

# Miami Dade College

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Tuesday April 19, 2022

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## The Daily News Clippings

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# Business

## eMerge Americas showcases Miami's innovation and its growth as a tech hub

BY MICHAEL BUTLER  
mbutler@miamiherald.com

During his opening remarks Monday at the annual eMerge Americas technology conference, Miami Mayor Francis Suarez left no question about his belief in the city's growth as a tech powerhouse.

"There is an attitude in Miami that has created an emergence," he said at the Miami Beach Convention Center, where one of South Florida's key tech events got underway. "You're seeing a transformation from one generation to another generation."

To emphasize that point, Suarez invited schoolchildren who were seated at the front of the crowd on-stage to loud applause.

"Create the kinds of ideas and companies that will change the future for

them and their children's grandchildren," the mayor said. "That's the challenge that I see before us."

Since 2014, eMerge has helped guide Miami into a bigger tech-driven future, with opportunities for entrepreneurs to pitch their ideas and more.

At this year's two-day event, which ends Tuesday, more than 200 companies and public entities have exhibits. Guests at the conference include: Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian; Serena Williams, iconic professional tennis player, venture-capital investor and Ohanian's wife; former NBA All-Star and now tech entrepreneur Baron Davis; Peter Smith, CEO of Blockchain; and entertainer Pitbull.

Ana Chammas, Miami-Dade County director of innovation, said it was important for the county to participate in a conference



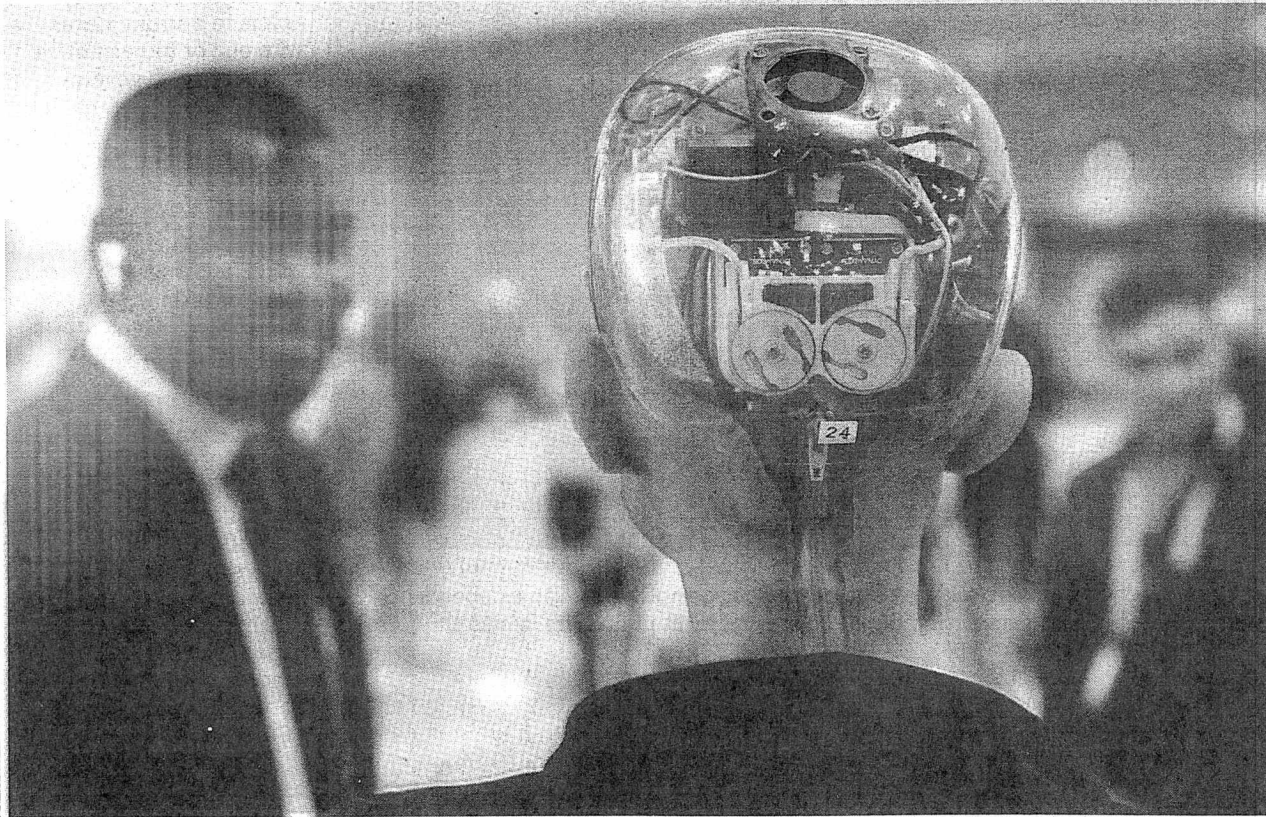
CARL JUSTE cjuste@miamiherald.com

The audience listens to entrepreneur Alexis Ohanian on Monday at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

that represents the intersection of different industries and career paths. The Miami-Dade exhibit space featured an interactive walkway, two roving robots with blinking neon eyes and a female robot that can speak on command.

"We're trying to make government not just some-

thing that is approachable and reachable and attainable, but we want people to understand in our community that we're offering equitable opportunities to bridge the digital divide," Chammas said. "We were one of the founding sponsors and really believe in what eMerge Americas is



CARL JUSTE cjuste@miamiherald.com

A visitor admires Sophia on Monday as Miami-Dade County showcases AI and robotic technologies at its exhibit at eMerge Americas at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The event ends Tuesday.

doing and what they've done for our community.”

Pedram Nimfreez is a part of Florida Atlantic University's machine perception and robotics lab. A proponent of artificial intelligence and its applications, Nimfreez is fascinated by the new technology and concepts that could be viewed on the main expo floor in the convention center. He thinks it's only a matter of time before artificial intelligence is at the center of our lives.

“Everybody's going to learn AI or work for someone that does,” Nimfreez said.

Antonio Delgado, Miami Dade College vice president of innovation and tech partnership, and his colleagues were at eMerge to interact with conference attendees. That included communicating the need for tech education in a city that has quickly become awash with technologists from other places.

Delgado affirmed that residents of all backgrounds can learn new skills at Miami Dade College or earn degrees, and that he does not want to see anyone get left behind as tech gains more of a foothold in Miami.

As Miami's tech wave continues, the college announced in February it's receiving \$15 million from a quartet of public and non-profit entities to increase its technology curriculum — and make AI education available to all of its students. The investment will be used to hire as many as 15 faculty members who can satisfy surging enrollment in MDC's School of Engineering and Technology. MDC is also launching MDCTECH, a web portal designed to serve as the hub for its tech efforts.

In addition, MDC officials announced the creation of a tech-focused charter high school that will be centered at the college's Wolfson Campus in downtown Miami.

“We all see what's happening in Miami,” Delgado said, noting the college “is that bridge to help anyone in Miami get a job.”

Michael Butler:  
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TECHNOLOGY

## eMerge conference showcases Miami's innovation and growing tech hub

BY MICHAEL BUTLER


UPDATED APRIL 19, 2022 9:55 AM



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Miami-Dade presents some of its AI collaboration with a robot named Sophia during the two-day Miami's Emerge Americas 2022 showcasing the best in tech innovation. BY [CARL JUSTE](#) 



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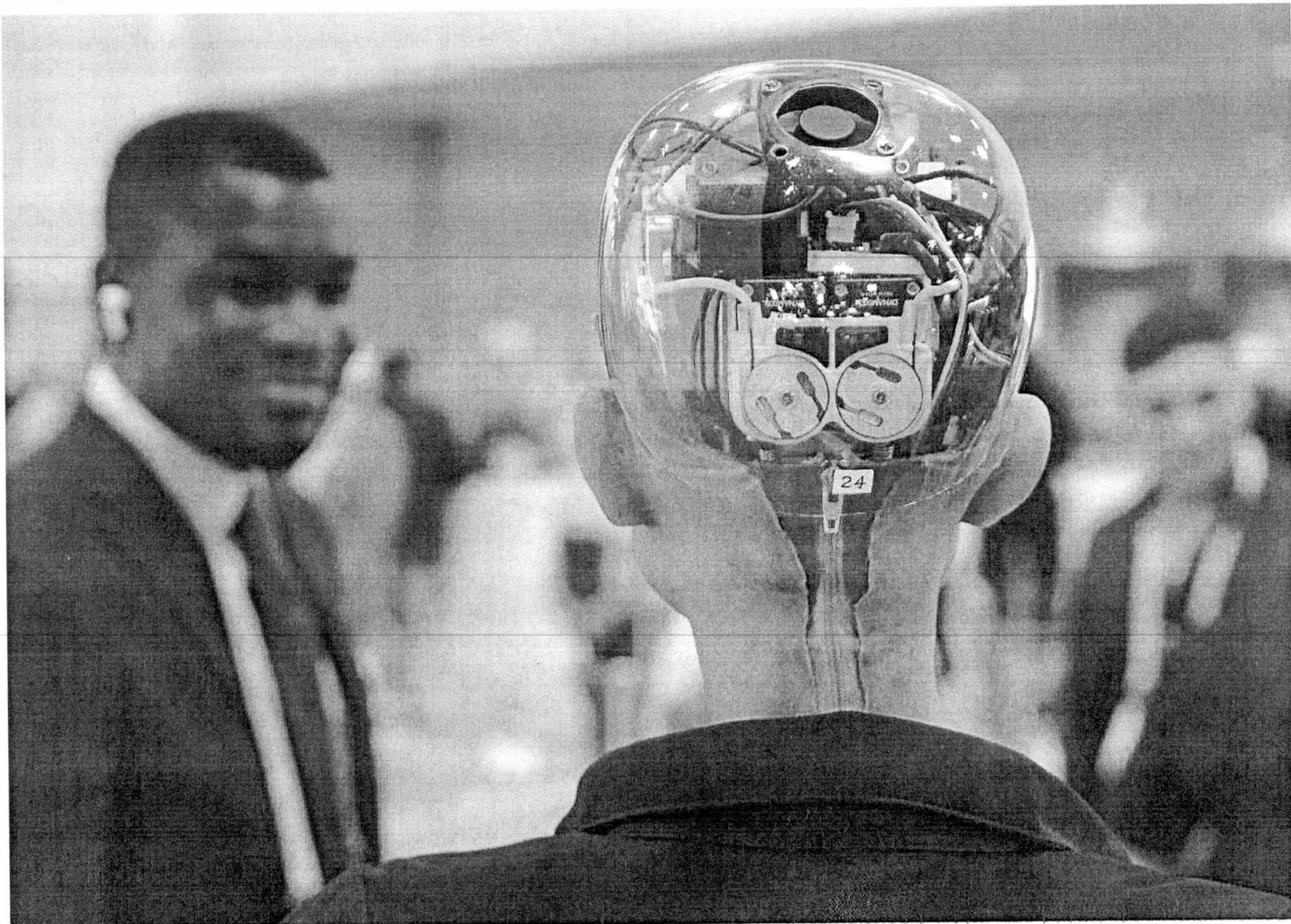
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Detail shot of the back of 'Sophia' revealing her inner workings as visitors look with amazement at Miami-Dade County's exhibit at eMerge Americas 2022, a two-day technology conference at the Miami Beach Convention Center. Carl Juste [cjuste@miamiherald.com](mailto:cjuste@miamiherald.com)

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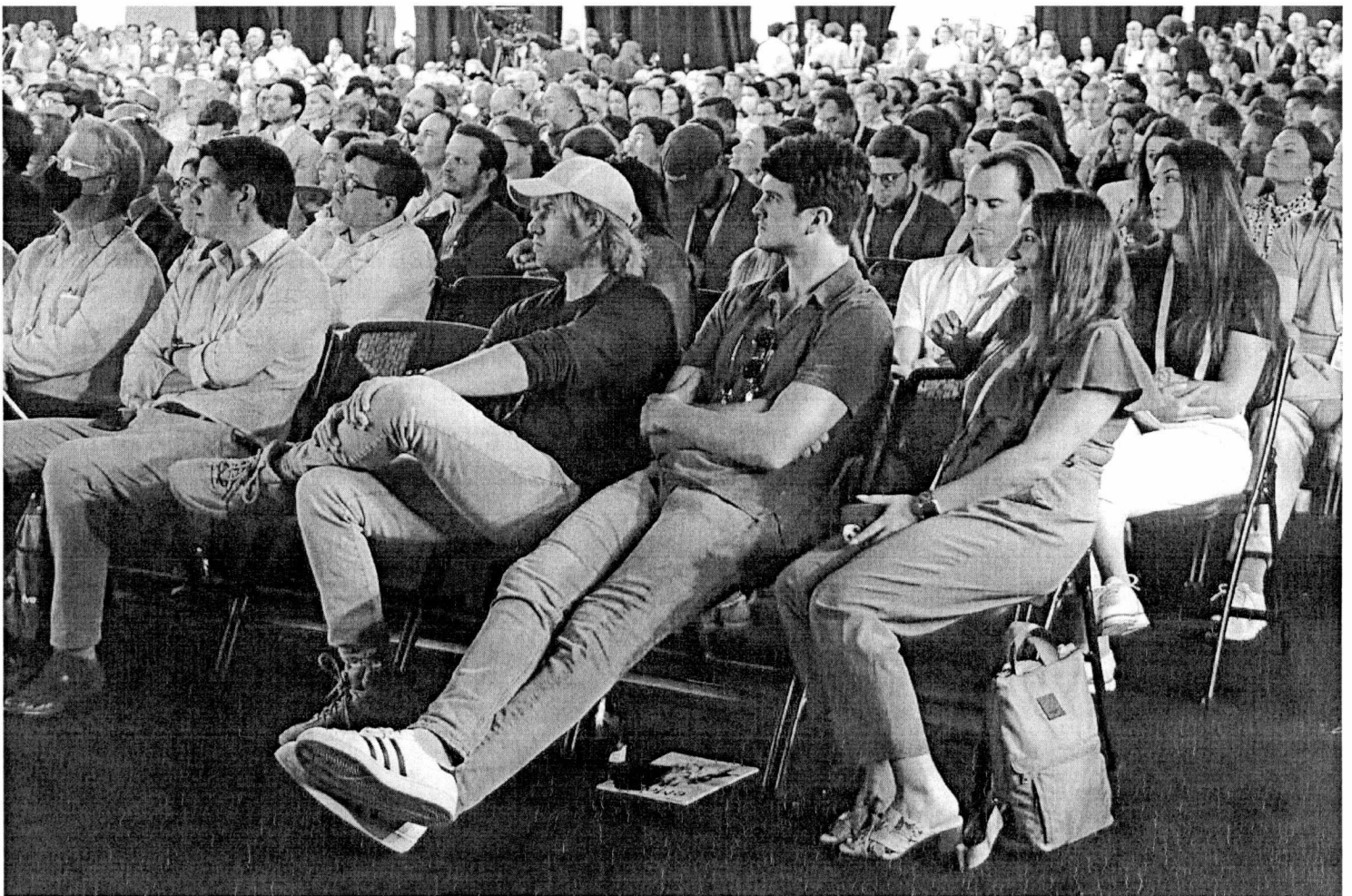
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This story was originally published April 18, 2022 6:59 PM.

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MICHAEL BUTLER



Michael Butler writes about the residential and commercial real estate industry and trends in the local housing market. Just like Miami's diverse population, Butler, a Temple University graduate, has both local roots and a Panamanian heritage.

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## ***eMerge Americas goes IRL with a splash, celebrates the new Miami***



***Nancy Dahlberg*** April 18, 2022



***By Nancy Dahlberg and Riley Kaminer***

*After a two-year hiatus, [eMerge Americas](#) returned to the Miami Beach Convention Center on Monday bigger than ever – and with a refreshed look, reflecting the new Miami.*

*Featuring over 200 speakers and with 400+ companies participating, the conference aims to offer something for everyone, whether you are an early-stage founder, an investor, a large tech company seeking talent, an educator, or one of the many supporters of South Florida's tech ecosystem. Miami Mayor Francis Suarez's vision of his city as a Crypto Capital is one of the main themes of the conference, with a number of main stage talks devoted to subjects like blockchain, NFTs and Web3.*

***'WE ARE STILL AT THE GOECITIES PHASE OF WEB3'***

The conference kicked off with Alexis Ohanian, the Palm Beach-based co-founder of Reddit and founder of investment firm Seven Seven Six. In a wide ranging conversation with CNBC reporter Deirdre Bosa, Ohanian weighed in on web3 and South Florida as an emerging destination for innovation.

“We are still at the GeoCities phase of Web3,” said Ohanian, referring to the Web 1.0 page builder and hosting service popular in the 1990s. “We’re all still learning what to tinker and what to build. The builders right now have an amazing assortment of Lego bricks to build with.”

While he noted that his NFT portfolio has done well over the last couple of years – its value having multiplied by some four to five times – Ohanian had words of caution for investors:

“This is a highly speculative, very, very, very early stage marketplace,” he said. “There will absolutely be a churn” of products, services, platforms, and investments.

Ohanian is perhaps one of the highest-profile investors in the South Florida region, as he has invested in 36 unicorns, including Miami-based senior-tech startup Papa. Seven Seven Six now has \$750 million assets under management.

Papa’s founder and CEO Andrew Parker also graced the stage with Ohanian, revealing that he is hoping to hire 100 employees in the company’s Miami office in the near future. Parker hopes that Papa, now with 800 employees globally, will create an effect similar to the so-called PayPal Mafia. “I’m sure people that work at Papa will end up going to build their own companies,” Parker said.

### ***MIAMI A MODEL ‘RISE OF THE REST’ CITY***

The Web3 revolution is going to take time to evolve and develop, up to a decade, and there will be shakeouts and winners and losers along the way, said Steve Case, a Web0 pioneer because AO was founded long before the Web. Still, he said, the excitement around web3 at eMerge is “intoxicating” and infectious, and that is the kind of optimism an ecosystem need to succeed. Successful startup areas bet on why the innovators will succeed rather than why they will fail, and he is seeing a lot of the former in Miami.

Case said Miami in fact a model city in the Rise of the Rest, the organization he founded to help lift venture capital attention beyond California and New York. That is because of Miami’s early believers like eMerge Americas and other community builders who didn’t stop telling the story when everybody said it couldn’t be done, the startups like Papa that stayed when investors said go west, and the mayors and other leaders who enthusiastically supported and trumpeted the ecosystem. While Case doesn’t see Silicon Valley falling from its throne, other cities including Miami are finally getting noticed and rising up.

### ***UNIVERSITIES RETHINKING THEIR MODELS***

The presidents of Miami Dade College, University of Miami and Florida International University took to the main stage to talk about how they prepare students for the fast-changing world of technology. power the next revolution. The three – MDC’s Madeline Pumariega, UM’s Julio Frenk and FIU’s Kenneth Jessell – were in agreement the traditional model of higher ed needs to change, and all three schools were actively undertaking transformation. “We must. Otherwise, we go the way of the Yellow Taxi,” Pumariega said.

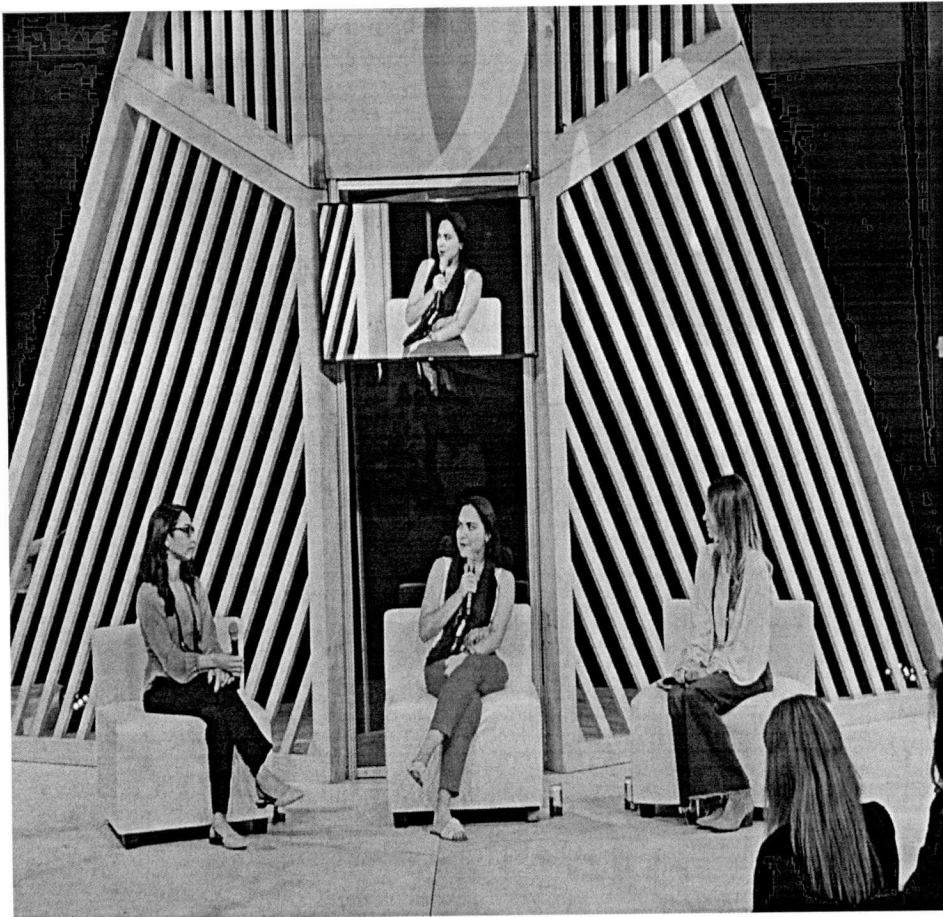
Pumariega talked about a personalized education experience as a platform with stackable credentials and courses that students can access as easily as they do with Netflix and other

services they use, when and where they need it. “We spent the last year reimagining the student journey,” she said, and that includes connecting them with potential employers right away.

Frenk talked about “education for life,” not only in providing lifelong educational opportunities – with content there when you need it — but education that prepares you for life. Universities must transform themselves, he said, adding that it is not about the traditional model of learning the theory and then applying it in internships and jobs – “It should be the other way around.” Jessell added that the role of educational institutions is to help students learn how to think critically in order to navigate this fast-changing environment. Like Frenk, he said experiential learning includes internships that start in year 1, not year 4, and more of them.

## **MEET THE STARTUPS**

The expo area of eMerge Americas was buzzing, with universities, organizations and larger companies showcasing their technology, with products and programs in elaborate booths. The LaunchPad stage featured talks with #MiamiTech leaders and founders.



***A Women in Blockchain talk on the Launchpad stage, led by Clara Bullrich, co-founder of TheVentureCity***

But at the center of the action were some 100 startups exhibiting at their tables and some pitching on a stage in the center of the room. Let’s meet a few of them.

The team from Miami-born [Lien Library](#) was out in full force at the conference. Their platform, a digital toolkit to identify liens on properties, is rapidly gaining clients. Most recently, the municipal governments of Miami Gardens and North Miami Beach deployed the platform, which is free for the public sector. Consumers, including investors, pay to use the platform to offset the risk of purchasing a property with a costly lien attached. “We offer an opportunity for cities to use Lien Library to earn revenue,” said co-founder and CEO Mac Alabre (pictured below), since the platform makes it easier for municipalities to make good on the money owed to them through liens.



[Babson grad Jason Shatsky](#), founder of ticket selling platform [TicketRev](#), said that there is “no better place than eMerge for everything Miami Tech.” The Boca-based startup has recently expanded to New York. “We’ve helped hundreds of fans already, and we’re excited for what’s to come,” said Shatsky. Also in TicketRev’s sights is a pre-seed raise.

Edward McGovern, police Major-turned entrepreneur, came to eMerge to showcase his public safety startup [Cera](#). Last month, the rapidly-growing company provided software used by seventy security officials at the Ultra music festival. McGovern explained that the tech-powered platform came in handy in field where analog techniques are still common: “When we arrived, we saw officials using paper maps and poker chips.”

Andres and Juan Barrero, co-founders of [LetsBox.it](#), enjoyed the opportunity to share their unique portal that helps customers find the most cost-effective way of sending shipments overseas. Juan told *Refresh Miami* that using the platform can help customers determine the most time- and cost-saving options, as well as ensure that they avoid pitfalls like issues at customs. The Wynwood-based startup, which just raised a small angel round, currently has seven employees. Andres has spent the better part of two decades in the shipping industry.

Paddleboarding app [PADL](#) made waves at eMerge, touting its [recent growth](#). Co-founder and COO Felipe Jauregui told *Refresh Miami* that the company has just inked a deal with the City of Miami, enabling PADL to deploy its paddleboard rental stations in a handful of new locations.



At eMerge, Learning platform EducUp announced that they have officially passed the threshold of one million users on the platform. Co-founders Carlos Raul and Yusnier Viera (pictured below) shared that the startup has already started raising a \$1.25M seed round.



### ***EMERGE'S MISSION***

In many ways, eMerge celebrated a very different Miami than years past, and that was evident as soon as you walked in the door. Among the largest exhibits were Blockchain.com, Algorand, Okcoin and Silicon Valley Bank. Walk in a little further and the signs are everywhere. #MiamiTech OGs remarked on how much has changed since 2019, the last eMerge Conference.

Yet, the foundational mission of eMerge Americas has not changed. Announced in 2013, eMerge launched its first conference in 2014 to connect tech entrepreneurs, angel investors, VC firms and other stakeholders with the mission of transforming Miami into the tech hub of the Americas. "This is all about building a community and building a forward-thinking innovative future for our ecosystem," eMerge President Melissa Medina said at a recent event. After all, long before Miami had tech, that was the vision of her father, a serial tech entrepreneur and eMerge's founder Manny Medina, who took the stage and was overcome with emotion. "We are on the cusp of a \$10 trillion run," said Manny Medina, referring to the digital transformation ahead, "I want Miami to be at the heart of it."

"We're a year-round platform. We connect the dots. We're tracking the data and telling the story," Melissa Medina said. eMerge is focused on continuing its mission and supporting Miami's renaissance, as well as uniting Florida in a common goal of moving tech forward in the Sunshine state. To that end it partners with Tampa-based entrepreneurship organization Synapse and VC firm Florida Funders, which is also Tampa-based but made a significant expansion into Miami in 2021.



*Miami Mayor Francis Suarez, eMerge CEO Felice Gorodo, eMerge President Melissa Medina and eMerge Chairman Manny Medina celebrate the moment with their children, the future of Miami.*

### **PITBULL, THE MAYOR AND LIN DAI**

The energy carried all the way through to the end of the day, finishing off with a conversation between Miami music legend Armando “Pitbull” Perez, Mayor Francis Suarez, and NFT platform OneOf’s co-founder and CEO Lin Dai.

Ever the source of a rhyming quip about hard work and perseverance, Perez shared his excitement about the Miami tech ecosystem with a packed crowd of attendees. “What comes quick goes quicker,” he said. “Me, I’ve always been about slow but for sho’.”

Suarez shot back, describing the major growth of Miami’s tech as “fast but going to last.” He noted that Miami is top in the nation for tech job growth and tech migration, among a litany of non-tech superlatives including Miami being both the healthiest and happiest city in America.

Dai, who recently migrated to Miami after spending two decades in New York, highlighted that the company is spearheading various initiatives to give back to the local community as they grow here. This includes a collaboration with Perez to build a network of sports leadership and management schools in Miami and beyond.

During his talk, Dai also announced OneOf’s launch of CO//SIGN, enabling early-career musicians to create a web3 version of a fan club. Artists that join the program will have a “rookie” card-style NFT. The idea is that the musicians will be provided with a long-term income stream while fans have an opportunity to prove their music prowess by identifying rising-stars at the start of their career – and perhaps even turn a profit eventually.

The day closed with Suarez’s reiteration of the excitement to come for Miami, and a firm plea: “Everybody who benefits from this movement has to give back,” said Suarez, citing SoftBank and J.P. Morgan Chase as examples for our tech community to follow.



Photo by Ryan RC Rea. Other photos by Riley Kaminer and Nancy Dahlberg On Tuesday, Ohanian's better half, Serena Williams, will be speaking, along with Blockchain.com CEO Peter Smith, OKcoin CEO Hong Fang, Michael Arrington of Arington Capital and others. eMerge will also crown a winner of the Startup Showcase; the winner will receive more than \$400,000 in investments. Follow Nancy Dahlberg on Twitter and email her at [ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com](mailto:ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com). Follow Riley Kaminer on Twitter [@rileywk](https://twitter.com/rileywk).

<https://refreshmiami.com/emerge-americas-goes-irl-with-a-splash-celebrates-the-new-miami/>

## Emerge tech conference showcases new tech design, innovation



A small kiwiBot displays the 'love' emoji at the Miami-Dade County exhibit of emerging artificial intelligence and robotic technology at its exhibit at the eMerge Americas conference Monday, April 18, 2022 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Carl Juste

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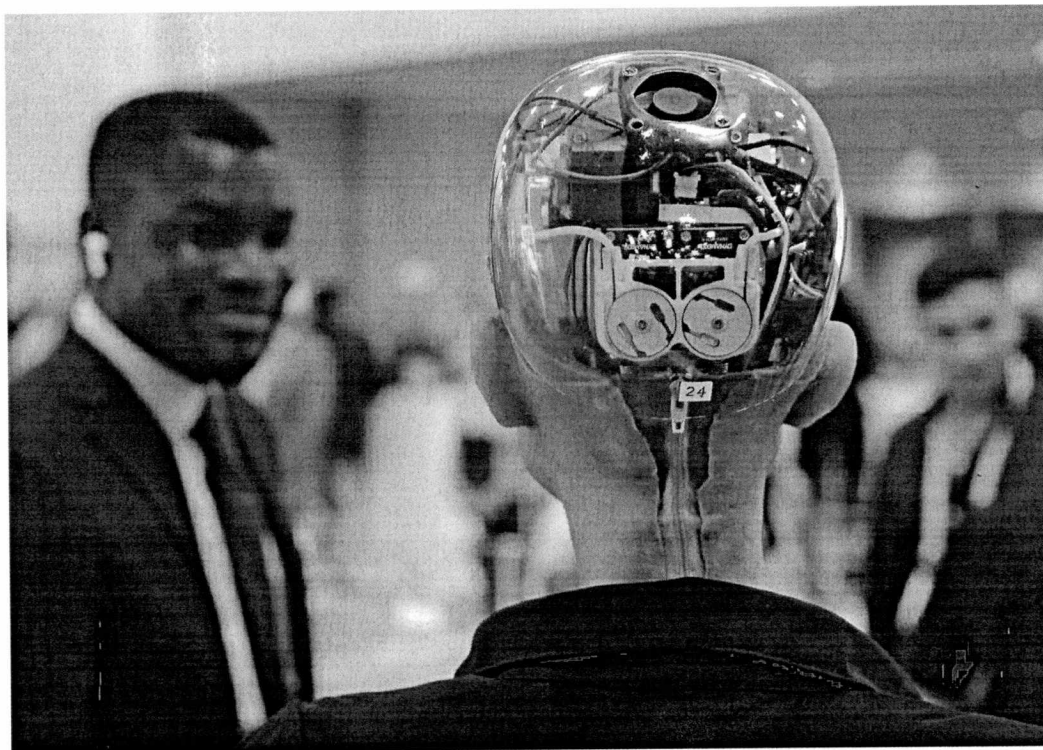


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Detail shot of the back of "Sophia" revealing her inner workings as visitors look with amazement at Miami-Dade County's exhibit at eMerge Americas 2022

the day's technology conference at Miami Beach Convention Center. Credit: Justin

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## New Initiative Aims to Diversify Miami's Tech Sector

[Annie Erling Gofus](#) - Apr 18 2022

Published in: [Global Workforce](#)

*Tech Equity Miami is a collaborative effort by various groups to raise \$100 million over five years in Miami, Florida.*

A campaign was announced to raise \$100 million over five years to enhance equity and inclusion in Miami's rapidly expanding technology industry.

A number of organizations, including [JPMorgan Chase](#), the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#), The [Miami Foundation](#), and [aïre ventures](#), recently announced [Tech Equity Miami](#), a transformative project that will invest \$100 million over five years in the use of technology to boost equity in the city. The mission is to provide under-served communities with greater access to technology and create educational and employment prospects for youth, women, and small business owners in those areas.

The funders' consortium, which already has over [\\$55 million in commitments](#), will continue to support initiatives that lower entry hurdles into the tech business and provide underrepresented groups, such as youth and small businesses, with chances.



All projects that receive a "Tech Equity Miami" designation will contribute information and statistics to a publicly accessible database that tracks the initiative's progress toward its intended results and impact objectives. The program is targeted toward those from diverse backgrounds interested in exploring technology professions.

The initiative is focused on making sure technology can help people move up the social ladder. Stakeholders consider this a down payment on long-term investment in technology to allow people who have historically been overlooked and left behind to participate fully.

Over the next five years, Tech Equity Miami aims to provide 100,000 students in Miami-Dade County with high-speed Internet access and digital literacy. Tech Equity Miami also aims to assist 25,000 underrepresented youths and workers in obtaining tech chances. Finally, the initiative will help 1,000 small firms develop digital solutions while boosting 50,000 local families' digital abilities.

Miami's growth as a global technology center is gaining momentum, with data recently showing a 45 percent increase in venture capital funds for the metro area. According to the Brookings Institution and LinkedIn, Miami's tech sector is experiencing equally strong expansion in the number of professionals choosing to work there, with a 30 percent increase in the net flow of workers in software and IT industries who arrived last year. Similarly, enrollment in technology-related programs at Florida International University and Miami Dade College is up by double digits year over year.

The tech movement is raising issues and gaps in inequality. Although 65 percent of Miami citizens self-identify as Black or Latino, only 12 percent of the city's tech workers are Black, and 27 percent are Hispanic.

The Miami Beach Entrepreneur Center's goal is to close the gap between Miami's emerging and established technology industries. The debate over technology equity has evolved beyond employment representation, with census data indicating that as many as 100,000 Miami homes lack internet access — roughly one in five.

The public-private effort is seen as having the chance to help build an inclusive tech culture in Miami. The pandemic had a particularly devastating effect on communities of color. Now more than ever, the community is striving to ensure that equity is improved in communities of color via a variety of activities.

Miami's tech sector is now at a delicate stage of development. The city has the potential to develop and influence technology in order to represent the region's tremendous diversity and offer all Miamians access to this lucrative sector. Tech Equity Miami aims to establish a flourishing, inclusive tech community that will continue to develop businesses and wealth for decades.

Miami-Dade County and additional contributors have already aided Tech Equity Miami in raising \$55 million. JPMorgan Chase's \$30 billion national commitment to improve racial equity, announced after George Floyd's murder in May 2020 and subsequent protests against police brutality, includes financial backing for the movement.

## **You might also enjoy reading:**



# Miami Dade College Students and Faculty Excel in Advancing Humanities and Undergraduate Research on the National Stage

**Miami, April 18, 2022 – Miami Dade College** (MDC) students and their faculty mentors are making waves at national platforms for undergraduate research and accelerating academic excellence and innovation. This spring semester, students and faculty in the humanities will convene for the fifth **Humanities Edge Undergraduate Research Virtual (HE-URP) Symposium at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19**, at MDC Wolfson Campus.

Each semester the HE-URP matches undergraduate student researchers with faculty mentors and librarians to develop student-led research projects. Sixty-four students at seven MDC campuses have completed the program so far. In addition, sixteen student researchers from seven MDC campuses participated at premier national conferences, including the Humanities Education and Research Association Annual Conference, the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, and Johns Hopkins 2022 Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Symposium. The program is also being represented at the annual conferences for the Humanities Education Research Association, the National Organization for Student Success and the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence. The **Humanities Edge** program supports these initiatives through the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** grant.

“The scope of national representation and highlights of the creativity of MDC students is unprecedented in the Humanities. We are grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their commitment and support of our students and institution, and I commend each of our students, faculty mentors, learning resource professionals and librarians for their initiative and dedication,” said Dr. Michaela Tomova, MDC Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and PI for the Humanities Edge program.

“Research in the humanities promises a space where dialogue and expression can be appreciated,” says Kirk Paskal, the Humanities Edge grant director, who characterizes the HE-URP Symposium as “a catalytic event where the interplay between research and human knowledge brings forth thought-provoking discussion in the humanities. All of this is brought to life by our undergraduate students who tackle complicated and thought-provoking topics. Our students’ projects have been recognized and applauded on the national stage. We are proud of the positive impact and legacy they have brought to our program.”

**WHAT:** Humanities Edge Undergraduate Research Virtual symposium

**WHEN:** Tuesday, April 19, at 6 p.m.

**WHERE:** <https://libraryguides.mdc.edu/HEURPSpring2022>  
(<https://libraryguides.mdc.edu/HEURPSpring2022>)

Conferences where MDC students, faculty and administrators are participating:

**Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) Annual Conference Invitees, March 3-5, 2022**

Marie Chacon, Padrón Campus

Noah Garcia, Homestead Campus

Dean Gil, West Campus

Samantha Gonzalez, North Campus

Laura Guerra -Lopez, Padrón Campus

Xiu Hau, Padrón Campus

Kamila Izquierdo, Padrón Campus

Sofia Rocabado, Kendall Campus

Mario Rodriguez, Hialeah Campus

Jimena Romero, Padrón Campus

Andrew Ruby, Wolfson Campus

Joseph Vega, Padrón Campus

Nicole Vilorio, Padrón Campus

**Faculty and Administrator Presenters at the Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) Annual Conference Invitees, March 3-5, 2022**

Dr. Ildiko Barsony

Erick Dominicus

Kirk Paskal

Dr. Jacqueline Peña

Professor Emily Sendin

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**Faculty and Administrator Presenters at the National Organization for Student Success, (NOSS), March 17-20, 2022**

Dr. Ildiko Barsony

Kirk Paskal

Dr. Jacqueline Peña

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**National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) Invitees, April 4 – 8, 2022**

Marie Chacon, Padrón Campus

Noah Garcia, Homestead Campus

Dean Gil, West Campus

Samantha Gonzalez, North Campus

Kamila Izquierdo, Padrón Campus

Sofia Rocabado, Kendall Campus

Andrew Ruby, Wolfson Campus

Joseph Vega, Padrón Campus

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**Johns Hopkins 2022 Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Symposium Invitees April 8-10, 2022**

Brittney Acosta, Hialeah Campus

Emanuelle Guillemi, Hialeah Campus

Nelson Rubio, Hialeah Campus

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**Faculty and Administrator Invitees for the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence, May 28-31, 2022**



Dr. Ildiko Barsony

Erick Dominicis

Professor Taurie Gittings Wheeler

Professor Victor Gomez

Dr. David Heredia

Kirk Paskal

Dr. Jacqueline Peña

Professor Emily Sendin

**For more information, please contact** Kirk Paskal at [kpaskal@mdc.edu](mailto:kpaskal@mdc.edu) (<mailto:kpaskal@mdc.edu>).

04/18/2022

## ***Miami Dade College Students And Faculty Excel In Advancing Humanities And Undergraduate Research On The National Stage***

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*<http://www.publicnow.com/view/544CBAD10B79D3108B3C45432F2A7707179F8441>*

# Florida Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Bill to Promote Adoption

State | Steven Ertelt | Apr 12, 2022 | 6:02PM | Tallahassee, Florida



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Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a bill today to promote adoption and provide support for foster care parents and children. The legislation is a significant boost to abortion alternatives and helps with the kinds of financial issues that adopted plague adoption.

The measure DeSantis signed provides financial benefits for foster parents, caregivers and former foster children seeking higher education within the state.

The legislation has a \$25 million allocation, will provide a \$200 monthly subsidy to foster parents and other caregivers of preschool children to help cover child care and early learning costs. The other \$19 million will go toward increasing stipends for relatives and nonrelatives who house and raise children to the same level as those given to licensed foster parents.

“You can have lip service and talk about adoption and foster care, but are you going to actually put the money where your mouth is (and) deliver policy that is going to show that commitment is real? The signing of this bill ... should leave no doubt in the minds of anybody in the state of Florida that this state stands committed to the proposition that every life counts,” DeSantis said.

The pro-life governor added: “All these kids deserve an opportunity, and we’re going to do what we can to make sure their dreams and hopes and aspirations can become a reality in a loving home.”

DeSantis signed the measure at Miami Dade College’s Wolfson Campus in front of families and supporters of the bill.

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“Through this funding, more than 7,000 foster parents and caregivers will receive this subsidy for the children that are in their care. And that’s going to make a big difference. Quite frankly, just from a feasibility perspective, foster parents have to work to put food on the table like anyone else. This will help them in that regard,” the governor said.

**Ron DeSantis** ✓  
@GovRonDeSantis



Promoting adoption and foster care so all Floridians have a fair chance in life is a top priority in the state of Florida.

Watch on Twitter

5:30 PM · Apr 12, 2022



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# The Floridant

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## Florida: Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Bill to Increase Support for Foster Parents and Former Foster Youth

The Floridant/10177507

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Florida: Governor Ron DeSantis Announces \$10.5 Million in Funding to Expand Registered Apprenticeship and Preapprenticeship Programs

Spoken Word Artist And Author Alicia Marie Phidd Takes You To The Metaverse With Self Care Music

Award-winning advertising producer Tian Liu Shares Her Career Working

**MIAMI** — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis was joined by foster families and legislative leaders to sign Senate Bill 7034, furthering Florida's support for foster families. Among its provisions, Senate Bill 7034 raises monthly payments for relative and nonrelative care givers, increases the monthly subsidy for child care and expands postsecondary education waivers for foster children. Through historic support, since 2019 Florida has added more than 4,000 foster families across the state.

"My administration is committed to supporting our most vulnerable children and Florida has already added 4,000 more licensed foster parents than we had in 2019," said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. "Not only does this bill allow us to expand our support for foster parents, but it also creates more opportunities for foster children. Including our work on early literacy and fatherhood, Florida is a national leader in setting young children up for success."

"There is no more important institution in our society than the family," said **Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez**. "By signing this bill, we are placing our foster children on a path to excellence, in which they can achieve their God-given potential. Our administration has made it a priority to ensure that children can thrive in every aspect of their lives, and today is yet another amazing win for children in the Sunshine State."

"Improving the level of benefits for family members and foster parents could mean all the difference when these folks are considering whether they can take in a vulnerable child," said **Senate President Wilton Simpson**. "The earlier in life we can give children a safe, permanent home, the better opportunities those children will

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Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Groundbreaking Legislation to Support Involved Fatherhood in Florida

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League of Women Voters PBC to Host Tax Update on Zoom with Two County Officials on May 18

Florida: Governor DeSantis Announces Workforce and Infrastructure Awards for Apalachicola

have for the rest of their lives. Government is a horrible parent, but we can, and we will continue to make foster children a priority by identifying and supporting caring families for them. Governor DeSantis, our First Lady and Speaker Sprowls are amazing leaders in this effort, and I am grateful for their support of pro-life policy reforms within our child welfare system."

### More on The Floridant

- Sydney skin cancer patients join the EPIC-Skin study as they undergo first treatments with OncoBeta's Rhenium-SCT
- Tanasi Enterprises Network partners with FUNINDEXES-USB
- Author Bruce Goldwell Releases New MG/YA Fantasy Novel - Dragon Keepers V: WARLOCK
- Berman Auto Group Completes Acquisition of Mancari's Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram
- Luminar to Provide Quarterly Business Update on May 5, 2022

Governor DeSantis signed SB 7034 at Miami-Dade College, which is providing innovative support for children who have previously been in foster care, including coaches to help them transition to independent life.

"Today is another bright day at Miami-Dade College, in our community and in our state as we witness the signing of this bill that will provide expanded opportunities to the most vulnerable youth in our community," said **Dr. Malou Harrison, Provost, Miami Dade College**. "It is with great pride that I say that Miami-Dade College is the largest college campus-based program for students who have aged out of foster care and are seeking a college education or credential to lift themselves and their families

Florida: Governor Ron DeSantis Announces More Than \$23.1 Million in Funding to Support Panhandle Communities

Florida: Governor DeSantis Awards the Governor's Medal of Freedom to Benjamin Ferencz, the Last Surviving Nuremberg Prosecutor

Jacksonville: MEDIA RELEASE Council Member Danny Becton Files Resolution 2022-276, Urging Mayor Lenny Curry to use a Rolled-Back Millage Rate for FY2022-2023 Budget

Florida: Governor Ron DeSantis Appoints Jared W. Perdue as Secretary of the Department of Transportation

towards independence. Thank you so much Governor and Legislature for providing these opportunities."

"We are forever grateful for foster parents and caregivers who open their homes to children during a vulnerable time in their life. This new legislation will make it easier for the Department to recruit foster parents to ensure every child has a welcome home that fits their needs," said **Department of Children and Families Secretary Shevaun Harris**. "We have made it a goal to equip former foster youth with the right tools to become economically self-sufficient, and the expansion of the tuition and fee waiver through this bill will be a tremendous support."

"I am so thankful for what the Governor and everyone else are doing for our children," said **Carlene Lawson, Foster Parent**. "I am a proud parent to be in this system and I am so grateful for what I do to give back and help the system. Thank you for what you are doing for the children and I am so grateful for this law to be passed for them."

"I aged out of foster care in Miami-Dade County and I took a tuition waiver. It was my first experience in college and I always say it was the foundation to my success" said **Demarco Mott, Former Foster Youth**. "I am now serving on the board of directors of Educate Tomorrow. We hear the stories, we get the calls and we needed this. It is definitely exciting to know that we can do a lot more. Policy makers are listening and providing more money and now we can go ahead and do more good work. When we can invest in our children now, we get that reward in our society later."



## More on The Floridant

- All the power you need for a day's work without a petrol-powered generator
- Publix Announces Scholarship Honoring Carol Jenkins Barnett
- InventHelp Presents Transmission Free Motorcycle (NPL-377)
- Guadalupe Center earns Platinum Seal from GuideStar
- Wash Ninja® Added as an Exhibitor at the 2022 Drive Electric Earth Day Event

"Across our state, we have so many dedicated relatives who are willing to step up to the plate and take on the responsibility of raising a child. Whether it is the level of monthly support needed to feed, clothe and shelter a child, or access to the college tuition waiver, these heroic family members should have the same level of benefit as a foster family," said **Senator Ileana Garcia**. "Likewise, the costs of out-of-home daycare, which we require for children in the dependency system, have been identified as a major barrier for families interested in fostering children. This bill closes the gap between what the Early Learning Coalition voucher pays and the actual cost of care. I am so grateful to our Governor and First Lady for their work to support the courageous families who provide safe homes when a vulnerable child is in need."

The bill amends section 39.5085, Florida Statutes, by providing an increase in monthly payment for relative and nonrelative caregivers to be equal to the room and board rate for a licensed foster home. This change is important because often, placing children with relatives or family friends is the best outcome to ensure their future success.

Previously, relative and nonrelative caregivers received \$250-\$320 less per month than licensed foster homes.

Additionally, the bill creates a \$200 per month child-care subsidy for any foster parent and relative or nonrelative who has a child between the age of birth to school entry placed in their home. This program will ensure every foster child has access to early learning programs and will help foster parents afford to enroll these children in child care.

The bill also amends section 1009.25, Florida Statutes, to reorganize and expand the population of students eligible for the tuition and fee waiver for children who have interacted with the dependency system. The program provides for exemptions from the payment of tuition and fees at workforce education programs, Florida College System institutions or state universities. Previously, exemptions were limited to children who were in foster care as they turned 18. Now, tuition and fee waivers will be available for children who were adopted out of the foster care system or spent a significant time in foster care in their teenage years.

Today's announcement follows the signing of HB 7065, which provided groundbreaking support for involved fatherhood in Florida. Read more about HB 7065 [here](#).

For the transmittal letter, [click here](#).

Filed Under: Government, State

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April 8, 2022

## M-DCPS Superintendent Visits Homestead

By **Charlie Hudson**

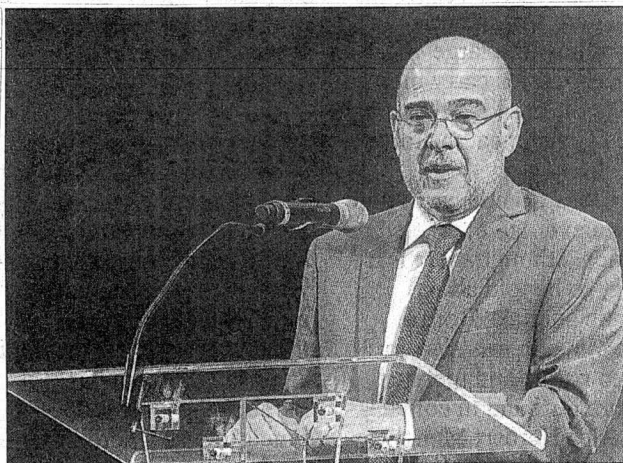
Thursday, March 31, 2022, was definitely a busy day for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Superintendent Dr. Jose L. Dotres who managed five back-to-back "Meet and Greet" sessions that began in Pinecrest.

District 9 School Board Member Luisa Santos planned the tour with the respective municipalities with the Homestead/Florida City stop at the Seminole Theatre.

Civic, business, and community leaders joined educators to have what was for many the first opportunity to hear from the man selected to head the fourth largest public school system in the country.

The South Dade Chamber of Commerce helped sponsor the event as the Homestead Senior High School Band played rousing music on stage and cheerleaders in the aisle greeted attendees moving from the lobby into the theatre.

"This indicates a new focus on Homestead as the place to be with what is happening here and in Deep South Dade."



Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Jose Dotres spent time in Homestead March 31, 2022 during a five-stop tour of District 9 communities. Hugh Hudson

Homestead Mayor Steven Losner said as part of his brief welcoming remarks.

"Three things make a city great; great schools, affordable housing, and public safety," Vice Mayor Julio Guzman included after thanking Santos for arranging the tour.

"As an educator

myself, I know the next few years are going to be critical," Councilmember Jenifer Bailey commented, and highlighted special issues like infrastructure gaps, digital divides, and parents who often struggle for advocacy for their children. She acknowl-

edged community organizations such as MUJER and En Familia, who work extensively with families.

Councilmember Erica Avila mentioned the Kiwanis International Student Service Leadership Programs (SLPs) which have programs from elementary school through high school and into college.

In a later discussion, Councilmember Larry Roth spoke to community non-profit efforts providing food to students to supplement shortages at home. This is a concern he will pass on to the District Office.

"I know how far we've come with our highest graduation rate ever of greater than ninety percent and the most school choice programs," were among District 9 School Board Member Santos remarks as she cited progress still needed with challenges like housing insecurity. She emphasized the importance of the involvement of cities, businesses, and non-profits in support of schools.

"With your partnership, growth is what is  
See **SCHOOLS 2A**

## SCHOOLS from 1A

going to happen with all of you at the table.” Her formal introduction of Dr. Dotres included pride in being one of the individuals who brought him back to Miami-Dade.

As the M-DCPS website shows in part, “At the age of five, he arrived in Miami, Florida – an immigrant boy from humble beginnings who enrolled in M-DCPS as an English Language Learner, graduated from high school, and began a long and rewarding career serving students, parents, employees, and the larger school community within the system that welcomed him as a child. Having held multiple instructional and administrative leadership roles over the course of his career in M-DCPS and other educational organizations, Dr. Dotres is a proven educator with a wealth of experience. He has served in the capacity of Teacher, Reading Coach, Principal, District Administrator, Regional Administrative Director, Region Superintendent, Assistant

Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer of Broward County Public Schools, Chief of Staff, Chief Human Capital Officer, and most recently, Deputy Superintendent of Collier County Public Schools.”

Early in his comments, the Superintendent said he was recently reminded of the phrase, “We have two ears and one mouth,” and he is listening to communities to gain a better understanding of the areas he’s not familiar with. He recounted how what was then Miami Dade Community College turned his life around with respect to academics. Even so, his initial career started at American Express, although he always knew he wanted to teach. His point was that our teachers come from different sources. In asking various groups in the audience to stand, he said, “Principals are the ones who truly create the optimal environment for students to learn.”

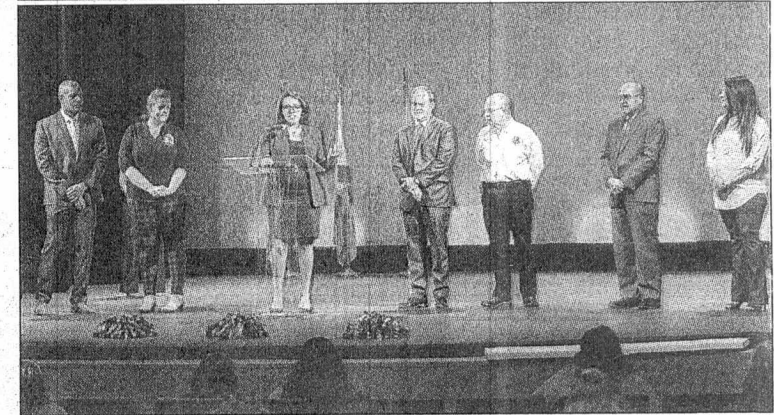
A primary theme was M-DCPS has, “ventured into a

new landscape”, and there must be balance between academics and social and emotional support. Effects of COVID have been felt by everyone and resources are being added to bridge the gap of “unfinished learning”.

One measure taken was the recent Spring Academy where many teachers voluntarily gave up their Spring Break to hold extra classes for designated students. Early literacy intervention is especially important because Kindergarten as well as first and second graders didn’t receive the traditional level of instruction due to COVID disruptions.

On a note about older students, post-secondary education must include paths to good-paying jobs in technical and trades fields. These options enable graduates to go immediately to work with sustainable salaries and college can come later if they so choose.

Projecting the excellence of our schools is another goal. “We want our schools to be the



employer of choice.”

With 41,000-plus employees, there are multiple roles for other than teachers. Understanding and attending to migrant children needs is something else he addressed as was special learning. In his experience, excellence in every student sometimes requires new approaches to bring out their potential.

After a standing ovation, he had time for a few questions and said his staff was taking notes to provide responses later. When asked about arts in school,

his immediate reply was arts are critically important to balance with academics. MDCPS is committed to keeping arts programs alive and expanding them.

District 9 School Board Member Luisa Santos can be reached at <https://luisasantos.com/about-district-9/>; Tel: (305) 995-1334; Email: [district9@dadeschools.net](mailto:district9@dadeschools.net)

Photos - Top: Homestead Senior High School Band showed their talent at the Meet and Greet for M-DCPS Superintendent.

Bottom from left: Homestead Vice Mayor Julio Guzman, Councilmember Jenifer Bailey, District 9 School Board Member Luisa Santos, Mayor Steven Losner, Councilmember Larry Roth, M-DCPS Superintendent Dr. Jose Dotres, Councilmember Erica Avila.



# Florida Trend

FLORIDA'S BUSINESS AUTHORITY

April 19, 2022

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## Monday's Daily Pulse

What you need to know about Florida today

| 4/18/2022

### Florida jobless rate dips to 3.2 percent

Florida's unemployment rate dipped to 3.2 percent in March, as workers shift away from gigs at hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues for higher-paying jobs in manufacturing, warehousing and logistics. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity released a report Friday that said the March jobless rate was down from 3.3 percent in February. Continued decreases in the rate come despite employers reportedly struggling to retain workers. [Source: News Service of Florida]

### Florida adds 15,678 COVID cases in past week as infections rise

Florida's COVID-19 infections and positivity rate are on the rise again across the state, and the highly contagious omicron BA.2 variant may be to blame. The variant now accounts for 80 percent of cases in the southeast, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Experts don't expect another omicron wave, but the immunocompromised and unvaccinated are still vulnerable to severe illness and death. [Source: Tampa Bay Times]

### Here's what Florida's lawmakers didn't do: notable failed bills

In the House and Senate, lawmakers proposed 3,685 pieces of legislation, but only about 285 passed in both chambers, slightly higher than the number since at least 2016, according to



legislative records. Lawmakers passed a \$112 billion state budget, as the session ended after vote on controversial legislation aimed at cultural issues unsettled between conservatives and progressives. [Source: South Florida Sun-Sentinel]

## **Sarasota researcher predicts 22 named storms, 5 major hurricanes in 2022**

Warm water acts as “rocket fuel” for hurricanes and water off the Florida coast is as much as four degrees warmer than average this April. Off Florida’s east coast, water temperatures are already warm enough to sustain tropical systems — a month and a half before the season’s official June 1 start date. [Source: Tampa Bay Times]

## **NASA to roll Artemis I moon rocket back from launch pad as it delays test**

NASA tried three times to get through its launch pad dress rehearsal for the Artemis I moon rocket at Kennedy Space Center, but it’s not hanging around for the fourth. Instead, mission managers announced that they were rolling the massive Space Launch System rocket topped with the Orion capsule on its mobile launcher back to the Vehicle Assembly Building. [Source: Orlando Sentinel]

### **ALSO AROUND FLORIDA:**

#### › **Florida Keys celebrate 40th anniversary of Conch Republic** [Tampa Bay Times]

The 40th anniversary celebration of the Florida Keys’ symbolic secession from the United States, motivated by a 1982 U.S. Border Patrol checkpoint established on the only road connecting the Keys with mainland Florida, has begun in Key West. The 10-day Conch Republic Independence Celebration kicked off Friday with a waterfront ceremony at the island city’s Mallory Square.

#### › **Orlando-area small businesses brace for rent surge** [Click Orlando]

As inflation numbers hit a 40-year high across the nation, rental rates for industrial and warehouse spaces were climbing faster in the Orlando metro area than other parts of the country. Tom Whisner, who owns Apogee Productions in Longwood, said the pandemic crippled his concert and event business. “We had ramped up to where our big thing was doing touring and arena shows. That is what they just totally cut,” he said.

#### › **Florida targets school math textbooks over critical race theory objections** [Miami Herald]

The Florida Department of Education on Friday said the state will not include dozens of math textbooks in a list used by school districts to buy books for classrooms because their content included references to critical race theory and other “prohibited topics” and “unsolicited strategies.” The announcement was made in a press release titled “Florida Rejects Publishers’ Attempts to Indoctrinate Students.” It did not include the names of any of the books or provide specific examples

of the content that prompted their objections.

## › Miami business, community leaders plan celebration of life for Beacon Council's Finney

[Miami Herald]

The life and career of Michael A. Finney, who served five years as CEO of Miami-Dade County's Beacon Council, will be celebrated in an invitation-only three-hour event later this month at Miami Dade College's Wolfson Campus. Finney, 65, died at Mercy Hospital after having a heart attack at his Coconut Grove home on April 3.

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Tags: Daily Pulse

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Home Bistro Inc. (HBIS) Is 'One to Watch' -

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### Home Bistro Inc. (HBIS) Is 'One to Watch'

- Home Bistro's strategic acquisition of California-based Model Meals meal delivery brand created bicoastal operations
- The company over the past 12 months has added five celebrity chefs to the Home Bistro platform
- Home Bistro recently relocated its East Coast operations to a state-of-the-art South Florida food production and fulfillment facility, creating a highly cost-effective infrastructure
- The company was selected best "a la carte" meal delivery service by Insider.com
- Home Bistro recently launched a wine offering with In Good Taste Wines, a unique direct-to-consumer wine platform

Home Bistro (OTC: HBIS) is a Miami-based company engaged in the business of providing prepackaged and prepared meals to consumers. The company has created the next generation of prepared meal delivery – Ready-Made Gourmet Meal Delivery 3.0.

Home Bistro addresses the three major problems facing the prepared food delivery market: poor food quality; customers tired of eating the same meals; and, eating at home is still eating at home, with the accompanying food preparation and clean up chores. The company addresses these problems by delivering high quality food fresh and fast, providing customers a variety of meal choices from a diverse lineup of celebrity chefs, and requiring simple prep and easy clean up without sacrificing the fine dining experience.

Home Bistro offers a family of high quality, direct-to-consumer, ready-made, gourmet meals. Using the latest fresh food "skin-packing" technology, Home Bistro offers a virtual "Bistro Emporium" where consumers can cross select from a wide variety of siloed "bistros," each with a dedicated section and unique visitor experience created by a renowned celebrity/executive chef. Meals delivered fresh can be eaten within 10 to 14 days or frozen for up to six months.

The company's mission is to lead the next generation of heat-to-eat food delivery with unique and delicious cuisine and an experience that excites the market. Home Bistro's advantage in the highly competitive meal delivery space is meal diversity – with the best celebrity chefs from around the world, offering a home-based fine dining experience through a selection of over 50 unique gourmet meals, as well as offering a developing selection of desserts and single-serving wine to perfectly complement the meal experience. In addition, the company uses only the highest quality ingredients in its meals and preserves their freshness by employing state-of-the-art vacuum skin packing.

In mid-2021, Home Bistro acquired southern-California based Model Meals, a lifestyle ready-to-eat meal prep service, which is Whole30 and Paleo approved, while then only serving three states. In September 2021, Home Bistro commenced shipping Model Meals to all 50 states and recently announced that it will launch a subscription-based service for Model Meals consisting of three meals per day (breakfast, lunch and dinner) for up to five days per week. The subscription service, expected to launch by May 2022, will initially target the Southern California market, where Model Meals maintains a food production and fulfillment facility and enjoys a strong customer base.

#### Brands and Products

Home Bistro's leading online platform ([www.HomeBistro.com](http://www.HomeBistro.com)) provides direct-to-consumer, heat-to-eat, celebrity chef-inspired gourmet meals. Offerings currently include inspirations developed by "Iron Chef" Cat Cora, two-time New York Times best-selling cookbook author and TV host Ayesha Curry, sports-tailgating focused creator of "Hungry Fan" Chef Diana Falk, "Master Chef" Claudia Sandoval, and "Top-Chef All-Star" Richard Blais. Soon-to-launch celebrity chefs on the Home Bistro platform include "Caterer to the Stars" Roblé Ali, "zero-waste cooking" celebrity chef Priyanka Naik, and CHOPPED champion Melanie Moss.

Home Bistro's Model Meals lifestyle brand ([www.ModelMeals.com](http://www.ModelMeals.com)) is a Whole30 and Paleo approved, ready-to-eat meal prep service, offering a weekly rotating menu that is prepared by professional chefs, using only the highest quality ingredients available, sourced responsibly and locally, and delivered in sustainable, eco-friendly packaging.

Home Bistro has partnered with celebrity chef Melanie Moss to expand its dessert menu options. In keeping with its mission to deliver a complete gourmet culinary experience to discerning customers, Home Bistro beta-tested its first dessert – a delicious, sweet and salty caramel brownie. Based on the encouraging results, the company is moving forward to create a much more robust dessert menu.

Home Bistro has formally launched its wine offering initiative with In Good Taste Wines, a

unique direct-to-consumer wine platform that empowers wine lovers to "discover the world, by the glass." The company has worked diligently with the In Good Taste Wines team to develop a unique selection of elegant single-serving wines to pair with Home Bistro's celebrity chef-inspired meals. The partnership with In Good Taste Wines provides Home Bistro with a low-cost, incremental source of revenue, which will assist the company in expanding its gross profit margin and lead it to faster profitability.

Market Outlook

Global revenue in the online food delivery sector was \$136 billion in 2020 and forecast to grow steadily at a 7.5% CAGR through 2024 to a projected value of \$182 billion. In the U.S., the food delivery sector, which comprises both the restaurant-to-consumer segment and the platform-to-consumer segment where Home Bistro operates, is expected to surpass \$32.3 billion in 2024. The company's addressable market, the platform-to-consumer segment, is approximately 30% of the U.S. market and is projected to reach a value of \$9.7 billion by 2024. This segment is expected to grow even faster than the sector as a whole as providers refine their focus on healthier meals, more convenient delivery and subscription options and more advanced meal processing technology.

Management Team

Zalmi Duchman is Chairman and CEO at Home Bistro. He was CEO and founder of The Fresh Diet online meal delivery service, which grew from a startup to over \$30 million in annual revenue. He is a thought leader, investor and publisher of numerous articles in the food tech sector. He was named one of Forbes "America's Most Promising CEOs Under 35," and was named a Miami Herald "20 Under 40" entrepreneur in 2014.

Carlo Ricci is Director of Operations at Home Bistro. He was VP Operations for The Fresh Diet online meal delivery service, where he developed the culinary and R&D departments and established distribution centers in five states. He was also Operations Manager at Homemade Meals, where he developed and implemented inventory systems, established production facilities on both coasts and trained and managed personnel. He has a bachelor's degree in data analytics from Miami Dade College.

Camille May is CFO at Home Bistro. She is a co-founder of Model Meals meal delivery service, where she has served as CFO since the company's inception in 2015. She helped build the company from the ground up to more than \$2 million in annual revenue. Prior to Model Meals, she worked as a financial analyst and broker in commercial real estate. She has a BBA in finance from the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado.

Danika Brysha is Chief Marketing Officer at Home Bistro. She co-founded Model Meals and was also a co-founder of the Self-Care Society. She is a former fashion model and founder of Danika Brysha Inc., a service specializing in modeling, coaching, speaking, events, media and influence. She is creator of the Brunch Series and a Whole30 certified coach. She is also host of the top-rated podcast "Light + Life Live" and is a lifestyle design expert. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado.

For more information, visit the company's website at [www.HomeBistro.com](http://www.HomeBistro.com).

NOTE TO INVESTORS: The latest news and updates relating to HBIS are available in the company's newsroom at <https://nnw.fm/HBIS>

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## Bulletin board for week of April 14, 2022

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By Insider Staff - Apr 13, 2022 | 0 comments

### Easter celebration

All are invited to attend a joyous Easter Worship Service at East Congregational Church UCC on April 17 at 10 a.m. The church is located at 51 Mountain Road, Concord. An Easter Egg hunt will follow the service. All children are invited! Go to [eastchurchucc.org](http://eastchurchucc.org) for more information, or call 224-9242.

### Author discussion

Gibson's Bookstore is pleased to virtually welcome *New York Times* bestselling author Anne Hillerman during a virtual presentation on April 19 at 7 p.m. Hillerman is back with her seventh installment in the Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito series, *The Sacred Bridge*. When Jim Chee makes a shocking discovery on ancient land, his vacation turns into an investigation of a new mystery, while Bernie Manuelito finds herself in the most dangerous situation she's been in thus far. Registration is required at [eventbrite.com/e/269787330167](https://eventbrite.com/e/269787330167).

### Virtual book talk

Gibson's Bookstore is pleased to join Books & Books, the Miami Book Fair, and indie bookstore partners across America to present Mary Laura Philpott (*I Miss You When I Blink*), in conversation with Kimberly Williams-Paisley, discussing Philpott's new book, *Bomb Shelter: Love, Time, and Other Explosives!* The virtual event will be held April 20 at 8 p.m. This is a ticketed virtual event, with a copy of *Bomb Shelter* included with each ticket (or a ticket included with each preorder of *Bomb Shelter* from Gibson's Bookstore).

Your ticket includes admission to this virtual event and a hardcover copy of *Bomb Shelter* (\$27 retail price), as well as sales tax, shipping, and handling (if applicable).

Registration is required at [eventbrite.com/e/305771650237](https://eventbrite.com/e/305771650237).

### Book presentation

Keith O'Brien (*Fly Girls*) returns to Gibson's Bookstore to virtually present his new work of meticulously researched history in *Paradise Falls: The True Story of an Environmental Catastrophe* on April 18 at 7 p.m.

The staggering story of an unlikely band of mothers in the 1970s who discovered Hooker Chemical's deadly secret of Love Canal — exposing one of America's most devastating toxic waste disasters and sparking the modern environmental movement as we know it today.

Lois Gibbs, Luella Kenny, and other mothers loved their neighborhood on the east side of Niagara Falls. It had an elementary school, a playground, and rows of affordable homes. But in the spring of 1977, pungent odors began to seep into these little houses, and it didn't take long for worried mothers to identify the curious scent. It was the sickly sweet smell of chemicals.

In this propulsive work of narrative storytelling, NYT journalist Keith O'Brien uncovers how Gibbs and Kenny exposed the poisonous secrets buried in their neighborhood. The school and playground had been built atop an old canal — Love Canal, it was called — that Hooker Chemical, the city's largest employer, had quietly filled with twenty thousand tons of toxic waste in the 1940s and 1950s. This waste was now leaching to the surface, causing a public health crisis the likes of which America had never seen before and sparking new and specific fears. Luella Kenny believed the chemicals were making her son sick.

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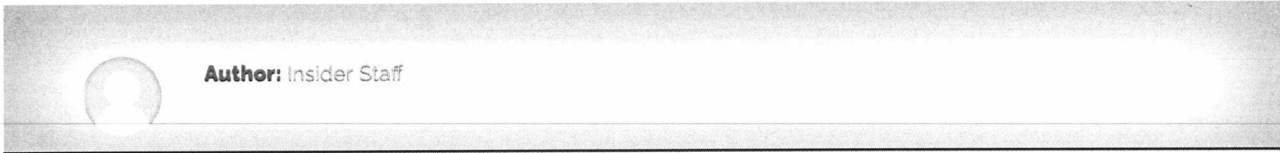
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O'Brien braids together previously unknown stories of Hooker Chemical's deeds: the local newspaperman, scientist, and congressional staffer who tried to help; the city and state officials who didn't; and the heroic women who stood up to corporate and governmental indifference to save their families and their children. They would take their fight all the way to the top, winning support from the EPA, the White House, and even President Jimmy Carter. By the time it was over, they would capture America's imagination.

Sweeping and electrifying, *Paradise Falls* brings to life a defining story from our past, laying bare the dauntless efforts of a few women who — years before Erin Brockovich took up the mantle — fought to rescue their community and their lives from the effects of corporate pollution and laid the foundation for the modern environmental movement as we know it today.

Register for the virtual event at [eventbrite.com/e/ 310644244297](https://eventbrite.com/e/310644244297).

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**Author:** Insider Staff

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# Doral Academy softball pitcher shows talent on and off field

BY DONOVAN CAMPBELL

APRIL 18, 2022

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*Alyssa Zabala*

DORAL, FLA. (WSVN) - Alyssa Zabala, a softball pitcher at Doral Academy Charter High School, is the definition of an ace with her arsenal of pitches at her disposal.

"I throw a fastball, a change up, a curveball, a screwball and a riseball," said Zabala.



“I set, like, a high expectation for myself, so then the following years having to keep up that expectation and do better every year, I think it’s helped me in the long run because I am always looking to surpass what I did the year before,” said Zabala.

William Viruet, the head coach at Doral Academy, recognizes the incredible talent that Zabala has.

“I’ve been here for 12 years, and there’s no doubt that Alyssa is on top, and it’s not just because, you know, she throws hard. There’s more to it. It’s the total package with her,” said Viruet.

Zabala and her Firebirds teammates are seeking back-to-back state titles.

“We can have bases loaded, two outs, game on the line, I know for a fact that she’s going to strike the next batter out,” said Anabela Abdullah, a teammate.

The Louisville Cardinal-commit has honed her skills under the watchful eye of Doral Academy pitching coach Kristina Picon. Picon is also Zabala’s mother.

“She’s very dominant, and it seems like the tougher the competition, the better she is,” said Picon. “She’s one of those pitchers that steps up to the game.”

Zabala gets her softball skills from both her mom and dad. Her parents shined on the baseball diamond growing up.

Her father was a star catcher at Belen Jesuit Preparatory School and at Miami-Dade College, while her mother was a pitcher at Florida Atlantic University.

“I definitely had no other choice. I mean, I have videos from when I was 4, 5, and I was there with my mom and my dad yelling in the background of the videos,” said Zabala.

Years later, her parents are still there with Zabala’s mom literally involved with every pitch.

“Being that I am her coach as well, I’m calling the pitches, so a lot of times it could come back on me to what’s going on, but she seems to step up whenever there’s a pressure situation,” said Picon.

Another thing in Zabala’s bloodline is working in television.



Zabala is following her father's footsteps as he happens to be a photo journalist.

"My dad is, obviously, in the field, so from a young age I've always seen him in the field. I just love being on camera. I love talking. That's something I inherited from my dad, because he's the same way. My dad loves attention the same way I do," said Zabala.

A big reason why Zabala chose to pursue higher education in Louisville is because of the university's great journalism program.

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# New World School of the Arts - Spring Dances

by New World School of the Arts in Miami

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Event Type: Entertainment Event

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**4/21/2022 - 4/23/2022**

Admission : \$15 - General Admission  
\$5 - Student and Senior

**Description:**

A program presented by NWSA's dynamic college dancers, showcasing choreography by professional choreographers including renowned guest artists Darshan Singh Bhuller, Francesca Harper, and Geeta Dias and by faculty choreographers Peter London and Jeffrey Lloyd Smith. Ranging from contemporary to Bollywood in style, this is a program of dance that is compelling, skillful, and appropriate for all ages.

Program date and timings:

April 21st-April 23rd: 7:00 pm  
April 24th: 2:00 pm

**About Artist:**

Featuring works by local choreographer, Geeta Dias (Shaadi Medley) and visiting guest artist, Darshan Singh Bhuller (new work, Junun, set to music of the same title by Jonny Greenwood, Shye Ben-Tzur & The Rajasthan Express - Chala Vahi Des (Let's Go to that Land); Hu; Junun (Madness of Love), along with choreographers Francesca Harper, Peter London, and Jeffrey Lloyd Smith.

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When & Where

Start Date : 4/21/2022  
End Date : 4/23/2022  
Start Time : 7:00:00 PM  
End Time : 9:00:00 PM  
Venue : New World Dance Theatre  
Address : 25 NE 2nd Street  
Miami , FL 33132  
[\(Get Directions\)](#)

About Organizer

Host : **New World School of the Arts**  
Contact : Dance Division  
Email : [mlburns@mdc.edu](mailto:mlburns@mdc.edu)  
Phone : (305) 237-3582  
URL : <https://nwsa.mdc.edu>

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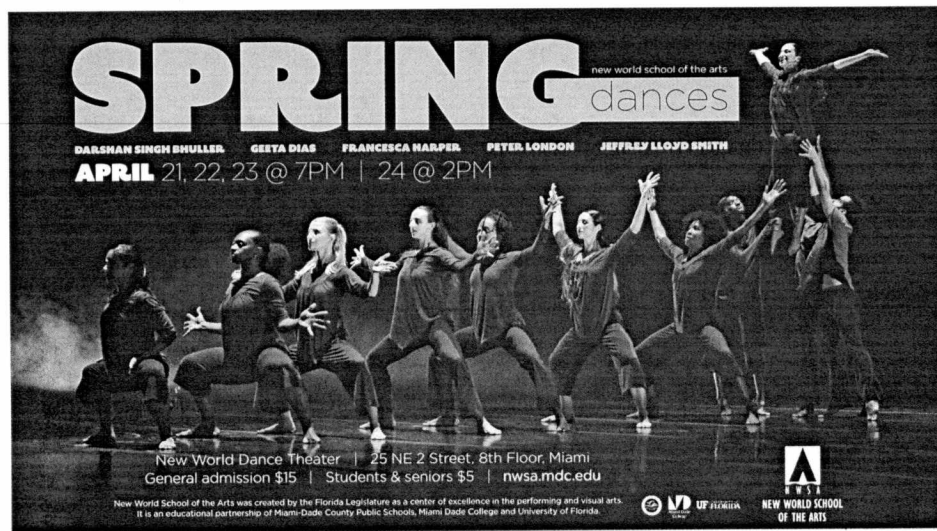
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Event Information: New World School of the Arts - Spring Dances by New World School of the Arts

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## Obituaries

### James Cuba September 11, 1956 - April 6, 2022

**Gainesville, Florida** - James (Jimmy) Cuba died on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 in Gainesville Florida. He was born in Miami on September 11, 1956, the son of the late James and Geraldine Cuba. Jimmy graduated from Miami Springs High School and attended Miami Dade and Tallahassee Community colleges. In Tallahassee, Jimmy learned the art of stained glass and later returned to Miami to open his own successful gallery, Stained Glass Unlimited.

Jimmy was predeceased by his parents and his sister, Pamela Cuba Tolleson. He is survived by his sister, Karen Cuba Pietrodangelo (Danny) of Tallahassee. Jim was a devoted son, brother and friend whose kindness and gentleness will be greatly missed. Sweet dreams, my dear brother.

No services are planned. Donations can be made in Jimmy's memory to the Humane Society of Greater Miami, 16101 West Dixie Highway, North Miami Beach, FL 33160.



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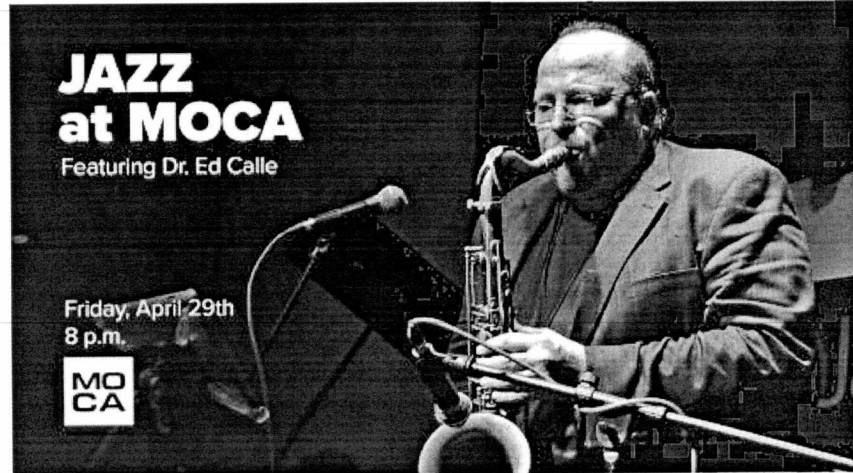
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Title: **Jazz at Mocha: Dr. Ed Calle**

Date: 4/29/2022 (Friday)

Address: Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, 770 Northeast 125th Street

Location: Miami, FL

Hours: 8:00pm

Cost/Cover: Free

Web Page: <https://mocanomi.org/>

Contact Info: 305-893-6211

Details: MOCA's free outdoor concert series featuring saxophonist and composer Dr. Ed Calle

"Jazz at MOCA" is MOCA's free outdoor concert series in-person on the last Friday of every month. On April 29, MOCA is pleased to present saxophonist, composer, orchestrator, producer, scholar, professor, and leader Dr. Ed Calle. Dr. Calle is known for his extraordinary ability to sight-read, interpret, and perform virtually any musical style. Throughout the globe, his peers and colleagues often laud his versatility. Dr. Calle is a Latin Grammy® Award winner for Best Instrumental Album (2015) with Dr. Ed Calle Presents Mamblue and a five-time Grammy® nominee. The first studio record by the World Music 5, America, features chamber jazz orchestrations of original and classic music from the Americas with an all-star quintet that includes Negroni's Trio and violinist Federico Britos. Dr. Calle was awarded the 2015 Miami-Dade County Mayor's Medal, named [www.facultyawards.org](http://www.facultyawards.org) 2014 Outstanding Professor at Miami Dade College (college wide), and 2014 United Teachers of Dade Champion of Education for Arts and Entertainment.

Register here: <http://111401.blackbaudhosting.com/111401/Jazz-at-Moca-Featuring-Dr-Ed-Calle-Jazz-Ensemble>

Event is: One Day Only  
Audience: All Welcome  
Category: Music  
Submitted by: contributed

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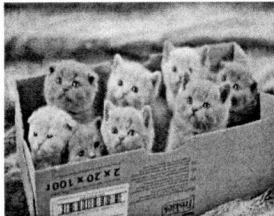
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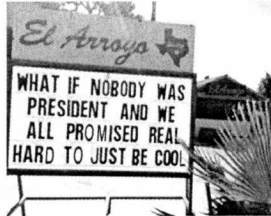
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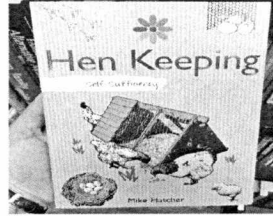
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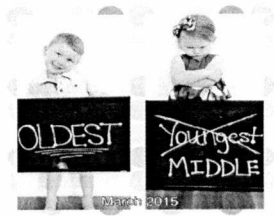
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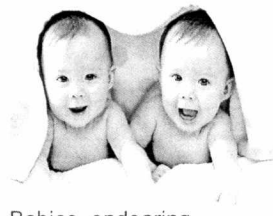
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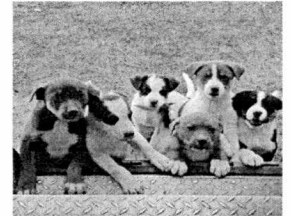
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Did you know how much pets really love UPS drivers? Turns out it's the highlight of their day!

# La corrección política atenta contra la incómoda Jezabel

**VENEZUELA** La adaptación cinematográfica de la cuarta novela de Eduardo Sánchez Rugeles estuvo a cargo de Hernán Jabes. El thriller psicológico protagonizado por Gabriel Agüero, Eliane Chipia, Johanna Juliethe y Shakti Maal, narra el asesinato de Eliana Bloom a través de los recuerdos de uno de sus mejores amigos. El largometraje se presentó en el Miami Film Festival y en el Festival de Málaga; sin embargo, no tiene recorrido definido y no se sabe si llegará a los cines venezolanos

Por Ariany Brizuela, abril 18, 2022

**DEPORTES**

**CIENCIA Y TECNOLOGÍA**



La primera vez que Hernán Jabes leyó *Jezabel*, la cuarta novela de Eduardo Sánchez Rugeles, fue en 2015. Lo hizo en una sola sentada. Y quedó impactado. La historia le gustó tanto que de inmediato pensó en hacer una adaptación cinematográfica. Se dio a la tarea de buscar al autor para proponerle la aventura, quien, sin dudar, aceptó. Así comenzó el recorrido del largometraje que explora los conflictos morales de cuatro jóvenes caraqueños.

*Jezabel* —que forma parte de la colección de novela negra Vértigo, del sello EdicionesB— narra un crimen atroz, el asesinato de la joven Eliana Bloom, cuyo cadáver fue hallado en su apartamento en Caracas con indicios de maltrato físico y violencia sexual. La novela reconstruye los hechos a través de los recuerdos de Alain, uno de los mejores amigos de la víctima. En el proceso, debió enfrentarse a los engaños de su propia memoria para esconder una dolorosa realidad.

«Una de las cosas que me llamó la atención del libro no fue solo su irreverencia y lenguaje descarado, sino la analogía que hace a la sociedad, que no es sólo la venezolana. Entonces, creo que la película se logró en el sentido de que tiene una historia universal», dice el director Hernán Jabes desde México, donde reside desde 2016.

Para la adaptación de *Jezabel*, Jabes y Sánchez Rugeles comenzaron a trabajar de inmediato en el guion de la película. Debido a la distancia, el autor residía en Madrid mientras y el director aún estaba en Caracas, trabajaban a través de Skype. Se reunían dos veces por semana en sesiones de tres horas, en las que las fallas de audio o imagen siempre estuvieron presentes. Sin embargo, recuerdan esa etapa como una experiencia constructiva, sana, amable y divertida.

«La estructura del guion fue muy fluida, muy cómoda, creo que fue una colaboración muy correcta. Quedamos muy conformes con el trabajo», asegura Sánchez Rugeles.



Aunque no se conocían, conectaron de inmediato, cuenta Jabes. En el proceso de escritura no tuvieron mayores diferencias. Compartían la misma visión de la historia. «Para mí era importante mantener la esencia y a los personajes», afirma el cineasta, quien agrega que Sánchez Rugeles le dio todas las licencias para realizar la adaptación.

*Jezabel* es la segunda adaptación cinematográfica de una obra de Eduardo Sánchez Rugeles. La primera fue *Dirección opuesta*, de Alejandro Bellame. Por esto, los cambios en la película no le generaban preocupación, todo lo contrario. «A diferencia de la literatura, el cine es absolutamente colaborativo y eso le viene muy bien a la historia. Si algo necesita el cine es que confíes en el otro. Sé que el guion es simplemente una pieza; no soy purista con el guion, sé que es algo que está para ser modificado. La belleza de esa confianza la tomo como algo positivo y para nada me incomoda. Incluso, cuando los actores improvisan sobre mi texto me encanta», asegura.

El primer acercamiento de Sánchez Rugeles a la escritura de guiones para cine fue con *Dirección opuesta*. De esa experiencia obtuvo un gran aprendizaje que le fue útil para la adaptación de *Jezabel*. «Fue un curso, una maestría en escritura de guiones. Yo nunca antes había escrito un guion. Tenía alguna idea de cómo era el formato, pero desconocía en gran medida lo que era la estructura del guion de un proyecto audiovisual. Entonces, trabajando con Alejandro Bellame para *Dirección opuesta* aprendí muchas cosas, comencé a entender y a percibir esa diferencia entre la acción audiovisual y el relato narrativo, que a veces no funciona para cine. Sin duda, a *Jezabel* llegué con más madurez y aprendizaje para escribir guiones», recuerda el autor.

A Sánchez Rugeles le resultó extraño visitar obras que había escrito hace un tiempo. «Me genera una sensación de resquemor, de si me encuentro o no, me reconozco o no. En el caso de *Dirección*

*opuesta* y *Jezabel* fue esencial que ya hubiese olvidado esos textos. Me pasó, no tanto con *Jezabel* pero sí con *Dirección opuesta*, al ser mi primera novela, que cuando la leí encontré cosas que no me gustaban. Con *Jezabel* siento que, a nivel de estructura, forma y lenguaje, es una novela más madura, por lo que no hubo tanto choque, sino que las cosas que se excluyeron o modificaron fueron para que se adaptaran con comodidad al relato audiovisual», cuenta.

Terminar el guion de *Jezabel* les tomó año y medio, aproximadamente. El rodaje comenzó en 2018, se hizo entre Caracas y Ciudad de México. El largometraje se narra en dos tiempos, pasado y presente, por lo que se filmó en dos partes. Primero la etapa de los recuerdos, la adolescente; después la etapa adulta de los personajes. «Paramos por unos cinco meses por varias razones: para que el actor tuviera un cambio físico y psicológico y, al ser una película independiente, nos habíamos quedado sin dinero y necesitábamos buscar los recursos para continuar», cuenta Jabes.

El casting está conformado por Gabriel Agüero como Alain Barral, Eliane Chipia es Eliana Bloom, Johanna Juliethe interpreta a Loló, Shakti Maal da vida a Cacá y Erich Wildpred es Salvador. También actúa César Augusto Cova como Flema, Armando Cabrera como el padre de Loló, una pequeña aparición de María Conchita Alonso como la madre de Alain, Héctor Manrique como el profesor Rafael y Diana Volpe interpreta a Alfonsina Mathinson.

La selección del casting estuvo a cargo de Hernán Jabes y Adrián Geyer, productor del filme. Contactaron a actores que querían en la película. Aunque no participó en esta selección, Eduardo Sánchez Rugeles sugirió el nombre de Eliane Chipia. «Una de las cosas que más me gusta de *Jezabel* es el trabajo actoral. Estoy muy conforme con el trabajo que se hizo y el talento de los actores es una de las cosas con las que más me siento cómodo», dice.

Para Gabriel Agüero, formado en el teatro, cofundador de la agrupación Deus Ex Machina, que ha participado en películas como *Fabulación* (2017) o *El baile* (2019), fue un reto interpretar a un mismo personaje en dos líneas de tiempo, debido al cambio físico y psicológico que requería. «Para mí era muy claro que tenía que abordar el trabajo olvidando lo que había pasado en la primera etapa del rodaje. De hecho, no quise ver ningún material para tener una sensación de olvido, de recuerdos confusos, de memoria selectiva», cuenta.

Y agrega: «Esa parte se enfoca, precisamente, en cómo una persona se enfrenta a sus recuerdos, tormentos del pasado, de una etapa confusa, conflictiva, rota y llena de contradicciones».

Al igual que Agüero, para Eliane Chipia interpretar a Eliana Bloom fue un reto. La actriz se enfrentó a una situación similar a la de su personaje, no de la misma forma ni magnitud, afortunadamente. Aunque tenía la carga emocional para interpretar al personaje, estaba en un momento distinto, en el que no se identificaba como víctima sino como justiciera. Esto hizo que le fuera un poco complicado empatizar. «Al final, fue hermoso porque revivir esa mala experiencia me hizo, de alguna manera, hacer catarsis y sanar», afirma.

«Sin duda, el reto mayor, en lo personal, fue revivir un toda esa situación porque yo la había bloqueado. Fue como ‘esto ya lo viví, lo tengo claro’, pero abrir la puerta nuevamente a la herida no es sencillo. Muchas veces te van a decir que no es necesario que hagas eso porque hay un montón de técnicas que puedes abordar para no tocarte personalmente, pero si uno como intérprete no empatiza de manera genuina, se va a notar. Una maestra siempre me decía que le puedes mentir a todos, menos a la cámara», añade Chipia.

Esta no es la primera película en la que participa la actriz. Chipia ha actuado en cintas como *El Silbón* (2018) y *El desertor* (2015), su debut y por la que recibió una mención especial como Actriz Principal en la edición de 2015 del Festival de Cine Venezolano de Mérida.

Durante el rodaje una de las preocupaciones de los actores era poder recrear la complicidad entre los cuatro amigos, pues no todos se conocían. Por eso, tuvieron la oportunidad de pasar tiempo juntos antes de comenzar a trabajar para conocerse mejor. «Hernán tuvo la genial idea de que cuando llegáramos a Venezuela teníamos que estar juntos todo el tiempo. Entonces, cuando íbamos a las visitas de locaciones, que un actor no tiene que ir, estábamos juntos. No teníamos nada que hacer más que estar juntos y conocernos, eso terminó en una complicidad muy grande», recuerda Agüero.

*Jezabel* es una película que retrata a un grupo de jóvenes de familias acomodadas poco atendidos por sus padres, que carecen de principios y que viven una libertad sin límites, contenida por el contexto sociopolítico en el que viven. Aunque es complicado decir que los jóvenes de cualquier generación pueden identificarse con la historia, Eduardo Sánchez Rugeles considera que no resulta indiferente. «Tengo la sensación, sobre todo con la película, de que te puede gustar o no, pero no resulta indiferente. Las personas después de verla quedan sorprendidas y eso me parece fascinante. Ese impacto lo valoro como un mérito de la película».



El filme se ha presentado en el Miami Film Festival y en el Festival de Málaga. En ambos la receptividad fue buena, cuenta Jabes. Sin embargo, debido a la crudeza de Jezabel ha sido difícil que los distribuidores se interesen por el filme, señala el director. «Desde un poco antes de la pandemia surgió una corrección política de cómo tratar las cosas y qué decir y qué no. La verdad, cuando hicimos la película jamás pensamos en eso y a medida que iba pasando el tiempo nos encontramos con esta nueva realidad comunicativa que atenta contra el filme», explica.

«Es una película oscura, pero creo que en un mundo tan encandilado por la luz de las apariencias y de la corrección política, la oscuridad de la película que presentamos despierta una chispa mínima y en cualquier oscuridad la chispa más mínima ilumina. Esa es la intención de Jezabel», agrega Jabes.

Tanto Jabes como Sánchez Rugeles coinciden en que Jezabel, la novela y la adaptación, es una obra que, pese a su historia local, tiene un lenguaje universal. «Nunca la escribí o la pensé con esa mirada localista, que solo estuviese limitada al territorio venezolana. Siempre tengo la universalidad como premisa y son historias de amor, desamor, familia, amistad, violencia, el bien y el mal. Esos son los temas que yo trabajo en mis historias y que creo que son temas universales», afirma el autor.

Aunque *Jezabel* tendrá su estreno europeo en Festival Internacional de Cine de Barcelona donde se presentará el 23, 25 y 27 de abril con sesiones abiertas al público –siendo la única película latinoamericana en competencia oficial–, aún no tiene un recorrido definido. Sigue buscando espacios para presentarse. El filme es una coproducción independiente entre México y Venezuela. Su distribución en Europa estará a cargo de Latido Films.»Creo que es fundamental que la gente vea la película, aunque incomode o haga sentir mal por todos los temas que plantea», asegura Jabes.

Se desconoce la fecha de estreno o si llegará a los cines venezolanos. «No veo por qué no podría llegar a los cines en Venezuela. Tengo una vocecita en mi cabeza que me dice ‘A lo mejor no me la

van a aceptar', pero por otro lado me cuestiono y me digo 'Pero ¿por qué?, si al final de cuentas es una película, es ficción», indica el cineasta.

Pese a las dificultades, Hernán Jabes asegura que siempre se ha decantado por hacer cine que mueva al espectador. Desde *Macuro, Piedra papel o tijera* y, ahora, *Jezabel*. «Además de entretener, hacer reír o llorar, quiero hacer películas con las que las personas se sientan diferentes, que las hagan cuestionarse cosas. Ese es el cine que me interesa, que entretenga, pero que también mueva fibras», finaliza.

*El periodismo independiente necesita del apoyo de sus lectores para continuar y garantizar que las noticias incómodas que no quieren que leas, sigan estando a tu alcance. ¡Hoy, con tu apoyo, seguiremos trabajando arduamente por un periodismo libre de censuras!*

Apoya a El Nacional ->



## ***De la mano del cubano Andy Rodríguez Miami Dade College se corona en su conferencia.***

***Rolando Díaz 17 de Abril 2022***

Con excelente pitcheo del habanero Andy Rodríguez y aporte ofensivo del spirituario Loidel Rodríguez, los Tiburones del Miami Dade College, se proclamaron campeones en su conferencia de la División NJCAA del béisbol colegial estadounidense.

Aunque faltan algunas fechas por disputar matemáticamente los chicos de Miami ya son inalcanzables en la tabla de posiciones. Hoy lo ratificaron con victoria 2x1 a los Pioneros de Indian River. Miami Dade tiene récord de 32-13.

Andy Rodríguez estuvo haciendo su salida más larga desde que está en Estados Unidos. Pues hoy lanzó ocho entradas completas con solo 3 hits y 8 ponches. Con un total de 100 pitcheos (67 strikes). Hoy su recta estuvo oscilando entre las 90-92 millas por hora y tocó esporádicamente las 93.

En toda la campaña Andy Rodríguez tiene récord de siete victorias con solo dos derrotas. Ha trabajado un total de 66 innings con 81 ponches y ha regalado solo 14 boletos en ese lapso. Su efectividad ahora descendió hasta 2.86 y le batean para .203 sus rivales.

También representando a La Mayor de Las Antillas estaba el receptor de Santi Spiritus Loidel Rodríguez. Loidel bateó en el juego de hoy de 3-2 con un doble. Para contribuir con el madero al triunfo de su equipo.

El máscara ahora batea para .317 gracias a sus 46 indiscutibles en 145 visitas al home plate con 15 dobles, un triple y tres batazos de vuelta completa, como extrabases en el campeonato. Además, con sus 38 carreras anotadas y 38 remolques, suma un total de 73 carreras producidas. Para fijar línea ofensiva de .434 OBP, 497 SLG y 931 OPS.

Los Rodríguez estuvieron saliendo de Cuba en el 2021, el capitalino en el Preolímpico de Las Américas disputado en la Florida y el de la tierra del Yayabo en el Mundial Sub-23 de México.

Ambos jugadores, aunque son jóvenes tienen su nivel muy por encima de la media de esta categoría. Pero al mismo tiempo es necesario para ellos para poder adaptarse lo más rápido posible al béisbol organizado y dar el salto al profesionalismo sin carencias en el A, B, C del juego.

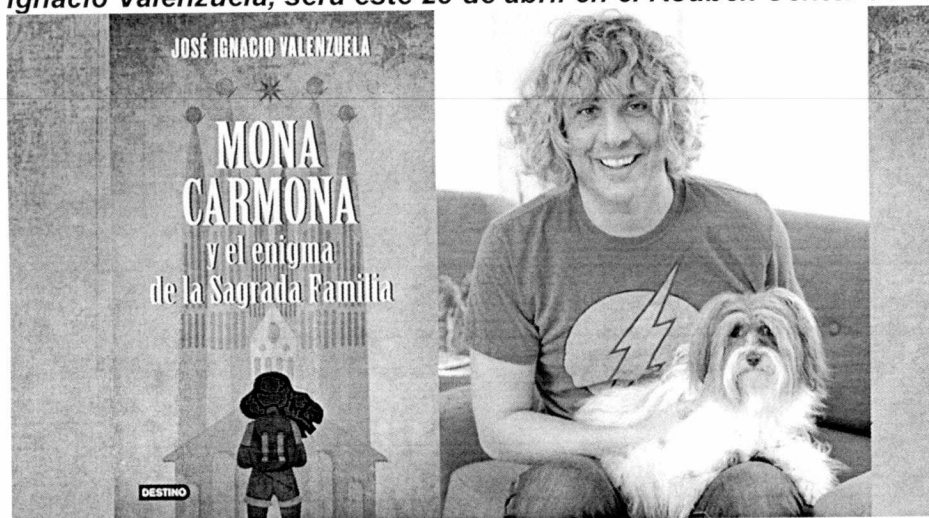
***<https://pelotacubanausa.com/2022/04/16/de-la-mano-del-cubano-andy-rodriguez-miami-dade-college-se-corona-en-su-conferencia/18/36/42/>***

Feria del Libro de Miami crea beca para autores en español

## Miami celebra Día del Libro y del Español con evento literario

16 de abril de 2022 - 18:04 - Por GRETHEL DELGADO

El lanzamiento del libro "Mona Carmona y el enigma de la Sagrada Familia", de José Ignacio Valenzuela, será este 23 de abril en el Koubek Center de Miami



En esta combinación de fotos, la portada del libro *Mona Carmona y el enigma de la Sagrada Familia*, del autor chileno José Ignacio Valenzuela, quien posa junto a su perrita Ofelia.  
Cortesía/ Fundación Cuatrogatos

**MIAMI.-** Una niña es la protagonista del reciente libro de José Ignacio Valenzuela, reconocido autor chileno residente en Miami. La novela *Mona Carmona y el enigma de la Sagrada Familia*, dedicada a lectores jóvenes, se presenta el sábado 23 de abril a las 4:00 p.m. en el Koubek Center, en conjunto con la Feria del Libro de Miami, el Grupo Editorial Planeta y la Fundación Cuatrogatos.

“Un hombre ha muerto y con eso ha cambiado el destino de su ciudad. Se ha ido Francesc Carmona, el último ser humano capaz de contar la verdad sobre la Sagrada Familia, ese orgullo de Barcelona que lleva más de cien años en construcción. Ahora solo quedan la especulación y la leyenda. A menos que Ramona Carmona logre demostrar que su abuelo no se llevó ningún secreto a la tumba, que la verdad está ahí, esperando que alguien tenga la capacidad —y la audacia— de revelarla”, plantea la sinopsis del libro, editado por Destino, sello de la Editorial Planeta.

Durante el evento de este 23 de abril, cuya entrada es gratuita, Valenzuela charlará sobre su novela con Betty Quintero, promotora de lectura y licenciada en Letras de la Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Quintero, colaboradora de la Fundación Cuatrogatos, señaló que “este libro te toma por asalto desde el primer capítulo y te atrapa hasta el final. El suspenso y la aventura enganchan por igual a jóvenes y adultos en un viaje sin retorno”.

“Mona Carmona está destinada a ser un referente en la literatura juvenil, y a ganarse un espacio en las bibliotecas familiares”, agregó.

Por su parte, Antonio Orlando Rodríguez, escritor, cofundador de la Fundación Cuatrogatos, subrayó que “ninguna forma mejor de celebrar el 23 de abril, Día Internacional del Libro y del Idioma Español, que presentando una nueva obra de un destacado autor que vive y escribe en Miami”.

Sobre el encuentro con el autor, en los jardines del Koubek Center, dijo que “va a ser un rato distendido, en el que se conversará sobre literatura, sobre las historias policíacas y sobre el trabajo de un creador que ha dado pruebas de su capacidad para cautivar al público tanto con sus libros como con sus series de televisión”.

Esta novela detectivesca para jóvenes da inicio a una nueva serie de libros de José Ignacio Valenzuela (conocido como “Chascas”), quien ha publicado anteriormente numerosas obras literarias para adultos y para niños, entre ellas *El filo de tu piel*, *La mujer infinita*, *Trilogía del Malamor*, *Hashtag* y *Mi abuela la loca*. Con su libro *Conoce a Mario Moreno “Cantinflas”*, este destacado escritor ganó el Premio Campoy-Ada otorgado en el 2021 por la Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española (ANLE).

El autor es ampliamente conocido, también, por su trabajo como guionista de exitosas series de televisión, entre ellas *¿Quién mató a Sara?*, cuya tercera temporada se estrenará próximamente.

### **Reflexiones en torno a la creación literaria**

Gracias a la gestión de Antonio Orlando Rodríguez y Sergio Andricaín, creadores de la Fundación Cuatrogatos, José Ignacio Valenzuela se refirió a varias cuestiones sobre literatura. Valenzuela ha publicado numerosos libros para adultos y para niños y para jóvenes, entre estos últimos varias novelas detectivescas juveniles. Es autor de exitosas series de televisión, entre ellas *¿Quién mató a Sara?*, transmitida por Netflix, que ha alcanzado una gran audiencia internacional. El escritor descubrió las novelas detectivescas cuando le regalaron un libro por su cumpleaños número 12: *Muerte en las nubes*, de Agatha Christie.

### **Lecturas de adolescencia**

Pienso que la adolescencia es el momento perfecto para leer novelas detectivescas porque en esa etapa de la vida uno tiene más preguntas que respuestas. Entonces, encontrar un libro que de alguna manera satisfaga tu ansia de respuestas, después de muchos vericuetos, es muy satisfactorio cuando tienes 15 o 16 años. Quizás por eso históricamente la literatura policial, que en sus inicios nunca fue creada con los lectores juveniles en mente, fue adoptada por ese público.

### **Retos**

Los jóvenes de hoy día son profundamente distintos al joven que yo fui y cuando estoy produciendo un libro con la calidad literaria que quiero que tenga, no puedo olvidar que estoy compitiendo con otros productos, tanto literarios como audiovisuales, que van a pelear por ese espacio que aspira a ganarse mi obra.

Por eso trato de dotar a mis libros de un vértigo, de una estructura que sea de fácil decodificación para los jóvenes y que, por lo general, sea más audiovisual que literario, con giros inesperados al final de cada capítulo. Trato de construir un contenido que sea no solo atractivo de leer, sino también de imaginar.



### **¿Por qué una novela con una adolescente como investigadora?**

Partió del hecho de sentir que había una desigualdad de género bestial que no me gustaba. Siempre he sido muy promujer y me parecía gravísimo que todos los héroes fueran masculinos. Esto se cruzó con el hecho de que fui papá de una niña. Eso me llevó a pensar más cómo, desde mi pequeñita trinchera, podía contribuir a la equidad de género.

Entonces decidí crear el personaje de Mona Carmona, una chica detective, con la idea de que en el futuro mi hija pudiera sentirse orgullosa de ese personaje. Por eso la novela está dedicada a ella, porque fue como el primer regalo que le hice para decirle: "Si quieres ser una heroína, investigar enigmas, saltar paredes, subir a las torres de la Sagrada Familia a medianoche y atrapar criminales, aquí hay alguien a quien admirar".

### **¿Quién es Mona Carmona?**

Ramona Carmona tiene 13 años recién cumplidos, es huérfana de madre, vive con su padre en México y tiene una relación conflictiva con su familia.

La muerte de su abuelo catalán hace que Mona y su padre tengan que viajar a Barcelona. Allí, Mona se topa con un diario de vida de su abuelo y descubre que este escondía una cantidad enorme de secretos.

### **Relación entre sus historias audiovisuales y sus libros policíacos**

Cuando escribo una novela detectivesca, los elementos son los mismos que utilizo en un producto audiovisual. No hay mucha diferencia para mí, porque siento que apelan a lo mismo: mantener cautiva a tu audiencia, atraparla, lanzarle un gran anzuelo y mantener su atención.

*El evento será en el Koubek Center, 2705 SW 3rd St, Miami, FL 33135. Teléfono: (305) 237-7749.*

*<https://www.diariolasamericas.com/cultura/miami-celebra-dia-del-libro-y-del-espanol-evento-literario-n4247194>*