fall semester got underway with strict protocols in place to protect students and faculty from the spread of COVID-19, some researchers reshaped certain aspects of their course content in light of Floyd's death and the Movement for Black Lives initiative.

For instance, Kate Ramsey, associate professor of history, structured her undergraduate course Modern Caribbean History “to encourage students, more than ever, to think about the legacies and afterlives of the histories we are studying and to make connections to the struggles and movements of our time,” she says. Her students wrote near-weekly reflections, and she urged them in emails “to think about how their work can be understood as a history of the present as well as the past.”

During a series of teach-ins conducted over two days in September as part of a nationwide Scholar Strike initiative, faculty members in several academic departments taught about racial justice. The effort was part of the University's

BIPOC-Social Justice Group (BIPOC stands for Black, indigenous, and people of color) in the UM AAUP-Alliance, a chapter of the national American Association of University Professors.

In lecturer Brian Breed's English 105 courses, he and his students read aloud Brent Staples' “Black Men and Public Spaces,” an essay that details how strangers read Staples' blackness as a threat to them. “The experiences of our BIPOC neighbors—whether they are students or staff, faculty, or friends—must be centered if we are to truly understand the world,” says Breed, M.A. '09, Ph.D. '15. “I asked my students to read ‘Black Men and Public Spaces’ with me because the essay illustrates how many Black Americans are read as threats simply because they exist and because white Americans are afraid of them.

“We white Americans must stop burdening our BIPOC neighbors with the weight of our own fears, and we can only break that habit by listening to them,” Breed continues. “Then and only then can we build a better world together.”

Sumita Chatterjee, a faculty member in the Department of History and in the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, devoted all of her classes during a two-day period to issues of race, showing her students a portion of the HBO documentary “True Justice: Bryan Stevenson's Fight for Equality,” which detailed the work of the acclaimed public interest attorney and his Equal Justice Initiative dedicated to helping the poor, the incarcerated, and the condemned.

“We reflected on issues raised in the documentary. And students, through written and oral critical reflection exercises, not only highlighted key historical, legal, and social issues raised in the documentary, but also applied it to other problems in contemporary society both in the U.S. and globally,” Chatterjee says. “India and Brazil came up in the discussions, as did the work of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.”

Osamudia James, dean's distinguished scholar and professor of law and the newly appointed associate provost for diversity, equity, and inclusion, moderated the panel “Unequal Treatment: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Miami-Dade Criminal Justice,” in which Nick Petersen, assistant professor of sociology, presented his research on how Blacks and Black Hispanics are more likely to be arrested, convicted, and incarcerated than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts.

As law student Graham puts it, the pursuit for racial equality “is a marathon, not a sprint. As a Black man, I'm just hopeful that something will come of it.” ■



# Research Illuminates the Way Forward

**Facing the urgent worldwide need to mitigate the threat and consequences of COVID-19, University researchers across a range of disciplines are helping to advance understanding and generate solutions for communities in Miami and around the world.**

BY MICHAEL R. MALONE

**NEARLY A CENTURY AGO, OUR FOUNDERS ENVISIONED A GREAT DESTINY FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI—ONE IN WHICH WE WOULD HELP DEVISE SOLUTIONS TO THE WORLD'S MOST VEXING CHALLENGES.**

One of those challenges arrived in the spring and has multiplied in recent months in the form of a merciless pandemic. And the University has stepped fully into the role our founders foresaw, serving as a source of unity, pride, and connection to the community. From a myriad of perspectives and multitude of approaches, University researchers are engaged in the effort to counter and assess the tragedy, and to stymie the advance of the pandemic.

Immunologists and doctors are pursuing a vaccine, engineers are generating materials critical for front-line workers, artists are capturing the virus's impact visually and aurally, public health specialists are assessing air quality, sociologists are tracking the spread in prisons, and environmental scientists are exploring the beaches and water during closures, amid many other research endeavors.

“It’s research that is going to get us to the other side of this pandemic.”

—President Julio Frenk



NATASA STRBO'S EXPERTISE ON HEAT SHOCK PROTEIN GP96, A POWERFUL IMMUNE SYSTEM ACTIVATOR, HAS PUT HER IN THE WORLDWIDE HUNT FOR A VACCINE AGAINST COVID-19.

The University is all in, supporting these talented specialists with investments and grants. Twenty-four University of Miami research teams have received rapid response grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000 via the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Scholarship to undertake innovative projects that will provide critical information about the novel coronavirus. Through another eight different proposals, faculty members across multiple disciplines have received internal funding from the College of Arts and Sciences.

At a time when truth and fact are being sorely tested by populist regimes and conspiracy theories, accurate information is critical.

President Julio Frenk, a global public health expert and former health minister of Mexico, says that experts must continue to illuminate the way forward.

“It’s research that is going to get us to the other side of this pandemic,” Frenk says. “We find ourselves in a moment in time where society is clamoring for the experience of experts, and converging research gives universities an incredible edge to help navigate the uncertainty. It’s a moment to rise and shine.”

#### > HUNT FOR A VACCINE

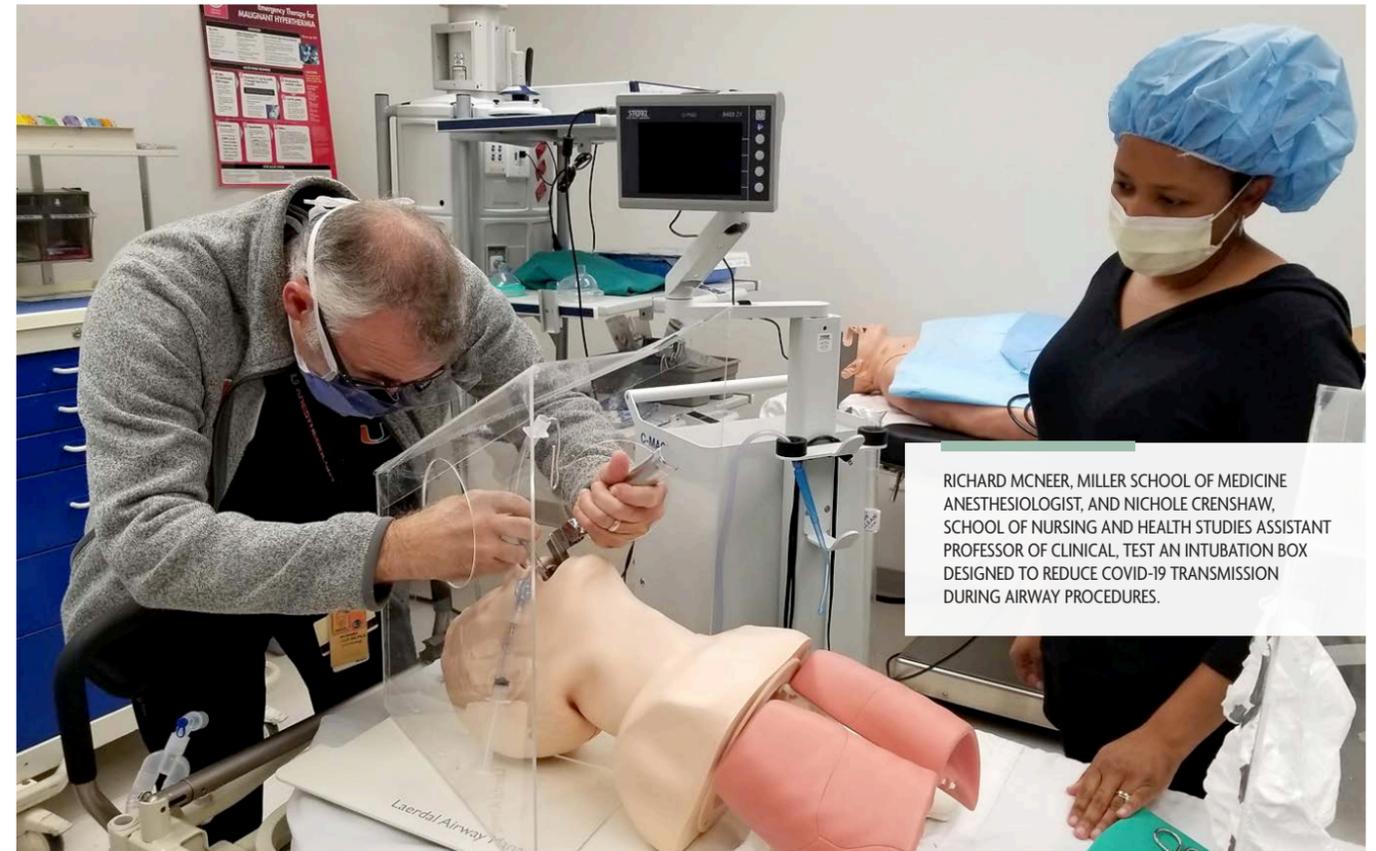
Natasa Strbo’s expertise on heat shock protein gp96, a powerful immune system activator, has put her in the worldwide hunt for a vaccine against COVID-19. The assistant professor of immunology and microbiology, together with researchers at the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine, had already been investigating the protein’s promise for HIV, malaria, and Zika vaccines. With the onset of the pandemic, the team shifted its scientific platform to concentrate on developing a coronavirus vaccine.

Their COVID-19 vaccine remains on track to begin manufacturing soon for preclinical testing. Heat Biologics—the company Strbo’s mentor Eckhard Podack co-founded in 2008—provides critical backing.

While the competition to discover the critical vaccine is fierce, Strbo considers the competition a privilege and an opportunity to carry on Podack’s work and to learn more about the novel coronavirus and the “fascinating little molecule” that she has dedicated her life’s work to understanding.

Strbo credits Eva Fisher and Laura Padula, her research associates, for their painstaking efforts to create the DNA that incorporates the coronavirus genes, and she emphasizes the need for scientists to learn from each other as vaccine development evolves.

“The whole world is a big laboratory,” Strbo says. “And now, more than ever, we must share information so we can adapt the vaccine when needed.”



RICHARD MCNEER, MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ANESTHESIOLOGIST, AND NICHOLE CRENSHAW, SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL, TEST AN INTUBATION BOX DESIGNED TO REDUCE COVID-19 TRANSMISSION DURING AIRWAY PROCEDURES.

#### > THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

When a team of University of Miami physicians, nurses and engineers used a patient simulator to test a new intubation box designed to prevent potential COVID-19 respiratory particles from reaching health care workers who perform critical airway procedures, anesthesiologist Richard McNeer, B.S. ’91, Ph.D. ’97, M.D. ’99, suddenly had one of those “aha” moments. He discovered that a Yankauer, a special suctioning tool used in many medical procedures, could actually evacuate most of the particles if it were positioned strategically near the opening of the simulator’s vocal cords prior to intubation.

“It was a serendipitous discovery,” recalls McNeer, a professor of clinical at the Miller School of Medicine. “Suction has been used to remove everything from stomach contents to blood. But this is perhaps the first time it’s been considered for use in suctioning out aerosols.”

Used in tandem, the tube and intubation box are an added layer of protection for health care providers, McNeer said.

The intubation box itself is made of acrylic and covers a patient’s head. It has two circular ports through which an anesthesiologist inserts his gloved hands and arms to perform an airway procedure. “We knew that anesthesiologists were at risk of being exposed to splatter and respiratory droplets when performing intubations, so we were trying to find a way to

“It was a serendipitous discovery.” —Richard McNeer

protect them,” says Suresh Atapattu, B.S.B.E. ’96, M.S.B.E. ’01, a biomedical engineer at the Miller School’s International Medicine Institute, who designed the box. He found inspiration for its design from half a world away—a physician in Taiwan who had constructed and used a clear barrier device to protect health care workers when intubating COVID-19 patients.

Atapattu designed and constructed his own iteration of the box. Once the prototype had been perfected, Maxwell Jarosz, architect and manager of the fabrication lab and model shop at the School of Architecture, built others, donating them to medical facilities in South Florida. Some are now being used at Ryder Trauma Center, where McNeer performs airway procedures on patients who are brought in with serious and often life-threatening injuries.

As for the suction tube, Jarosz is working with McNeer on a design that is more ergonomically friendly than the Yankauer that was initially used. Once the design is finalized, the tubes will be 3D-printed in mass quantities at the School of Architecture.



PHOTO: ASSOCIATED PRESS

“These are people’s parents, spouses, children, brothers, and sisters, or friends.” —Kathryn Nowotny

### > THE POWER OF ART

Xavier Cortada, A.B. '86, J.D. '91, M.P.A. '91, launched the Miami Corona Project, a three-pronged art initiative that aims to inspire, educate, and engage the public while providing a real-time record of the pandemic’s impact on Miami-Dade County.

Presented as part of the University of Miami COVID-19 Rapid Response, Cortada’s project is modeled on an inspiration he presented 20 years ago in South Africa to memorialize the victims of a different pandemic—AIDS.

“Our goal is to create a space for community engagement, just like we did with the ‘Breaking the Silence’ mural hanging in the Durban Art Gallery in Durban, South Africa,” he explains.

Adam Roberti, B.A.M.A '18, director of Cortada Projects, helped to develop the project’s website ([cortada.com/corona](http://cortada.com/corona)), where visitors can add their own stories about the pandemic.

“I hope this project serves as an artistic model for how to build community, amplify voices, and ultimately save lives,” Roberti says.



MIAMI PRONOUNCEMENT: 7/11/2020, XAVIER CORTADA, MIAMI CORONA PROJECT, PROVIDES A REAL-TIME RECORD OF THE PANDEMIC’S IMPACT ON MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

### > THE PANDEMIC BEHIND BARS

Kathryn Nowotny, an assistant professor in the University of Miami’s Department of Sociology, together with public health scientists from two other institutions, launched the COVID Prison Project to encourage policies and procedures that better protect one of the most vulnerable but most neglected populations.

The group tracks the pandemic’s impact on the roughly 2.7 million people who are incarcerated and the more than 423,000 employees in state and federal prisons and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers across the nation and in Puerto Rico.

In addition to the altruistic argument for her research, Nowotny cites the radiating impact of the spread of the virus on incarcerated people.

“These are people’s parents, spouses, children, brothers, and sisters, or friends,” she says. “And correctional officers and other staff come in and out regularly and go home to their communities.”

A cadre of students from the three collaborating universities manually collect and update the data by visiting every state’s and the federal government’s prison websites daily. A \$20,000 Langeloth Foundation grant will help to automate and expand the operation—to include data from the thousands of county jails across the nation.

“We want prison officials to see what other states might be doing to improve conditions,” says Nowotny. “And for them to say: ‘Maybe we should be doing it, too.’”



RESEARCHERS CONDUCTED LAB TESTS OF WATER, SAND, AND SEAWEED SAMPLES BEFORE AND AFTER KEY BISCAYNE BEACH WAS CLOSED DUE TO THE PANDEMIC.

### > BEACH SHUTDOWN SHEDS LIGHT

The forced closure of beaches paved the way for research that supported the suspicions of University investigators that beachgoers—and not a nearby water treatment facility—were the source of the unusually high levels of enterococci bacteria that have been contaminating the waters of Key Biscayne Beach.

Helena Solo-Gabriele, B.S. '87, M.S. '88, a professor of environmental engineering at the College of Engineering, and her team of graduate assistants obtained the necessary permissions during the pandemic period to analyze beach waters for the potentially dangerous microbes as part of a Village of Key Biscayne-funded study.

Afeefa Abdool-Ghany, an environmental engineering graduate student, and other researchers conducted lab tests of water, sand, and seaweed samples before and after Key Biscayne Beach was closed.

Solo-Gabriele says the team was “astonished” by their findings. “The sand and seaweed were amazingly high in bacteria levels before COVID and then, shortly after the shutdowns, the levels dropped dramatically,” she says.

Maribeth Gidley, a research scientist at the University’s Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, and James Klaus, an associate professor of marine geosciences at the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, are collaborating on the pollution study.

### > INDOOR AIR QUALITY

During the April-to-May shutdown period, Naresh Kumar, a University public health scientist who studies the environmental burden of disease, recorded dramatic increases in the levels of harmful substances and noxious concentrations in the air of homes where he had placed environmental sensors.

The intensified use of disinfectants—often times with harsh chemicals containing dangerous compounds—increased dramatically. And the fact that more people were cooking at home, some using gas-powered ranges that produced carbon monoxide that was not ventilated, were largely to blame for

the increased pollutants and diminished air quality, his preliminary findings showed.

“It’s what people did inside their residences during stay-at-home orders that contributed to those increases,” Kumar said.

The 33 sensors he placed in residential homes—15 in Miami and 18 in Baltimore—continue to track levels of particulate matter and other substances in real time, and a long-range study examining whether those harmful substances led to respiratory illnesses remains a possibility, Kumar says.

### > EFFECT ON THE HEART

To discover the extent to which COVID-19 affects the heart, cardiologists and researchers at the Miller School of Medicine have begun multiple studies.

A collaborative study between the school, the American Heart Association, and other U.S. cardiovascular programs seeks to identify the best practices, quality measures, and treatments for patients with COVID-19 and cardiovascular diseases, according to Jeffrey Goldberger, professor of medicine and chief of the Cardiovascular Division.

The research accompanies the University’s recently established COVID-19 Heart Program, which aims to identify and diagnose serious conditions related to COVID-19 at an early stage and protect the heart from serious damage.

Raul D. Mitrani, professor of clinical medicine and director of both the clinical cardiac electrophysiology section and the Electrophysiology Fellowship Program, leads a follow-up study together with other physician-researchers to assess arrhythmia risk.

Another study involves patients with hypertension and other cardiovascular conditions who are taking two types of medications: angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers. Other Miller School researchers are exploring COVID-19 from the biological side, hoping to gain a better understanding of the viral infection process.

—This article included reporting from Maya Bell, Robert C. Jones Jr., and Kelly Montoya. ■



BY MAYA BELL

# Lauren's gift of hope

**From victim to thriving survivor, Florida senator and alumna Lauren Book uses her powerful voice to protect children from sexual abuse.**

**AS PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN FLORIDA'S BROWARD COUNTY PREPARED TO REOPEN WITH VIRTUAL CLASSES IN MID-AUGUST, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT** warned employees not to share their COVID-19 status in the workplace or on social media. Issued by the district's safety chief, the order rankled many educators, but few voiced their objections as loudly and swiftly as Florida Senator Lauren Book. Book, who is running for reelection in 2022, condemned the "see no evil, hear no evil" approach to virus management as "misguided and dangerous." She demanded the directive be rescinded immediately, and it was.



FLORIDA SENATOR LAUREN BOOK

Silence will never again be an option for Book, A.B. '08, M.S. Ed. '12, one of the nation's 42 million survivors of childhood sexual abuse who, a day before her 18th birthday, publicly shared the dark secret she had kept from her family for six years. Since then, she has become a powerful and persuasive voice for preventing sexual abuse through education and awareness—an advocacy that formally began in 2007, when she and her father established Lauren's Kids during her senior year in the University of Miami's School of Education and Human Development.

"So much of who I am and what I am came from my professors," says Book, now 35 and the happily married

mother of 3-year-old twins. "They helped me heal in different ways that I wasn't in touch with through traditional counseling for trauma. They taught me that I could give kids things that I didn't have by creating a safe place in a classroom."

Initially, the nonprofit foundation was little more than a hotline, a toll-free phone number that other victims of childhood sexual abuse could call to confide their shame, their guilt, their fear, and their thoughts of suicide. But in 2010, Book began what quickly became the foundation's signature Walk in My Shoes trek across Florida. Over the next eight years, she walked thousands of miles from Key West to Tallahassee, stopping at crisis treatment centers, empowering



OVER EIGHT YEARS, BOOK WALKED THOUSANDS OF MILES ACROSS FLORIDA, EMPOWERING OTHER SURVIVORS WITH HER "IT'S OK TO TELL" MESSAGE. NOW THE STATE SENATOR LEADS THE "42 HOURS FOR THE 42 MILLION" WALK AROUND THE STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA TO HONOR THE 42 MILLION U.S. SURVIVORS OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE AND PUSH FOR SOCIETAL AND LEGISLATIVE CHANGES.



“I was angry. I was sad. I was broken. And I was determined to fix it. That was really what propelled me to engage in the process and make a difference for other kids.” —Lauren Book

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAUREN'S KIDS

other survivors with her “It’s OK to tell” message, and influencing the passage of more than two dozen state and national laws aimed at protecting children from sexual abuse and helping survivors heal.

Among them: hard-fought battles against the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts of America to eliminate statutes of limitation for prosecuting sexual assault crimes against children.

Today, the foundation is one of the nation’s most respected child advocacy and resource centers. Its Safer, Smarter Schools curriculum aims to stamp out the staggering statistics Book learned when in 2010 she returned to the University for her master’s degree in community and social change—1 in 3 girls and 1 in 5 boys will be sexually assaulted before they turn 18, and 90 percent of the time their assailant is someone they know, love, and trust.

The curriculum, which teaches kindergarteners through 12th-graders how to recognize unsafe situations, avoid traps set by predators, and speak up if they are being victimized, is propelled by another statistic that most motivates Book—that 95 percent of childhood sexual abuse can be prevented with education and awareness.

At last count, Safer, Smarter Schools was taught in 37 states, including Florida, and—through partnerships with UNICEF and Crime Stoppers International—in numerous countries around the world. This expanding reach does not surprise Laura Kohn-Wood. Now the dean of the School of Education and Human Development, Kohn-Wood joined the University in 2009 to implement the master’s degree program in community and social change. She remembers being so impressed with the anti-abuse curriculum that Book developed for preschoolers as a master’s-degree project that she used it with her young son.

“When I met Lauren, she already was a remarkable and incredibly determined young woman,” Kohn-Wood says. “I marveled at how she had survived this horrific childhood to create this incredible model, which was the genesis for Safer, Smarter Schools. She also had something that is hard to teach—and that is vision. She had this vision for how she could use her experience to create a communal safe space to address issues that happen, figuratively, in the dark. That’s perhaps the biggest gift she’s given us.”

Today, with the novel coronavirus pandemic forcing many school districts to continue reaching students through online instruction, the foundation’s curriculum and the 10 million education and awareness materials it mails annually may be more important than ever. As schools shut down in the spring and summer camps, sports leagues, and other summer programs were canceled, calls to the Florida Abuse Hotline began dropping. By August, they had plummeted by 26,000, compared with the same time period the year before.

Not for an instant did Book, who chairs the Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs, think

children were suddenly safer because they were home. She knew teachers, counselors, physicians, and other front-line defenders against abuse no longer had a watchful eye on children in harm’s way. Lacking the proper personal protective equipment, even state social workers who investigate abuse reports stopped visiting children in their homes. And, as Book knows too well, home is not always a safe harbor.

Her tormenter was her live-in nanny, a beloved best friend/big sister who joined the Book household when Book was 10. From outward appearances, Waldina Flores showered Book with the affection and attention the girl craved, and that Book’s parents were not always available to provide. But behind closed doors, Flores subjected Book to a barrage of sexual, physical, and verbal abuse that continued for six agonizing years—until Book’s boyfriend recognized something amiss and pressed her to tell the truth when they were both 16.

For the next two years, Book fought for her very survival. She struggled with anorexia and barely weighed 80 pounds. Her organs were failing. She was self-mutilating. Yet, in 2002, a few months before Flores was sentenced to 15 years in prison, Book managed the first of what would become annual trips to the state capital with her father, Ron Book, an influential South Florida lobbyist. Together, they quietly pushed the Legislature to amend the law that barred her from learning the results of Flores’ HIV test.

“I was angry. I was sad. I was broken,” Book recalls. “And I was determined to fix it. That was really what propelled me to engage in the process and make a difference for other kids.”

By 2016, when Book successfully ran—unopposed—for her first term in the Florida Senate, there were no visible signs of that broken child. Though she was a freshman Democrat in a Republican-controlled chamber dominated by men, she was a force to be reckoned with, a voice for the voiceless that could not be ignored. As the CEO of Lauren’s Kids, she already had numerous legislative victories under her belt and used her insider’s knowledge and growing influence to better protect everything from Florida’s endangered coral reefs to victims of human trafficking.

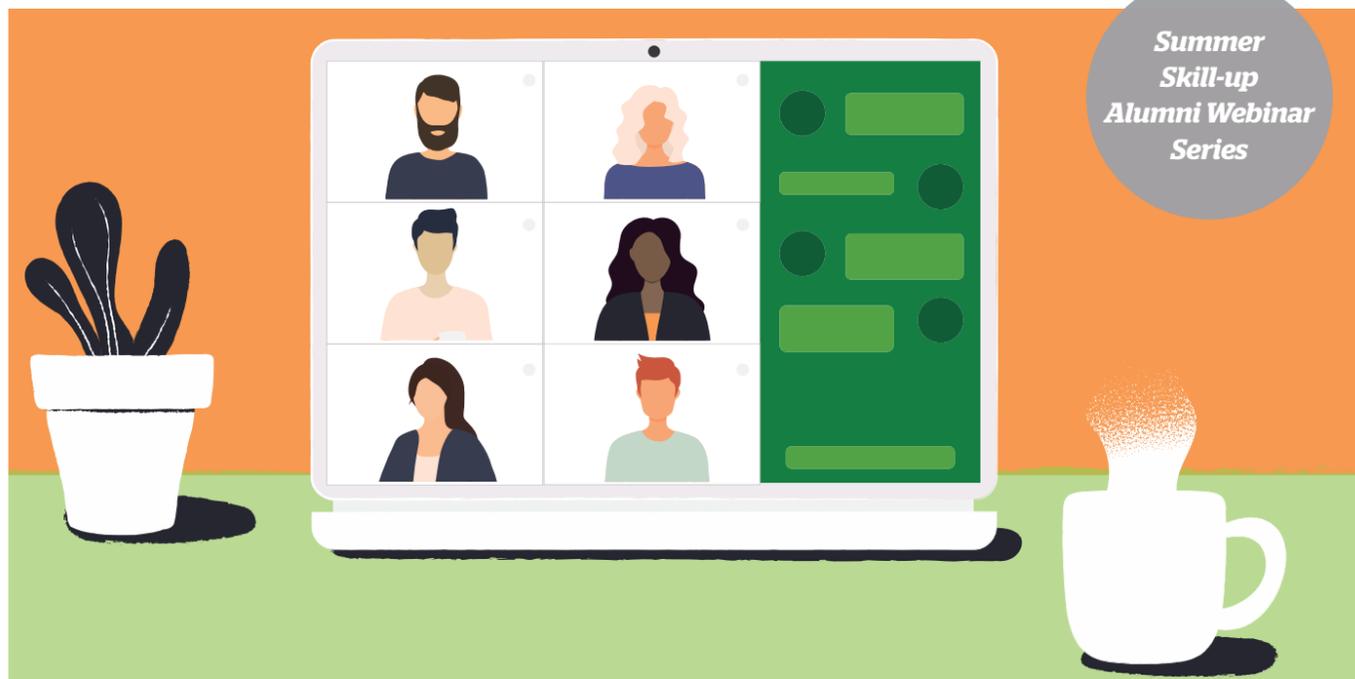
After the shooting rampage by a former student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School killed 17 people, including 14 students, Book brought dozens of surviving students to the capital to share their stories and push for what became the first gun-control legislation enacted in Florida in more than two decades. She never told the students what to say, but she made sure they had the opportunity to say it—and perhaps to begin turning their own anguish into healing advocacy.

Some attribute Book’s many accomplishments to the strings her father pulls, but she shrugs off the whispers. “He has opened doors and led me to them, but I always say, ‘If the door wasn’t open, there would be a Lauren-sized hole next to it, because I tend not to take no for an answer,’” she points out. “Being silenced for so long, you know what it is not to have a voice.” ■



## Bringing the U to You

The University of Miami Alumni Association provides enhanced online career support and digital engagement opportunities



“We want alumni to know: Your alma mater is here for you. We are bringing the U to you.”

—Erica Arroyo

In a discussion moderated by alumna and “Mad Men” television series actress Sola Bamis, A.B. ’07, a panel of successful University of Miami graduates who overcame the 2008 recession shared stories of how they navigated the job search, took risks, and stayed motivated during a challenging time. For Scott Kerr, A.B. ’92, a former Orange Bowl DJ who now heads the sales team for a

global marketing firm, the key was to shift his focus. Paige Ford, B.B.A. ’11, a digital marketing expert at Netflix, concentrated on networking. And career development professional Alicia Savage, B.B.A. ’09, pursued micro-credentials.

“Lessons Learned from the Great Recession” was the last of the Alumni Summer Skill-Up webinars, a series featuring successful alumni’s advice and insights to the current career and recruiting landscape. Other topics included career positivity during challenging times and developing skills and connections.

The series was part of a larger effort by the University of Miami Alumni Association to enhance online career resources and digital programming in response to COVID-19. Alumni have online access to new and existing

resources, programming, and benefits, including inspiring and educational webinars, courses, mentoring platforms, and an extensive library of digital resources, to support their career growth even as in-person events are canceled.

“We are here to support alumni throughout their entire professional careers,” says Erica Arroyo, B.S.C. ’03, M.A.L.S. ’08, associate vice president of engagement, “and especially now as we face one of the most challenging job markets.”

The webinars leverage and highlight the talent, skills, and expertise of the ’Canes network to offer guidance and resources. Most recently, the Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series brought together four prominent alumni—the Honorable Alex Ferrer, J.D. ’86, Cynthia Hudson, A.B. ’85, Chuck Todd, Hon. ’14, and

Maribel Perez Wadsworth, B.S.C. ’93—to discuss the role of media in an election year, moderated by news anchor Jackie Nespral, A.B. ’89. ’Cane Conversations, a series led by ’Canes Communities across the country, features successful alumni discussing a range of topics that has included sustainability, effective storytelling, and the impact of COVID-19 on the entertainment industry.

The first of the series featured University of Miami Trustee Johnny C. Taylor Jr., B.S.C. ’89, president of the Society for Human Resource Management, and Maribel Perez Wadsworth, B.S.C. ’93, president, USA Today Network, and publisher, USA Today at Gannett, who provided insight on navigating the future of the workplace. In another webinar, former NFL player and University of Miami Trustee Jonathan Vilma, B.B.A. ’04, and former global vice president of The Coca-Cola Company Dean Myers, B.B.A. ’80, M.B.A. ’81, shared advice on thriving in any environment.

In addition to digital events, alumni can access a number of tools. These include the Alumni Career Corner, recently launched in partnership with the Toppel Career Center, which provides access to industry articles, resume prep, and career events. Other online resources include the Cane2Cane mentorship and career-sharing platform and Handshake, the University’s official online system for job postings.

Those who are not able to join events live can find them all recorded and published in an extensive digital resource library, which also includes podcasts; online courses; and free master lectures by faculty members, distinguished alumni, and subject-matter experts from across the University’s campuses and the world. Two new massive open online courses, Essentials of Project Management and Cultural Transformation Through Process Improvement, are available exclusively to alumni on demand and at no cost. They are the newest additions to the U’s library of leadership and management courses.

Arroyo says that new online resources will continue to be added, based on the needs of the more than 190,000 alumni throughout the world. “We want alumni to know: Your alma mater is here for you,” she says. “We are bringing the U to you.”



Watch Tiffany and Kelly discuss their experiences and careers in this Coffee with a ’Cane conversation. [facebook.com/miamialumni/videos/coffee-with-a-cane/793673951158194/](https://facebook.com/miamialumni/videos/coffee-with-a-cane/793673951158194/)



This Coffee with a ’Cane online session features Tiffany Dominguez, B.B.A. ’06, owner of Taudrey Jewelry, and style expert and TV host, Kelly Saks, B.S.C. ’10.

### Staying Social

Through new digital programming, ’Canes across the country and the world are making new friends, connecting with old friends, and staying engaged with the U.

Dozens of alumni tuned in for Coffee with a ’Cane—informal chats with alumni and faculty experts that covered everything from Earth Week and self-driving vehicles to music and beer—over an afternoon cafecito. On social media, a series of ’Canes Games, including the U edition “tic-tac-toe” and “this or that,” kept alumni and their families entertained.

For the first time, the Black Alumni Society hosted its annual Juneteenth celebration entirely online, complete with Black history trivia, a screening of the TV show “black-ish,” and a discussion of Black independence.

And ’Canes Communities across the country came together via virtual social hours. Members of the Palm Beach County and Tampa communities, dressed in their best U gear, battled it out in a virtual trivia

’Canes across the country and the world are making new friends, connecting with old friends, and staying engaged with the U.

competition. Broward County ’Canes answered questions about the University and shared cocktail recipes while Orlando ’Canes participated in a virtual cooking demonstration. In addition, the Alumni Association organized an at-large ’Canes Community Bingo Night, bringing alumni together for a fun and entertaining evening and raising money for student scholarships.

## Pride Your Ride

Alumni Association unveils new license plate designs

The University of Miami Alumni Association engaged fans from around the world to vote on the University's next Florida license plate in a single-elimination tournament that launched with eight unique license plate designs and invited alumni, family, and friends to vote in three rounds of matchups. Contest updates and games featured on social media, using the hashtags #PrideYourRide and #Belof500, provided additional opportunities for fans to show their support for the U and win gear.

"We wanted to give our fans a voice in the selection process," says Brittany Shaff, assistant vice president for philanthropic giving and digital engagement, "and stir up some 'Canes spirit."

The result? There were more than 12,000 votes, 5,000 bracket submissions, 3.2 million impressions on social media, and a whole lot of 'Canes pride.

And, in response to the many participants who expressed their love for Sebastian the Ibis as part of the voting process, the University released a limited-edition vintage Sebastian



novelty plate for any 'Canes fan across the country.

Funds from every University of Miami Florida license plate and novelty plate go to student scholarships. Since the start of the Florida plate program, nearly 80,000 custom tags have been purchased, raising nearly \$2 million for scholarships.

The new official University of Miami blackout license plate will be available to Florida residents in spring 2021 through their local Department of Motor Vehicles office.

## 'Canes Are Driving the Future

Three alumni are helping Ford to build its autonomous vehicle business



When Ford Motor Company decided to build a self-driving business in Miami, it turned to those who know the market best—three University of Miami alumni who were born and raised in the Magic City.

"What we're doing here is a global endeavor for a pretty big company with a 117-year legacy. But if you want to do it right, you need a local touch," says Alexander Buznego, M.B.A. '10, market manager at Ford Autonomous Vehicles LLC.

Buznego—along with fellow 'Canes and Ford AV team members Nick Chong, B.S.I.E. '12, operations lead, and Jaife Rainelli, B.B.A. '10, business development lead—spoke at a Coffee with a 'Cane online event this summer about Ford's plan to launch a fleet of fully autonomous service vehicles in Miami by 2022. Buznego hired Chong and Rainelli to join the Miami team after another alumnus referred them to him.

"What Ford is currently testing, and what we are just a few years away from, is technology that allows a driver to disengage completely and a vehicle that will operate without a human driver," Buznego explains.

If you've been in Miami Beach, Wynwood, or Downtown Miami over the past two years, you might already have spotted early prototypes, Ford Fusion cars that are labeled "autonomous vehicle" and have a large roof apparatus housing cameras and sensors. They all have two drivers who monitor performance and can intervene if necessary. Part of the mission is to teach the cars to "drive like a Miamian," Buznego says.

"Some of the pilots we will be conducting are around our fleet management and how we service vehicles," Chong explains. "For example, in a post-COVID-19 world, it will be very important that we build out how we will clean and sanitize our vehicles so that every customer has the best, most trusted experience."

Rainelli helps facilitate Ford's collaboration with Miami-Dade County and the state of Florida on the project. Her role also involves engaging in open dialog with members of the community and businesses.

"This is an entirely brand-new mode of transportation and something that the majority of people haven't been able to experience," Rainelli says. "If people don't understand the technology, or trust it for that matter, then it won't be utilized, nor will it be successful."

## Women of the U

Online series features alumnae who have succeeded in the corporate world

**The University of Miami leveraged the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment—giving women the right to vote—to launch a new dialogue series shining a spotlight on influential alumnae who are making their mark on issues women face today.**



The Women of the U: Leading through Challenge and Change program featured two members of the University's Board of Trustees—Marilu Marshall, B.B.A. '66, J.D. '69, left, and Alice Vilma, B.B.A. '99.

Called "Women of the U: Leading through Challenge and Change," the inaugural program featured two members of the University's Board of Trustees—Marilu Marshall, B.B.A. '66, J.D. '69, senior vice president and chief inclusion and diversity officer for the Estée Lauder Companies, and Alice Vilma, B.B.A. '99, managing director, multicultural client strategy, Morgan Stanley—with introductions provided by Yolanda Strader, B.B.A. '05, J.D. '09, shareholder, Carlton Fields, and member of the University's Citizens Board.

With Vilma serving as the moderator, their candid conversation focused on how women can succeed in the corporate world and the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in today's workplace—a most fitting topic for the historic day on which the event was held.

A first-generation American born into a Cuban family, Marshall grew up fascinated by the television character Perry Mason—the original, she points out. As she shared her dreams to become a lawyer and "put bad people in jail," her traditional grandmother told her that was not an appropriate role for girls. Luckily, her mother told her she could become anything she wanted as long as she worked hard at it, but "just don't tell your grandmother."

After graduating from the University, Marshall joined the U.S. Department of Justice, where she became the first female trial attorney assigned to the Organized Crime and Racketeering Strike Force. Among the pressures of being the first woman in a male-dominated field "is that you don't want to mess it up for those who come behind you," Marshall explains.

She credits her professional success to her willingness to take risks. That meant taking a job as lead counsel for the Playboy Enterprise as it opened its first casino hotel in Atlantic City, joining Cunard Line as general counsel with no background in admiralty law, and culminating with what she calls her "dream job."

"Inclusion and diversity are part of Estée Lauder's DNA," Marshall says. And, she says, the company works at it every day, pushing the boundaries to make it a place where employees can be their authentic selves and in creating an environment that reflects the diverse consumers and communities it serves worldwide.

"We start with the premise that awareness precedes action. We design programs and seminars to raise awareness and then we turn that awareness into action," Marshall says.

After an employee told Marshall that while she felt included because she had a seat at the table, what she really wanted was to know that her voice was being heard and valued, Estée Lauder took its inclusion efforts to the next level. "We launched a program called the 'Beauty of Belonging' and had our employees tell us what it meant to them to feel that they belonged, or they didn't belong," she says.

When asked how to garner buy-in and allies for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, Marshall says it all comes down to business results. "Our diverse consumer base has been instrumental in getting our word across. The strategy of developing a diverse consumer base—whether it be race, age, or gender—requires a team that shares those same characteristics," she says.

Vilma reflected a bit of her own career philosophy as part of the discussion, "What I've learned is that hard work begets more work. My calling card was that people could count on me to get the job done right," she says. "When you are up all night grumbling about the work, people are taking notice. That leads to getting stretch assignments, then one promotion and the next. What ends up happening is you grow your network of people who can be influential in your career."

# Citizen 'Canes

## Mark Jackson

Mark Jackson, M.A. '20, newly hired as the sustainability coordinator for the City of Pensacola, has quickly become a voice for the sustainable future of the northern Florida city, advocating for a more robust urban forest environment.

Jackson credits the Miami Herbert Business School's specialized Master of Science in Sustainable Business program with deepening his understanding of "sustainability" and providing the skills to launch his dream career.

Born and raised on a farm in Paris, Tennessee, Jackson developed an appreciation for the great outdoors. He followed a path into the Marine Corps, where he worked as a mechanic, gravitating toward learning about hazardous materials and environmental risk. While stationed in Hawaii, he completed his B.A. in environment studies. And when his military service ended, he moved to northern Georgia to work for the Army Corps of Engineers—assisting in dam, recycling, and pollination projects. After four years, he felt the pull to expand his career horizons.

The University's 10-month sustainability master's degree seemed the ideal option. After all, Jackson had long been a fan of the U—and his wife was from the Miami area. Then, they sold their Georgia home in 24 hours. Good sign.

"With my experience from school



Mark Jackson, M.A. '20, is the sustainability coordinator for the City of Pensacola.

and work, I had a sense of 'sustainability,'" Jackson says. "I loved the program and had a blast, but more importantly, it gave me a fuller understanding of what sustainability really means—at every turn I was challenged to question, go to the next level, and dig deeper."

As important as the curriculum he absorbed, Jackson says the career help he received in refining his resume, honing his interviewing skills, and learning to use a host of professional resources were instrumental in preparing him for his new position.

One of the initial tasks Jackson has been charged with is to inventory and assess the city's urban forest.

"In trying to show the mayor and constituents the importance of having more trees in the environment, the most important metric is that of the social cost of CO<sub>2</sub>—and that's something that I learned at the U," he says. "I'm able to

show the social cost of carbon and what that means in terms of a dollar figure and how it impacts the well-being of people who live there."

Jackson pointed to the added value of sustainability that COVID-19 has unveiled.

"Where there's more canopy cover and more dense urban forest, these are typically wealthier and healthier areas," Jackson explains. "If we plant more trees in the other areas, that can improve the air quality—important for those with respiratory and other ailments—and from a social-economic standpoint more trees can lower the energy costs to cool homes," he says.

"Looking through the sustainability lens makes you look at the whole system," he adds. "From the sustainability framework of 'people, planet, and profit,' you can see that a healthy tree has benefits for everybody."

—Michael R. Malone

PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF PENSACOLA



## Kelsey DeSantis

As a decorated U.S. Marine Corps veteran, mixed martial arts fighter, and businesswoman, Kelsey DeSantis, M.A. '19, has set the stage to accomplish anything she sets out to do. When she decided to become a stronger communicator, she met the challenge head on, pursuing a master's degree in public relations at the University of Miami—and attaining her goal.

Growing up in Southern California, DeSantis was drawn to the idea of military life by the example of the man she calls Uncle Rock, a close family friend and Vietnam-era Marine Corps veteran. She described him as a father figure who taught her about discipline, respect, humility, and character.

When DeSantis' brother joined the Marines, his recruiter encouraged her to do the same, and she did.

"I wanted to find more people that helped define selflessness" as Uncle Rock did, DeSantis says. "I wanted to be a part of something greater than myself, and I really found that in the military."

Her enlistment ended in 2012, and DeSantis returned home to train and compete as a professional mixed martial arts fighter. She had begun kickboxing in her teens and loved the healthy emotional and physical outlet it provided.

Working toward her bachelor's degree at a city college that offered a veterans' resource center and program, she remained involved in veteran advocacy.

When she learned that the Ms. Veteran America competition raised funds for homeless female veterans, DeSantis entered as a contestant in 2014. Eight months pregnant with her daughter, she made the top 25 and received the Iron Woman award.

DeSantis' fascination with the world of communications was sparked when she created a video to invite Justin Timberlake to the Marine Corps Ball. The video went viral; Timberlake accepted and attended.

"I wanted to be a part of something greater than myself." —Kelsey DeSantis

The process of making the video, and all the subsequent media attention, piqued DeSantis' interest in improving and leveraging her communication skills and led her to enter the School of Communication to pursue her master's degree in public relations.

Now a consultant and independent contractor in marketing and public relations, DeSantis said that her master's degree has been "a huge asset" and praised her professors as industry professionals.

DeSantis already muses about returning to school for her Ph.D. She perceives the challenge of self-improvement as a lifelong pursuit.

"For me it's always been less about what people think of me, or assume about me, and more about my performance and what I am capable of," she says.

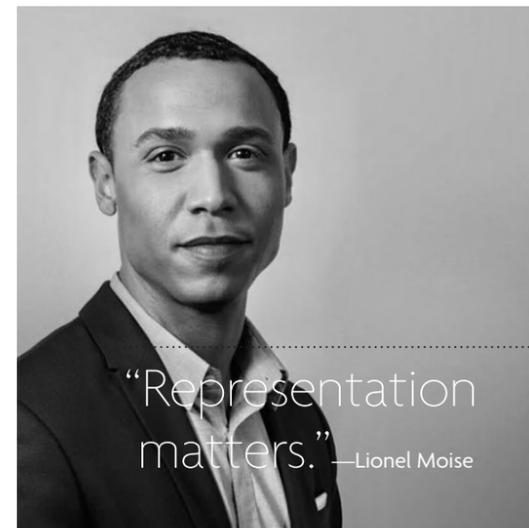


Watch DeSantis discuss her experience and career in this Coffee with a 'Cane conversation.  
[youtube.com/watch?v=880HbcZoyms&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=880HbcZoyms&feature=youtu.be)

## Lionel Moise

In a national broadcast on ABC News Radio in July, alumnus Lionel Moise, B.S.C. '10, highlighted the University of Miami's Senior Mwambo ceremony, an annual celebration to recognize graduating students of color. Moise, a former student body president who served as the event's alumni speaker this year, shared insights on the Senior Mwambo tradition and interviewed participants.

For Moise, a two-time, Emmy Award-winning journalist and anchor, it was a chance to reconnect with his alma mater and relive what was one of his most memorable moments as a graduating senior 10 years ago. "It was so powerful to



"Representation matters." —Lionel Moise

be honored in a ceremony with such history and meaning," he says.

But it was also a reflection of what Moise has often done throughout his decade-long career as a broadcast journalist: leverage his position to inform and elevate others and make an impact through inspiring stories and representation.

"Representation matters," he says. "And I do think that by being unapologetically myself and not hiding who I am,

—Continued on page 44

—Lionel Moise continued from page 43

I allow other people to see that they can be who they are.” As a gay Haitian-American Black man, who didn’t often see himself represented on TV as a child, he chooses to be vocal about the aspects of himself that he says make him different.

Moise was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale, the son of a Haitian father and American mother. A recipient of the Ronald A. Hammond Scholarship, which covers full tuition, he came to the University of Miami at the age of 16. It wasn’t until his junior year, however, that he discovered a passion for storytelling and switched his major from pre-med to broadcast journalism.

Through the School of Communication and UMTV, the University’s award-winning cable channel, he quickly gained the experience and skills needed for what was to come. “The University of Miami allowed me to grow as a journalist before moving forward into my career,” he notes.

After graduating in 2010 and putting his dream job on hold to travel to Haiti to help with earthquake relief, Moise moved to Atlanta to begin a job at a television station. He worked his way up from assisting to pitching story ideas, eventually earning an on-air role as a tech producer.

From there, Moise’s career as an anchor took him from coast to coast, covering stories ranging from a family’s participation in a major Atlanta marathon to protests against the display of Confederate flags. He eventually made his way to New York, where he hosted “Business Insider Today,” the No. 1 business and news show on Facebook Watch at the time. Today, he works as a radio anchor and correspondent for ABC News.

“Journalists have a unique ability to change the world through knowledge and inspire others through the stories that we tell,” he points out. “It’s the best job in the world.”



Colonel Alice A. Kerr (ret.), M.A.L.S. '97, J.D. '20, left, and wife Sheryl S. Borg, establish a scholarship fund for veteran students.

### Alice Kerr

A decorated veteran who served for 30 years in the United States Army, Colonel Alice A. Kerr (ret.), M.A.L.S. '97, J.D. '20, recently reached another life milestone: graduating from the University of Miami School of Law. She plans to use her new degree to advocate for other veterans.

Kerr, who grew up in a military family, knew she wanted to be a soldier early on. “For me, service has always been a calling,” she says, “and that’s how I wanted to serve.” She went to college on an ROTC scholarship, after which she immediately joined the Army.

She spent 30 years alternating between active duty military and the Reserves. Deployed to combat during the Gulf War and the Iraq War, Kerr held various leadership roles. Based on her background, expertise, and character, she was also selected to oversee a camp of more than 10,000 soldiers in Iraq, a position until then held only by men and higher-ranking officials.

After retiring from the Army and a 20-year career in IT at the University of Miami, Kerr wanted to help other veterans. She knew that she was in a unique position to do so, understanding the challenges veterans face reintegrating into civilian life, the emotional and physical impacts of combat service, and even the unique military jargon.

It was her desire to serve—and a conversation with Patricia D. White, then the dean of the School of Law—that led Kerr to pursue a law degree in 2016. She hoped to acquire the tools and knowledge she needed to make a significant impact.

As a law student, Kerr got to work immediately, providing legal support on a number of veterans’ cases. She worked with Legal Services of Greater Miami’s Veterans Advocacy Project, earning the Outstanding Law Clerk award for her dedication to promoting equal justice for all. As a law school admissions ambassador, she encouraged other veterans to return to school.

Kerr now plans to continue this outreach work, while also focusing on policy reform. “A lot of the issues that veterans face—not knowing what they’re entitled to, getting turned down for certain health care benefits—all boil down to a gap in policy and in communication,” she explains.

In celebration of her graduation, Kerr’s wife, Sheryl S. Borg, established the Colonel Alice A. Kerr Veterans Scholarship Fund, which will be awarded to a student with financial need who served their country honorably while on active duty in the United States Armed Forces.

### Tori Miller

A lifelong love of basketball helped Tori Miller, B.B.A. '13, score the job of a lifetime. This summer she was named general manager of the College Park Skyhawks, an affiliate of the NBA’s Atlanta Hawks—and became the first female GM in NBA G League history.

Miller, who graduated cum laude from the University of Miami, credits her time at the U for much of her success.

“I went down to Miami during a Harambee Weekend, and I just fell in love,” says Miller, a native of Decatur, Georgia. “That’s how I ended up at Miami, for the best four years of my life.”

While she didn’t compete as a Division I athlete at Miami, basketball has always been an integral part of Miller’s life.

“I played all the way through high school. I always joke with people—I’m 5-foot-2, so you would never think that I’m involved in basketball,” she says.

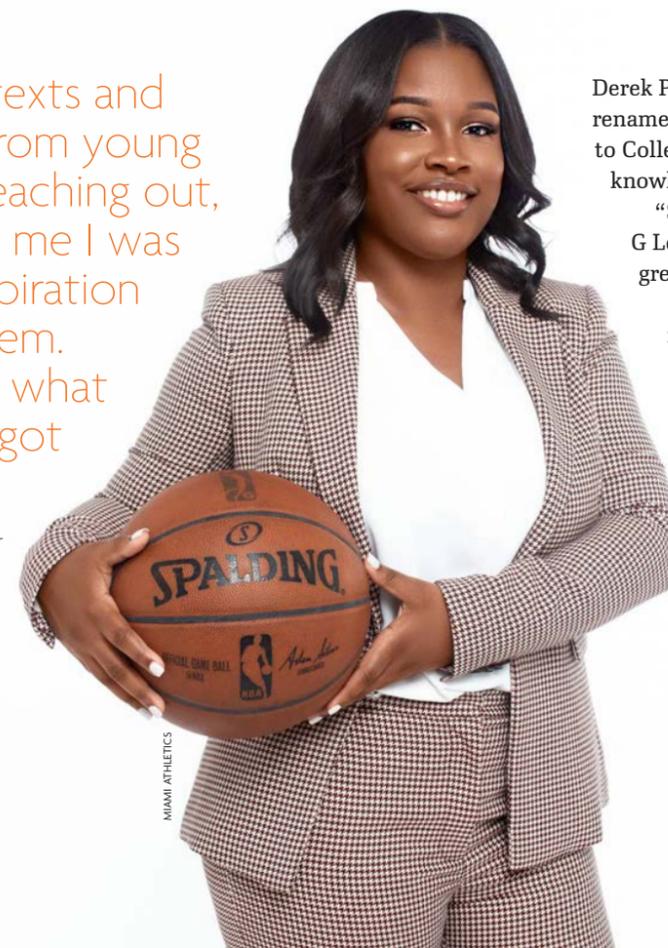
After graduating, Miller spent two seasons as a basketball operations intern with the Phoenix Suns but was unable to secure a full-time job with the team. Undeterred, she embarked on a career in unpaid scouting, splitting her time between Georgia and Delaware to attend local college games.

“I would send out monthly review reports to all 30 NBA teams,” Miller notes. “They would include information for call-ups and let NBA teams know who was playing well in the league. I started to get a lot of traction.”

In 2017, Miller joined Atlanta Hawks affiliate the Erie Bayhawks as manager of basketball operations.

“I got texts and calls from young girls reaching out, telling me I was an inspiration for them. That’s what really got me.”

—Tori Miller



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Derek Pierce became general manager of the team, newly renamed the Skyhawks, in 2018, a year before they relocated to College Park. He said that Miller’s enthusiasm and knowledge of the G League were obvious from the start.

“She is extremely driven and very passionate about the G League and what it represents,” Pierce says. “She has a great understanding of the league’s inner workings.”

In 2019, Miller was promoted to assistant general manager under Pierce, now vice president of player personnel for the Hawks.

The full import of her ascent to GM did not dawn on her until days after her appointment.

“I started to get all the emails. I saw my name on ESPN,” Miller says. “I didn’t understand the magnitude, in the moment. I got texts and calls from young girls reaching out, telling me I was an inspiration for them. That’s what really got me.”

Miller indicated that her time at the University played a meaningful part in shaping her trajectory.

“It helped me get out of my comfort zone,” she points out. “Had I not gone to Miami, I don’t know if my career would be where it is today.”

## Class Notes

### 1960s

**Peter A. Wish**, A.B. '67, launched the book "The Candidate's 7 Deadly Sins," on March 10th. It combines neuroscience, cognitive psychology, case studies of winners and losers, and years of coaching political candidates on how to make a better emotional connection with the voter.

**Glenn A. Ogden**, B.Ed. '69, published his eighth American Civil War historical fiction novel, "A Tempest Dawn." It is the story of a young soldier who fights at the First Battle of Manassas. And after his enlistment expires, he travels to Wilmington, North Carolina, where he joins a Confederate blockade runner steamer and helps a young slave girl escape.

### 1970s

**Randy J. Ogren**, B.Ed. '72, released his third Disney book, "Imagination and Dreams Are Forever," co-written with his wife, Suzanne, and published by Theme Park Press. All three books are about his career in the early decades of Walt Disney World. Ogren continues to do commissioned paintings, mostly Disney themed, from his home studio. He was recently informed that his painting, "First on the Moon," is on permanent display at the Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Ohio. He completed this painting while still a student at the University of Miami, and he personally presented it to Neil Armstrong in 1970.

**Roy D. Berger**, A.B. '74, author of two baseball books, "The Most Wonderful Week of the Year" and "Big League Dream," writes a weekly blog, "Sunday Morning Coffee," from his Las Vegas, Nevada, home.

**Raymond A. Belliotti**, M.A. '76, Ph.D. '77, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, has published his 22nd book: "Dante's Inferno: Moral Lessons from Hell." Previous books published include "Justifying Law," "Good Sex," "What is the Meaning of Human Life?," "Happiness is Overrated," "Roman Philosophy and the Good Life," "Shakespeare and Philosophy, "Jesus or Nietzsche?" and "Machiavelli's Secret."

### 1980s

**Nancy L. Weckwerth**, M.M. '80, published a book about the story of survival of her husband and life partner, John D. Swan, D.M.A. '71, following a massive stroke. The book, "Don't Stop the Music: Finding the Joy in Caregiving," was a finalist in the Body Mind and Spirit Book Awards and was selected as one of eight best books on caregiving. It is a survive and thrive manual for anyone who takes care of a family member or friend in addition to managing a career.

**Marina P. Banchetti**, A.B. '85, M.A. '91, Ph.D. '91, is associate professor of philosophy at Florida Atlantic University. Her academic book, "The Chemical Philosophy of Robert Boyle: Mechanicism, Chymical Atoms, and Emergence," has just been published. Banchetti was recently appointed as the Florida Department of Education's philosophy discipline coordinator for the Statewide Course Numbering System. In this role, she oversees the course numbering and the approval of all new philosophy courses for Florida's state colleges and universities and for participating private colleges and universities.

**Lettie J. Bien**, J.D. '86, was hired as the first Defense Affairs Program Coordinator for the Charlottesville (Virginia) Regional Chamber of Commerce. Her portfolio will include community engagement and business development to strengthen relationships between the chamber, the Central Virginia community, the regional defense/intelligence community, and veterans. Bien is an Iraq War veteran, and she served 30 years in the Army and Army Reserve. She is a longtime community advocate working with military organizations, soldiers, and veterans.

**Darrell L. Grant**, M.M. '86, has built an international reputation as a pianist, composer, and educator who channels the power of music to make change. Grant recently released a music video of an original song, "Take Flight," featuring vocalist Michelle Willis. He penned "Take Flight" in 2019 at the request of his son's eighth-grade teacher, who asked him to write a song that the parents could sing to the children at their middle-school class promotion. Since moving to Portland, Oregon, Grant has been named Portland Jazz Hero by the Jazz Journalist Association, received a Northwest Regional Emmy, been named the 2019 Portland Jazz Master, and received a MAP Fund grant. He is a professor of music at Portland State University, where he directs the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute.

**Kimberly D. Kolback**, J.D. '86, of the Law Offices of Kimberly Kolback, Miami, moderated the lecture "Mobile Applications, Gaming and Entertainment Patent Law," on behalf of The Florida Bar Entertainment, Arts & Sports Law Section 2019-2020 Webcast Series.

**Laird A. Lile**, L.L.M.E. '87—board-certified wills, trusts, and estates attorney in Naples, Florida—was selected through an extensive peer-review process for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America 2021 for his work involving trusts and estates. This year's honor marks the 26th consecutive year Lile has been recognized. He has also been named as a Top 10 Florida Super Lawyer for the third consecutive year and marks the 10th consecutive year that he is among the Top 100 Florida Super Lawyers.

**Ana E. VeigaMilton**, B.S.E.E. '87, J.D. '93, was recognized as an honoree at the 2020 Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon (WWMD) hosted by the Junior League of Miami on Sept. 10th. Each year, the Junior League of Miami hosts its signature fundraiser to honor outstanding women who exemplify the league's mission of promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities.

**Daniel R. Smith**, B.B.A. '89, was named president by First Community Mortgage, which originates mortgages nationally. Smith was previously president of mortgage for National Bank of Commerce, which is now part of Center-State Bank. He has grown multiple companies with annual origination volumes ranging from \$500 million to \$6 billion. He is chairman and was principal investor of Insite Managed Solutions. He is chairman-elect of the University's President's Council and served on the

advisory board for The Launch Pad, a collaboration between the University of Miami, Blackstone Charitable Foundation, and The Kauffman Group, which promotes entrepreneurship for students and alumni.

**Roy L. Weinfeld**, A.B. '89, J.D. '95, a creditors' rights and real estate litigator, has brokered commercial lease and sales transactions for nearly 25 years and conducts seminars regularly in areas of his expertise. He has presented seminars to the Attorneys Real Estate Council of Miami-Dade County (AREC), Miami Beach Bar Association, Colliers International, and NAI Miami commercial brokerages.

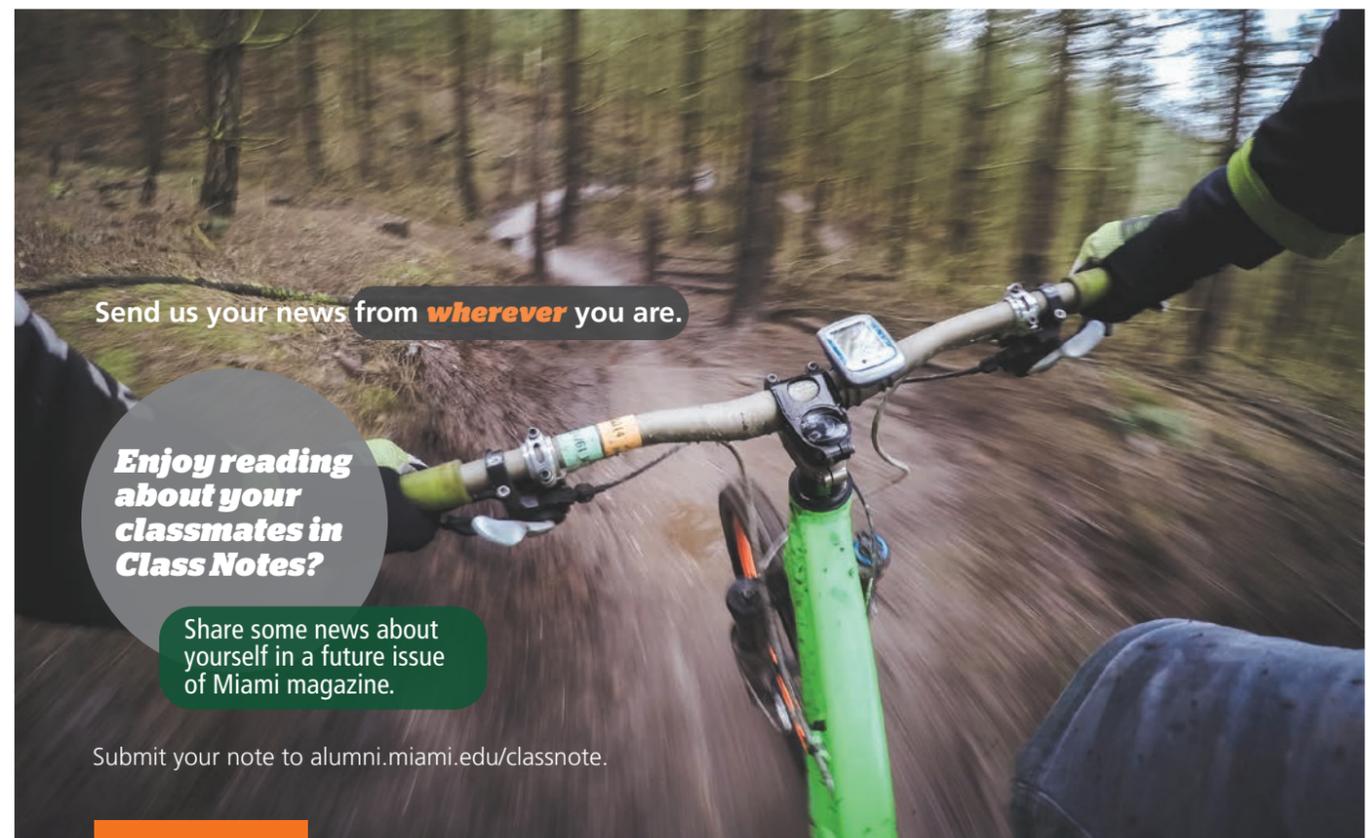
### 1990s

**Donna A. Liberman-Scott**, A.B. '90, debuted "Shame the Devil," a historical fiction novel. Liberman-Scott is an award-winning author of 17th- and 18th-century historical fiction. Before embarking on a writing career, she spent her time in the world of academia. "Shame the Devil" won the first place Chaucer Award for its historical fiction category and Best Book Award from Chanticleer International Book Awards.

**Ana M. Echenique**, B.S. '91, M.D. '91, published a paper in the Journal of Urgent Care Medicine to get the word out on the research in the fight against COVID-19 by trying to discover how the disease is manifesting on imaging in the early stages in patients presenting to urgent care. The article is titled "Chest X-Ray Findings in 636 Ambulatory Patients with COVID-19 Presenting to an Urgent Care Center: A Normal Chest X-Ray Is no Guarantee."

**Leyza F. Blanco**, A.B. '93, J.D. '96, is a shareholder at Sequor Law, which focuses on a wide range of litigation and insolvency matters, including debt restructuring and representation of creditors—with special emphasis on complex business bankruptcy and commercial litigation matters. Blanco has been recognized by Florida Super Lawyers (2010-2018); Florida Trend, Legal Elite (2008-2016, 2018); South Florida Legal Guide, Top Lawyer (2009-2018), and has received multiple other recognitions.

**Celia L. Alvarez**, A.B. '94, M.F.A. '96, M.A. '99, recently became the new editor of a literary journal dedicated exclusively to new writers: "Prospectus: A Literary Offering."



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**David T. De Celis**, B.Arch. '94, has been published in the July 2020 peer-review journal Interiority. De Celis is a founding principal of DCVL Design, an interdisciplinary firm that often collaborates with artists, educators, and other members of the design and engineering fields. He is the former chair of the Public Art Commission in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he also served on the Mayor's Arts Task Force. In 2013 De Celis returned to the University to teach a Summer Studio section at the School of Architecture. Recently, he served as adjunct faculty member at Rhode Island School of Design and Boston Architectural College.

**Sewall Menzel**, Ph.D. '94, released his book "The Pearl Harbor Secret," published by Praeger, which breaks new ground and reshapes boundaries in terms of understanding what Pearl Harbor was really all about. It represents a reevaluation and correction of the traditional interpretation as to why Pearl Harbor took place as it did.

**Rudolph G. Moise**, M.B.A. '94, J.D. '97, was inducted as president of the Dade County Medical Association at the end of June, and he is already mapping out plans for his year of service. Moise's plan will start with making phone calls while he continues working on three

goals started by the immediate past president. The first is to develop a quality rating system for physicians. Second, is to make Miami Medicine magazine into a journal that physicians can use as a reference. The third involves improving the way physicians can meet their licensing requirements.

**Tony Alhadeff**, M.S. '95, M.B.A. '95, published his first book, "The Family Treasure." While Alhadeff's initial intent was to share the story of his grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, during the process of writing the book he discovered not only his grandmother's special story but the roots of his entire family as he followed their trails across the Mediterranean Sea, Africa, Israel, Europe, and America.

**Michelle Diffenderfer**, J.D. '95, was selected as a 2020 Florida Super Lawyers in the area of environmental law. This designation is shared with only 5 percent of all attorneys in Florida. Super Lawyers are nominated by fellow attorneys who have personally observed them in action, whether as opposing counsel, co-counsel, or through other firsthand observations in the courtroom. Diffenderfer is president and shareholder at Lewis, Longman, & Walker, where she assists landowners, businesses, and governments with environmental,

natural resource, and land development legal requirements.

**Christian Hasenoehrl**, M.S. '95, M.B.A. '95, joined Korn Ferry as a senior client partner specializing in the consumer market. Based out of the Dallas, Texas, office, Hasenoehrl joins the firm with a concentration in helping organizations effectively align behaviors with strategy to manage business transformations.

**Michele N. Knierim**, B.S. '95, retired from the Air Force in June 2020 as a colonel after a successful 21-year career. After holding a headquarters job for the past four years, Knierim will be moving to Colorado and returning to full-time patient care as a family medicine physician.

**Joshua A. Cohen**, A.B. '96, has been recognized as a Top National Financial Advisor by Northwestern Mutual for his commitment and drive to help families and businesses plan for and achieve financial security. Cohen is affiliated with the Northwestern Mutual Boston & Rockland offices and resides with his family in Canton, Massachusetts. As part of this recognition, Cohen will be inducted into the company's elite membership, the 2020 Forum Group.

**Alan B. Suess**, B.B.A. '96, is publishing his first book, "An Angel Among Us," which will be released in mid-November by Xlibris Press.

**Derefim B. Neckles**, J.D. '97, was officially sworn in as a Kings County judge during an installation ceremony at Brooklyn Law School in Brooklyn, New York. She won her countywide judicial primary in a landslide when she picked up 31,160 out of 43,154 votes. Neckles was elected to the Civil Court in Brooklyn but has been assigned to the Criminal Court, where she is likely to spend at least two years.

**Monique N. Woodard**, A.B. '98, a venture capitalist and angel investor, was featured in *Queer 50* as the first black partner at 500 Startups, a venture fund and accelerator. She championed under-represented founders by investing in Black-owned businesses such as media startup Blavity and legal tech company Court Buddy. Woodard—who previously cofounded a network of Black tech entrepreneurs, BlackFounders—led a \$25 million microfund at 500 Startups that focused on investing in pre-seed and seed-stage startups helmed by Black and Latino founders. She has since left 500 Startups to start her own fund, Cake Ventures, and has also been an angel investor, backing companies

such as Mented Cosmetics, a direct-to-consumer beauty brand by and for women of color.

**Kathryn M. Gilden**, B.B.A. '99, M.S.Tx. '01, M.B.A. '01, was promoted to chief operating officer at Fiske & Company, one of South Florida's oldest CPA firms. Gilden oversees the firm's operations, policies, and procedures supporting the delivery of efficient quality service to clients. She also directs engagements for the litigation support practice area. Prior to joining Fiske & Company, Gilden worked for two Big 4 accounting firms.

## 2000s

**David Mullings**, B.S. '00, M.B.A. '03, was featured on a segment on Bloomberg TV, discussing the topic of Jamaica's Stock Market. The interview, "Why Jamaica's Stock Market Is Red Hot," is available to watch on YouTube on the Bloomberg Markets and Finance channel. Mullings, Blue Mahoe Capital Partners founder, talks about the Jamaican stock market and how hard it is to launch an ETF (exchange-traded fund) on the island.

**Katherine A. Sanoja**, B.B.A. '01, M.B.A. '03, was promoted from associate to counsel amid continued growth and increased demand for the firm's legal services. Sanoja has worked with GST LLP, and its predecessor, for eight years. Her institutional knowledge comes in handy as counsel, where she is responsible for overseeing GST's defense of Pakistan in a multibillion-dollar dispute, among other cases. She is also responsible for supporting and ensuring the smooth day-to-day operations of GST LLP's thriving Miami office.

**Mahsaw E. Nademin**, A.B. '02, released her book "Don't Be a Stranger: Creating Connections & Memorable First Impressions in Everyday Life," which breaks down simple strategies for more successful interactions with others. The book is a great tool for building personal and professional confidence, flirting, networking skills, job interview skills, and fun. Nademin is a board-certified psychologist in behavioral and cognitive psychology and works full time as a home-based primary care psychologist for elderly veterans. She maintains a small, part-time private practice and lectures annually on professionalism, communication, behavioral medicine, and diversity to medical students.

**Julio J. Torrado**, B.S.C. '03, Keys Energy Services' director of human resources and communications, recently

received the American Public Power Association's (APPA) Harold Kramer-John Preston Personal Service Award. It recognizes individuals for their service to APPA through substantial contributions toward association goals. The APPA is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide. Torrado has been an active member of APPA since 2003 and has contributed countless hours to advance the goals of the association.

**Brian A. Cavallaro**, M.F.A. '04, produced a virtual graduation with YouTube Originals and the Obamas. The virtual celebration, "Graduate Together: America Honors The High School Class of 2020," had an extensive list of talent that included Alicia Keys, Zendaya, Lady Gaga, and many more who sent their best wishes to the class of 2020 graduates. The celebration also discussed traditional graduation-day themes mixed in with musical performances.

**Robert J. Kennedy**, B.S.C. '04, host of the E! series "In the Room," was presented with the 2020 South Florida Communicator of the Year Award during the awards show that celebrates the dedicated students who make the University's award-winning student media outlets successful. Kennedy shared with students how his passion for news started at an early age. As a 12-year-old, he built a news studio in his parents' home equipped with a police scanner, 14 television sets, and studio lighting.

**Betsy P. Earle**, M.B.A. '06, founder of Event Driven Solutions, based in Florida, is proud to announce the celebration of the company's 10-year anniversary. It specializes in tradeshow logistics, management, and corporate events. Earle is one of 18 Diamond-Level CTSM (Certified Trade Show Marketer) graduates in the world. She has taught at Exhibitor Live and Exhibitor FastTrack events throughout the country for the past six years and currently writes Exhibiting 101 in Exhibitor Magazine.

**Vanessa L. Alonso**, B.S.C. '08, was appointed to a three-year term on the American Meteorological Society's Board of Broadcast Meteorology. The term begins in January 2021. Her main roles on the board will be to evaluate candidates for their AMS Certified Broadcast Meteorologist Seal and to help make the industry a better one for current and future broadcast meteorologists. Alonso is currently the morning and midday meteorologist at WCBV-TV in Columbus, Mississippi.

**Lauren F. Book**, B.S.Ed. '08, M.S.Ed. '12, is an internationally recognized

child advocate and safety expert, best-selling author, Emmy-winning television producer, and Florida senator. She represents the Broward County-based District 32 in the Florida Senate. She was the Democratic Leader Pro Tempore from 2016 to 2018 and has been an effective advocate for Florida's children and families—recently passing a comprehensive law to combat human trafficking. Following her advocacy in the wake of the Parkland massacre, Book was appointed to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission to investigate mass shootings and recommend policy to reduce the possibility of future such tragedies. As founder and CEO of Florida-based nonprofit Lauren's Kids, Book works tirelessly to prevent child sexual abuse and help survivors heal.

**Christopher P. Nielsen**, B.S.C. '09, recently won a New England Regional Emmy for his work as a television news producer at WBZ-TV, Boston.

## 2010s

**Tyler M. Baram**, B.B.A. '11, associate director, clients and markets, KPMG, was noted in Crain's New York Business. Baram works on an important niche in the real estate world, orchestrating the Women in Real Estate Steering Committee at the audit, tax, and advisory services firm where he produces content and programming centered on the entry, reentry, and retention of women in the real estate industry. Baram is active in the American Cancer Society and Young Leadership Network of B'nai B'rith International, for which he supports global relations and disaster relief efforts.

**Christina A. Crocco**, B.S.Ed. '11, who was a member of the women's rowing team and **Christopher M. Malek**, J.D. '09, Iron Arrow, SBA President 2008-2009, were married on Feb. 8, 2020, in New Orleans. Crocco remains with the University of Miami and currently works for the Department of Teaching and Learning. Malek is the founding member of his law firm, Christopher Malek PLLC, specializing in immigration, property insurance, and corporate law.

**Molly J. Evans**, B.F.A. '12, along with co-creators and music producers **Jaime A. Swartz**, A.B. '12 (Pop/R&B girl group BE4), and **Jenna T. Rubaii**, B.M. '12 ("50th Anniversary Tour of Jesus Christ Superstar," "Groundhog Day"), created and launched Rise Together, Sweat Together: A Virtual Fitness Fundraiser, which supports World

Central Kitchens' COVID-19 relief work. The video was launched in June and features accomplished stage and screen performers as well as a special appearance by Madeline Deutsch, physician and assistant professor of medicine at Jacobi Medical Center Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx.

**Justine S. Green**, B.S.Ed. '13, Ed.D. '19, is an educator, author, and disability advocate based in Boca Raton, Florida, where she currently serves as the principal at Tamim Academy. She shares her story of living with a disability in her recently published children's book, "Completely Me." Her first official interview was posted on Thrive Global by Huffington Post.

**Brandon W. Barsky**, B.S. '15, graduated with a Doctor of Medicine degree on May 1, 2020, from Florida Atlantic University Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. Barsky will do his residency in pediatrics at Nationwide Children's Hospital at The Ohio State University.

**Xiao Du**, Ph.D. '16, is the CEO for TEDA Technology Development Co., a manufacturer that has advanced production equipment and rich production experience in Huangdao (Jiaonan) Qingdao city, Shandong Province, China, and Orlando, Florida.

**Samantha S. Chaitram**, Ph.D. '18, is a research manager at the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, an adjunct lecturer at the University of the West Indies, and a Spanish interpreter for the Ministry of National Security, Trinidad and Tobago. Chaitram wrote her first book, which was converted from her dissertation and was published by Palgrave Macmillan. "American Foreign Policy in the English-speaking Caribbean, From the Eighteens to the Twenty-first Century" is the first to examine the policies of Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump in this context.

## 2020s

**Melanie C. Goergmaier**, Ph.D. '20, received her degree in international studies. Her specializations are international relations and international political economy with a focus on European Union studies and trade politics. Goergmaier was born and raised in Munich, Germany. As a European Union citizen, she has contributed and taught numerous global study-abroad programs in France, Australia, Jamaica at Hofstra University Campus, Costa Rica at Centro PanAmericano de Idiomas, Chile, Argentina, and Spain at University of Barcelona. ■

The University of Miami Alumni Association notes the passing of the following graduates.

## In Memoriam

### 1940s

Zerney B. Barnes, B.S. '44  
Betty Lou Donovan, A.B. '48  
Martin Yelen, B.A. '48, J.D. '50  
Charles E. Bleakley, B.B.A. '49  
Sanford N. Feinman, B.B.A. '49  
Betty L. Injaychok, A.B. '49  
Robert T. McBride, B.B.A. '49  
Mary Lou H. Smethurst, A.B. '49

### 1950s

William A. Brun, B.S. '50  
Gloria M. Dennen, A.B. '50  
Bernard J. Fremerman, B.B.A. '50  
William B. Risan, J.D. '50  
Peggy L. Cohn, B.B.A. '51  
Milton Hillman, B.S. '51, M.D. '56  
Marshall J. Langer, J.D. '51  
George N. Leader, J.D. '51  
Joseph P. McCarthy, B.B.A. '51  
Gordon R. Williamson, B.B.A. '51  
Peter Wolf, B.B.A. '51, M.A. '52  
Katherine L. Zarker, M.A. '51  
Theodore A. Gens, B.S. '52, M.S. '53  
Darrell L. Harding, B.B.A. '52  
Alma L. Loy, B.B.A. '52  
David C. Miller, B.B.A. '52  
Constance J. Weldon, B.M. '52, M.Ed. '53  
Wallace M. Cichon, B.B.A. '53  
Albert N. Cohen, J.D. '53  
Blair D. Conner, B.Ed. '53

Glenda F. Johnson, B.Ed. '53  
Joan R. Madden, B.Ed. '53  
Solon W. Bacas, B.B.A. '54  
Lucille W. Cohen, A.B. '54  
William F. Noonan, B.Ed. '54  
Marvin M. Silverberg, B.S. '54, M.D. '58  
Malcolm S. Sotland, B.B.A. '54  
Helen W. Valentine, B.S.N. '54  
Janet K. Wright, B.M. '54  
Frederick Cushman, B.M. '55  
Raymond S. Sprague, A.B. '55  
Norman M. Kenyon, M.D. '56  
Myrna B. Palley, B.Ed. '56  
John W. Petch B.S.M.E. '56  
Robert C. Rietmann, B.B.A. '56  
Morton Trilling, B.B.A. '56  
George E. Barket, J.D. '57  
Zell Davis, J.D. '57  
Patricia M. Herbert, B.B.A. '57  
Jean F. Kay, B.B.A. '57  
Martha M. Milani, A.B. '57  
Frank Thaller, B.S.I.E. '57, B.S.M.E. '57  
Constantine Thymius, B.M. '57  
Peter C. Cokinos, B.B.A. '58  
David Kulchin, M.Ed. '58  
Robert H. Stewart, B.Ed. '58  
Russell W. Wheatley, B.Ed. '58, M.Ed. '63  
Nicholas M. Athans, B.B.A. '59  
Howard B. Davidow, B.B.A. '59  
Purvis D. Jackson B.B.A. '59

Barbra B. Kaplan, A.B. '59  
Stuart B. Matz, B.S.I.E. '59  
Yale Mosk, B.B.A. '59  
Donald A. Susenbach, B.B.A. '59  
Anthony T. Vamvaks, B.B.A. '59

### 1960s

Arnold D. Levine, J.D. '60  
Dana Jo Kahn Mermelstein, B.Ed. '60  
Stephen A. Welsh, B.B.A. '60  
William P. Booras, M.D. '61  
Judith L. Cushman, B.M. '61  
Mellis R. Meyers, B.B.A. '61  
Joseph E. Williams, B.S.E.E. '61  
Richard A. Willmen, B.B.A. '61  
Anna M. Evans, AB '62  
Paulette M. Mansell, B.Ed. '62, M.Ed. '69  
Marianne E. Rhodes, B.Ed. '62  
Charles J. Diamond, B.Ed. '63  
Evelyn F. Provost, B.S.E.E. '63  
Charles J. Curry, B.B.A. '64  
David M. Krause, B.B.A. '64  
J.D. '67  
Roselee N. Roberts, A.B. '64  
Rebekah S. Griffard, B.S.N. '65  
Bernard M. Kane, A.B. '65  
C Lois Lazarus, A.B. '65  
Joseph A. Thompson, M.A. '65  
Clarence R. Bergeron, B.B.A. '66  
Lorraine T. Daxe, B.Ed. '66  
Norman D. Freid, M.D. '66



**Patti Herbert**

Patti Herbert, B.B.A. '57, a longtime University of Miami benefactor who, with her husband, University Trustee Allan Herbert, B.B.A. '55, M.B.A. '58, donated millions to transform academics and student life at the University, died in July at the age of 84. The Patti and Allan Herbert Wellness Center and the University of Miami Patti and Allan Herbert Business School are named in honor of the couple's generosity. Several other schools, colleges, and divisions throughout the University, as well as the Department of Athletics and the Lowe Art Museum, also have benefited from the couple's more than \$100 million in lifetime giving. Patti and Allan, both members of the Iron Arrow Honor Society, met and fell in love while they were students at the University.



**Myrna Palley**

Lifelong champion of the arts Myrna Palley, B.Ed. '56, died in June at the age of 85. In 2008 Myrna and husband Sheldon Palley, B.B.A. '56, J.D. '57, donated their personal collection of more than 150 glass art pieces, along with a significant financial gift, to establish the Myrna and Sheldon Palley Pavilion for Contemporary Glass and Studio Arts at the University of Miami Lowe Art Museum. In celebration of the pavilion's 10th anniversary in 2018, the couple generously sponsored the full reinstatement of the gallery and launched the Myrna and Sheldon Palley Lecture Series, a biannual event that brings leading glass artists to the Lowe and the University's Coral Gables Campus.

## In Memoriam



### Eugene Sayfie

Eugene J. Sayfie, a world-renowned cardiologist and member of the Miller School of Medicine faculty for more than 35 years, died in May at the age of 85. Sayfie, a graduate of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, was part of the team at the Miami Heart Institute that, in 1969, performed the first heart and kidney transplant in the southeastern United States. At the Miller School, he was an associate professor of medicine and a former medical director of the Executive Health Program. The school's Sayfie Pavilion is named in his honor, and every year the Department of Medicine celebrates Eugene J. Sayfie, M.D., Research Day. In 2012 he received the Miller School's inaugural Distinguished Master Clinician Award.



### Roselee Roberts

A pioneering woman in the male-dominated aerospace industry, Roselee Roberts, A.B. '64, died in April at the age of 77. While a student at the University, where she met her husband, William "Art" Roberts, B.B.A. '64, she was a student government leader and the first woman to head the Inter-Fraternity Council. After graduating, she was a junior economist on President Lyndon B. Johnson's Council of Economic Advisers. After working on Capitol Hill in the 1970s and 1980s, she joined Boeing Corporation and founded Women in Aerospace to support women in the industry. In 2005 she returned to Capitol Hill and led a successful push to fund the International Space Station. She retired from government in 2010. Her family established the Roselee N. Roberts, A.B. '64, Endowed Scholarship in support of women student leaders at the U.



Names recorded as of Sept. 1, 2020. We research each name in the "In Memoriam" section, but errors can occur. Please email any corrections or clarifications to [alumni@miami.edu](mailto:alumni@miami.edu) or call 305-284-2872.

Merrill I. Lamb, J.D. '66  
William A. Leithiser, A.B. '66  
Gerald H. Stead, J.D. '66  
Donald R. Friis, B.B.A. '67  
Marlene R. Langer, B.S. '67, M.D. '71  
Rose G. Perrin, M.Ed. '67  
John M. Watson, B.A. '67  
A Stephen J. Foxman, J.D. '68  
Thomas N. Silverman A.B. '68  
Alan S. Becker J.D. '69  
Paul H. Vuona, A.B. '69

### 1970s

Selina W. Dunworth, M.A. '70  
Matthew C. King, B.B.A. '70  
Jon C. Staiger, Ph.D. '70  
Thomas A. Weiss, A.B. '70  
Barak Yaron, A.B. '70, J.D. '75  
Jeffrey J. Connors, B.B.A. '71, J.D. '75  
Robert T. McAlpine, B.S.E.E. '71  
Arva Moore Parks, M.A. '71  
David H. Ratner, B.Ed. '71  
Alan Telisman, A.B. '71  
Charlotte M. Close, M.A. '72

Mark S. Colby, B.M. '72, M.M. '75  
C. Amelia B. Dameron, B.Ed. '72  
William B. Stansbery, A.B. '72, M.A. '80  
Gerald M. Weiner, M.D. '72  
Byron A. Scogins, A.B. '73  
Marilyn Sher, A.B. '73, J.D. '76  
Dean T. Barnhard, B.M. '74, M.M. '80  
Robert J. Capece, B.B.A. '74  
Randolph A. Newman, J.D. '74  
Lorraine B. Reagan, M.M. '74, D.M.A. '77  
Neil A. Trager, A.B. '74  
Don S. Cohn, J.D. '75  
Hilary L. Mindlin, M.A. '75  
Ida L. Roberts, J.D. '75  
Jane M. Sprogis, M.S.C.E. '75  
Roderick G. Dorman, J.D. '76  
Theron E. Howard J.D. '77  
Ronald T. Martin, LL.M.E. '77  
Andrew R. Meyer, B.B.A. '77  
Cesar A. Clavero, B.B.A. '78  
Rebeca Porto, B.S. '78, M.D. '82  
Elaine G. Seldon, C.N.P. '78

Guido Vecchiarelli, M.B.A. '78  
William E. Webb, M.D. '79

### 1980s

Michael F. Granata, B.G.S. '80, M.A. '82  
Ronald S. Lowy, A.B. '80, J.D. '85  
David A. Newman, M.A. '80  
Kenneth A. Burns, J.D. '82  
Christine Housen, A.B. '82, J.D. '86  
Francis J. Manzella, B.M. '82  
Glendon L. Cardwell, M.B.A. '83  
Laura A. Netter, M.B.A. '83  
Joan L. Bornstein, Ph.D. '84, M.S.Ed. '84  
Carol C. Brown, B.S.N. '84  
William E. Simmons, M.B.A. '85  
Timothy B. Berlew, M.M. '86  
Honey F. Hartman, J.D. '87  
Douglas D. Jolly, M.B.A. '87  
Murray S. Flaster, M.D. '88  
Gary Goldberg, M.D. '88

### 1990s

Steven B. Dan, M.B.A. '90

Cynthia W. Van Buren J.D. '90, LL.M.P. '97  
Raoul J. Diaz, M.S.Ed. '91  
Richard F. Watson LL.M.E. '93  
Cynthia Duval, J.D. '99

### 2000s

Henry N. Farfan, M.B.A. '03  
Thomas G. Regnier, J.D. '03  
H. Tiffany A. Barranco, B.S.C. '07, M.A. '09  
Mara A. Balda, Ph.D. '09, M.D. '11

### 2010s

Sacha Kantor, B.S.C. '19  
Ryne J. Zenner, J.D. '19 ■

## Alumni Leadership

### Alumni Board of Directors



Kourtney Gibson, B.B.A. '03, President



Frank R. Jimenez, B.S. '87, Immediate Past President



Devang B. Desai, A.B. '97, J.D. '03, President-Elect



Darren S. Dupriest, B.B.A. '91, Vice President



Bill J. Fisse, B.B.A. '75, M.B.A. '77, Vice President



Christopher Lomax, B.M. '05, J.D. '08, Vice President



Robert J. Munch, A.B. '73, Vice President



Maribel Caridad Wadsworth, B.S.C. '93, Vice President



Erica Arroyo, B.S.C. '03, M.A.L.S. '08, Associate Vice President

### Alumni Trustees

Carolyn B. Lamm, J.D. '73  
Marilu Marshall, B.B.A. '66, J.D. '69  
Alice S. Vilma, B.B.A. '99

### Directors

Daniel P. Carvajal, B.B.A. '08  
Preston J. Clark, J.D. '08  
Joshua A. Cohen, A.B. '96  
Lissette M. Exposito, B.S.N. '86  
Allison S. Gillespie, B.A.M. '91, M.S.Ed. '95, M.S. '03  
Lissette Gonzalez, B.A.M. '01  
Michael F. Guilford, J.D. '85  
Jose A. Hernandez-Solaun, M.B.A. '05  
Shannon K. High-Bassalik, B.S.C. '88  
Rachel S. Highland, B.S.B.E. '05, J.D. '08, M.S. '09  
Thomas F. Juhase, M.B.A. '89  
Jordan H. Ledford, M.S. '05  
Bryan Lewis, M.B.A. '04  
Roberto L. Palenzuela, B.B.A. '84, J.D. '88  
Nilesh K. Parikh, B.B.A. '05  
Mark F. Raymond, J.D. '83  
Marc A. Risser, B.B.A. '93  
Robert D. Rubin, J.D. '84  
John A. Ruzich, B.S.C. '96  
Gulnar G. Vaswani, B.B.A. '91, M.B.A. '93  
Douglas J. Weiser, A.B. '78, J.D. '82  
Juliana R. Wheeler, A.B. '92, M.A. '94

### Young Alumni Leadership Council Representative

Vikesh N. Patel, B.S.B.E. '17, M.S.F. '18

### Faculty Representatives

Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14  
Xavier I. Cortada, A.B. '86, J.D. '91, M.P.A. '91  
Christian Diez, B.S. '00, M.D. '04, M.B.A. '12

### Student Representatives

Abigail Adeleke, President, Student Government  
Micaela N. Stoner, President, Student Alumni Ambassadors

## 'Canes Communities

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### Special Interest Groups

**Band of the Hour**  
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Robert S. Mann, A.B. '87, M.B.A. '89, President-Elect  
**Black Alumni Society**  
Wendy-Ann T. Dixon-DuBois, A.B. '06, President  
Patricia S. Morgan, B.S. '06, President-Elect  
**LGBTQ Alumni Association**  
Roberto J. Bosch, B.S.M.S. '07, President  
Taylor H. Rambo, B.M. '14, M.A. '17, Vice President  
**Public Health Sciences**  
Monica M. Bahamon, B.S. '14, President  
Stephanie A. Maestri, B.S.P.H. '14, President-Elect  
**UM Sports Hall of Fame**  
Richard M. Horton, B.S.M.E. '66, President  
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### School and College Groups

**College of Engineering**  
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**Miller School of Medicine**  
Ana I. Gonzalez, B.S. '81, M.D. '85, President  
Alex J. Mechaber, B.S. '90, M.D. '94, President-Elect  
**School of Law**  
Timothy A. Kolaya, B.S.C.E. '00, J.D. '08, President  
**School of Nursing and Health Studies**  
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