



# **Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, June 17, 2024**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Location:**

**United Way – Ryder Room  
3250 S.W. 3rd Avenue (Coral Way)**





## Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, June 17, 2024  
3250 S.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (Coral Way)  
United Way – Ryder Room  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

### AGENDA

#### Board of Directors

Kenneth C. Hoffman  
Chair

Pamela Hollingsworth  
Vice-Chair

Matthew Arsenault  
Treasurer

Marissa Leichter  
Secretary

Edward Abraham, M.D.

Laura Adams

Islamiyat Nancy Adebisi

Daniel Bagner, Ph.D.

Hon. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Ph.D.

Cathy Burgos

Silvia Castellanos

Norie del Valle

Lourdes Diaz

Richard P. Dunn II

Jacqueline Exceus

Gilda Ferradaz

Hon. Norman S. Gerstein (Ret.)

Lourdes P. Gimenez

Nicole Gomez

Valrose Graham

Mindy Grimes-Festge

Hon. Keon Hardemon

Malou C. Harrison, Ph.D.

Maria Norton

Clara Lora Ospina, Psy.D.

Ashna Paudel

Hon. Orlando Prescott

Diana Ragbeer

Javier Reyes

Hon. Alex Rizo

Hon. Isaac Salver

David Lawrence Jr.

Founding Chair

James R. Haj

President & CEO

County Attorney's Office

Legal Counsel

4:00 p.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Pamela Hollingsworth  
*Vice-Chair*

4:05 p.m. **Public Comments**

Pamela Hollingsworth  
*Vice-Chair*

4:10 p.m. **Approval of May 13, 2024 Board of Directors  
minutes summary**

*(Additional Items Packet) (Pgs. 4-5)*

Marissa Leichter  
*Secretary*

4:15 p.m. **Appreciation for Outstanding Service to The Children's  
Trust**

Pamela Hollingsworth  
*Vice-Chair*

James R. Haj  
*President/CEO*

- *Maria Norton, Miami-Dade PTA/PTSA*

4:20 p.m. **School Based Health Input Session Report**

Dr. Edward Abraham  
*Committee Chair*

4:30 p.m. **Finance & Operations Committee Report**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

**Preliminary Budget and Millage for FY 2024-25**  
*(Pgs. 6-11)*

James R. Haj  
*President/CEO*

William Kirtland  
*Chief Financial Officer*

The public is allowed to comment on a specific agenda item but must register with the Clerk of the Board prior to being allowed to comment.

4:45 p.m. **IT Presentation**

James R. Haj  
*President/CEO*  
Jacques "Jack" Bentolila, EdD, PMP  
*Chief Operations Officer*

4:55 p.m. **Resolutions**

Matthew Arsenault  
*Committee Chair*

**Resolution 2024-44:** Authorization to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) competitive solicitation for the office reconfiguration project at the current office space being leased by The Children's Trust from the Children's Advocacy Complex, LLC (United Way) at 3150 SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, and that supports the infrastructure of The Children's Trust. *(Pgs. 12-13)*

**Resolution 2024-45:** Authorization to renew services and execute related agreements with multiple IT vendors, and to waive (in part) the formal competitive procurement process **[2/3 vote]** in a total amount not to exceed \$2,004,130.00, inclusive of \$50,000.00 contingency for IT budgeted enhancement projects, for a term of 12 months, with two agreements commencing on October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. *(Pgs. 14-19)*

5:55 p.m. **CEO Report**

James R. Haj  
President & CEO

- *Monthly Media Highlights (Pgs. 20-32)*
- *Financial Disclosure – due by July 1, 2024*
- *Summer Youth Internship Program (SYIP)*
- *Monthly Financial Statements*
- *TRIM I & TRIM II – September 9 & September 16, 2024*
- *The Children's Trust Family Expo events:*
  - *Florida Memorial University – July 27, 2024 (10am – 2 pm)*  
*(15400 NW 42 Ave, Miami Gardens, FL 33054)*
  - *Miami Dade College (Kendall Campus) – August 3, 2024 (10am - 2 pm)*  
*(11011 SW 104th St, Miami, FL 33176)*

6:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

**Reminder:**  
**Next Board Meeting: \*Monday, July 15, 2024**



**Board of Directors Meeting  
Summary of Actions and Events  
May 13, 2024  
4:01 p.m.**

**These actions and events took place at the Board of Directors of The Children's Trust meeting held on May 13, 2024:**

Please note that the number of board members fluctuate based on arrival and departure of some of them throughout the meeting.

**Motion to approve the March 18, 2024, Board minutes summaries was made by Javier Reyes and seconded by Dr. Edward Abraham. Motion passed unanimously, 22-0.**

**Motion to approve recommendation from the Nominating Committee to appoint Kenneth C. Hoffman as chair of the board for his final two-year term was made by Javier Reyes and seconded by Richard P. Dunn II. Motion passed unanimously, 22-0.**

**Finance & Operations Committee Report**

**Resolution 2024-36: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Hon. Isaac Salver and seconded by Dr. Daniel Bagner.** Authorization to negotiate and execute a contract with The Miami Foundation, acting as the fiscal agent, for a match funding award to the Community Based Care Alliance of Miami-Dade County (CBC Alliance), in a total amount not to exceed \$64,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. **Motion passed, 20-0. Recusal by Gilda Ferradaz and Norie del Valle.**

**Program Services Committee Report**

**Presentation & Discussion Items:**

A Family Support Services presentation was conducted by staff and discussed among board members.

The following resolutions 2024-37 through 2024-40 were presented and voted together as part of the consent agenda:

**Resolution 2024-37: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Dr. Edward Abraham and seconded by Norie del Valle.** Authorization to negotiate and execute contracts with 45 providers, identified herein, to deliver evidence-based parenting and family strengthening services in a total amount not to exceed \$23,230,563.00, each for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025, each with three remaining annual renewals, subject to annual funding appropriations. Request for delegation of authority to adjust paid program partners. **Motion passed, 20-0. Recusals by Dr. Daniel Bagner and Pamela Hollingsworth.**

**Resolution 2024-38: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Dr. Edward Abraham and seconded by Norie del Valle. Request for Procurement Waiver (requires the approval of a 2/3 vote of the board members present).** Authorization to waive the formal competitive procurement process and to negotiate and execute contract renewals with 22 providers, identified herein, for Family and Neighborhood Support Partnerships, in an amount not to exceed \$13,408,796.00, and for The Children's Trust to encumber a purchase order in the amount of \$500,000.00 for pooled family stabilization funding, for a total amount not to exceed \$13,908,796.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025, with two remaining contract renewals.

Request for delegation of authority to adjust paid program partners. **Motion passed, 20-0. Recusal by Dr. Daniel Bagner and Pamela Hollingsworth.**

**Resolution 2024-39: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Dr. Edward Abraham and seconded by Norie del Valle. Request for Procurement Waiver (requires the approval of a 2/3 vote of the board members present).** Authorization to waive the formal competitive procurement process and to negotiate and execute contracts with nine providers, identified herein, to deliver public benefits enrollment supports, in a total amount not to exceed \$1,596,882.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025, each with three remaining annual renewals, subject to annual funding appropriations. Request for delegation of authority to adjust paid program partners. **Motion passed, 20-0. Recusal by Dr. Daniel Bagner and Pamela Hollingsworth.**

**Resolution 2024-40: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Dr. Edward Abraham and seconded by Norie del Valle.** Authorization to negotiate and execute a single source contract with Jewish Community Services of South Florida (JCS) to operate the 211 Miami helpline, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025, in a total amount not to exceed \$1,374,176.00. **Motion passed, 20-0. Recusal by Dr. Daniel Bagner and Pamela Hollingsworth.**

The following resolutions 2024-41 through 2024-43 were considered individually:

**Resolution 2024-41: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Hon. Keon Hardemon and seconded by Hon. Isaac Salver.** Authorization to negotiate and execute a single source contract with Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership for Reach Out and Read early literacy programming, in a total amount not to exceed \$700,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. **Motion passed, 21-0. Recusal by Pamela Hollingsworth.**

**Resolution 2024-42: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Hon. Isaac Salver and seconded by Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall.** Authorization to negotiate and amend a contract with the Miami-Dade County Community Action and Human Services Department for local match funding for the federal Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grant, to add an additional \$400,000.00 of match funding, contingent upon a federal funding award, making the total contract amount \$1,250,000.00, for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. **Motion passed, 21-0. Recusal by Cathy Burgos.**

**Resolution 2024-43: Motion to approve the resolution was made by Mindy Grimes-Festge and seconded by Richard P. Dunn II.** Authorization to execute a funder collaboration contract with the U.S. Soccer Foundation to support the continuation of the Soccer for Success program and the expansion of the Just Ball program, in a total amount not to exceed \$300,000.00, for a term of 14 months commencing August 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. **Motion passed unanimously, 22-0.**

**The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.**

**THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
BUDGET SUMMARY  
FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025**

**THE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET EXPENDITURES OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST ARE 12.3% MORE THAN LAST YEAR'S  
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES.**

General Fund Budget		
<b>REVENUES: Estimated at 95% of ad valorem tax levy of .5000 mills.</b>		
Ad valorem tax revenue	\$ 223,535,000	
Interest/miscellaneous	5,729,562	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>229,264,562</b>	
Fund balance/net assets, October 1, 2024	52,282,284	
<b>Total Estimated Revenues/ Fund Balance/ Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 281,546,846</b>	
 <b>EXPENDITURES:</b>		
<b>Contracted Programs</b>	<b>\$ 234,036,186</b>	91.50%
 <b>Operating Expenditures:</b>		
<b>General Administration:</b>		
Personnel expenditures: salaries & fringe benefits	\$ 12,522,534	
Non-personnel & capital expenditures	1,715,000	
<b>Total General Administration Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 14,237,534</b>	
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 14,237,534</b>	5.57%
 <b>Non-Operating Expenditures:</b>		
CRA refund of taxes, property appraiser, tax collector fees	7,500,000	
<b>Total Non-Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 7,500,000</b>	2.93%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 255,773,720</b>	100.00%
<b>Fund Balance, Reserves/ Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 25,773,126</b>	
<b>Total Expenditures, Reserves, and Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$ 281,546,846</b>	

The tentative, adopted and/or final budgets are on file in the office of the above-mentioned taxing authority as a public record.

The Children's Trust  
Fund Balance  
Fiscal Years 2023-2025

Description	2023-24 Amended Budget	2023-24 Projected	2024-25 Budget
Millage rate	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000
Beginning fund balance	\$ 47,822,737	\$ 48,934,318	\$ 52,282,284
Revenue: Ad valorem tax	203,209,460	203,209,460	223,535,000
Revenue: Interest/ miscellaneous	4,754,050	4,754,049	5,729,562
<b>Total funds available</b>	<b>\$ 255,786,247</b>	<b>\$ 256,897,827</b>	<b>\$ 281,546,846</b>
Sustain and expand direct services	\$ 193,725,248	\$ 174,352,723	\$ 219,796,886
Community awareness and advocacy	6,150,300	5,043,246	6,350,300
Program and professional development	7,670,000	5,522,400	7,889,000
The Children's Trust management and administration	13,226,223	12,697,174	14,237,534
Non-operating expenditures	7,000,000	7,000,000	7,500,000
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 227,771,771</b>	<b>\$ 204,615,543</b>	<b>\$ 255,773,720</b>
<b>Ending fund balance, reserves/ net assets</b>	<b>\$ 28,014,476</b>	<b>\$ 52,282,284</b>	<b>\$ 25,773,126</b>

The Children's Trust  
Core Strategies  
Fiscal Years 2023-2025

Description	2023-24 Budgeted Expenditures	2024-25 Budgeted Expenditures	Dollar Difference	Percentage Difference
<b>SUSTAIN AND EXPAND DIRECT SERVICES</b>				
Parenting	\$ 30,359,460	\$ 30,809,460	\$ 450,000	1.48%
Early childhood development	43,661,017	44,128,357	467,340	1.07%
Youth development	81,748,817	82,303,115	554,298	0.68%
Health and wellness	21,791,778	26,391,778	4,600,000	21.11%
Family and neighborhood supports	16,164,176	16,164,176	-	0.00%
Additional programming to be assigned	-	20,000,000	20,000,000	
<b>Total sustain and expand direct services</b>	<b>\$ 193,725,248</b>	<b>\$ 219,796,886</b>	<b>\$ 26,071,638</b>	<b>13.46%</b>
<b>COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY</b>				
Promote public policy and legislative agendas	\$ 215,300	\$ 215,300	\$ -	0.00%
Public awareness and program promotion	3,085,000	3,085,000	-	0.00%
Promote citizen engagement and leadership to improve child and family conditions	1,115,000	1,315,000	200,000	17.94%
Cross-funder collaboration of goals, strategies and resources	1,735,000	1,735,000	-	0.00%
<b>Total community awareness and advocacy</b>	<b>\$ 6,150,300</b>	<b>\$ 6,350,300</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>	<b>3.25%</b>
<b>PROGRAM AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>				
Supports for quality program implementation	\$ 3,650,000	\$ 3,650,000	\$ -	0.00%
Information technology	2,050,000	2,050,000	-	0.00%
Program evaluation and community research	570,000	570,000	-	0.00%
Innovation fund	1,400,000	1,619,000	219,000	15.64%
<b>Total program and professional development</b>	<b>\$ 7,670,000</b>	<b>\$ 7,889,000</b>	<b>\$ 219,000</b>	<b>2.86%</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION AND NON-OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>				
Management of The Children's Trust	\$ 13,226,223	\$ 14,237,534	\$ 1,011,311	7.65%
Non-operating expenditures	7,000,000	7,500,000	500,000	7.14%
<b>Total administration and non-operating expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 20,226,223</b>	<b>\$ 21,737,534</b>	<b>\$ 1,511,311</b>	<b>7.47%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 227,771,771</b>	<b>\$ 255,773,720</b>	<b>\$ 28,001,949</b>	<b>12.29%</b>



**THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
BUDGET SUMMARY  
FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025**

**THE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET EXPENDITURES OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST ARE 3.5% MORE THAN LAST YEAR'S  
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES.**

General Fund Budget		
<b>REVENUES: Estimated at 95% of ad valorem tax levy of .4545 mills.</b>		
Ad valorem tax revenue	\$	203,193,315
Interest/miscellaneous		5,253,672
<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>208,446,987</b>
Fund balance/net assets, October 1, 2024		52,282,284
<b>Total Estimated Revenues/ Fund Balance/ Net Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>260,729,271</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURES:</b>		
<b>Contracted Programs</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>214,036,186</b> 90.78%
 <b>Operating Expenditures:</b>		
<b>General Administration:</b>		
Personnel expenditures: salaries & fringe benefits	\$	12,522,534
Non-personnel & capital expenditures		1,715,000
<b>Total General Administration Expenditures</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>14,237,534</b>
 <b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	 <b>\$</b>	 <b>14,237,534</b> 6.04%
 <b>Non-Operating Expenditures:</b>		
CRA refund of taxes, property appraiser, tax collector fees		7,500,000
<b>Total Non-Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>7,500,000</b> 3.18%
 <b>Total Expenditures</b>	 <b>\$</b>	 <b>235,773,720</b> 100.00%
 <b>Fund Balance, Reserves/ Net Assets</b>	 <b>\$</b>	 <b>24,955,552</b>
 <b>Total Expenditures, Reserves, and Fund Balance</b>	 <b>\$</b>	 <b>260,729,272</b>

The tentative, adopted and/or final budgets are on file in the office of the above-mentioned taxing authority as a public

The Children's Trust  
Fund Balance  
Fiscal Years 2023-2025

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Millage rate	0.5000	0.5000	0.4545
Beginning fund balance	\$ 47,822,737	\$ 48,934,318	\$ 52,282,285
Revenue: Ad valorem tax	203,209,460	203,209,460	203,193,315
Revenue: Interest/ miscellaneous	4,754,050	4,754,050	5,253,672
<b>Total funds available</b>	<b>\$ 255,786,247</b>	<b>\$ 256,897,828</b>	<b>\$ 260,729,272</b>
Sustain and expand direct services	\$ 193,725,248	\$ 174,352,723	\$ 199,796,886
Community awareness and advocacy	6,150,300	5,043,246	6,350,300
Program and professional development	7,670,000	5,522,400	7,889,000
The Children's Trust management and administration	13,226,223	12,697,174	14,237,534
Non-operating expenditures	7,000,000	7,000,000	7,500,000
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 227,771,771</b>	<b>\$ 204,615,543</b>	<b>\$ 235,773,720</b>
<b>Ending fund balance, reserves/ net assets</b>	<b>\$ 28,014,476</b>	<b>\$ 52,282,285</b>	<b>\$ 24,955,552</b>

The Children's Trust  
Core Strategies  
Fiscal Years 2023-2025

Description	2023-24 Budgeted Expenditures	2024-25 Budgeted Expenditures	Dollar Difference	Percentage Difference
<b>SUSTAIN AND EXPAND DIRECT SERVICES</b>				
Parenting	\$ 30,359,460	\$ 30,809,460	\$ 450,000	1.48%
Early childhood development	43,661,017	44,128,357	467,340	1.07%
Youth development	81,748,817	82,303,115	554,298	0.68%
Health and wellness	21,791,778	26,391,778	4,600,000	21.11%
Family and neighborhood supports	16,164,176	16,164,176	-	0.00%
<b>Total sustain and expand direct services</b>	<b>\$ 193,725,248</b>	<b>\$ 199,796,886</b>	<b>\$ 6,071,638</b>	<b>3.13%</b>
<b>COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY</b>				
Promote public policy and legislative agendas	\$ 215,300	\$ 215,300	\$ -	0.00%
Public awareness and program promotion	3,085,000	3,085,000	-	0.00%
Promote citizen engagement and leadership to improve child and family conditions	1,115,000	1,315,000	200,000	17.94%
Cross-funder collaboration of goals, strategies and resources	1,735,000	1,735,000	-	0.00%
<b>Total community awareness and advocacy</b>	<b>\$ 6,150,300</b>	<b>\$ 6,350,300</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>	<b>3.25%</b>
<b>PROGRAM AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>				
Supports for quality program implementation	\$ 3,650,000	\$ 3,650,000	\$ -	0.00%
Information technology	2,050,000	2,050,000	-	0.00%
Program evaluation and community research	570,000	570,000	-	0.00%
Innovation fund	1,400,000	1,619,000	219,000	15.64%
<b>Total program and professional development</b>	<b>\$ 7,670,000</b>	<b>\$ 7,889,000</b>	<b>\$ 219,000</b>	<b>2.86%</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION AND NON-OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>				
Management of The Children's Trust	\$ 13,226,223	\$ 14,237,534	\$ 1,011,311	7.65%
Non-operating expenditures	7,000,000	7,500,000	500,000	7.14%
<b>Total administration and non-operating expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 20,226,223</b>	<b>\$ 21,737,534</b>	<b>\$ 1,511,311</b>	<b>7.47%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 227,771,771</b>	<b>\$ 235,773,720</b>	<b>\$ 8,001,949</b>	<b>3.51%</b>

## The Children's Trust Board Meeting

**Date: June 17, 2024**

**Resolution: 2024-44**

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**Strategic Framework Priority Investment Area:** Administrative/Operational

**Strategic Framework Headline Community Results:** This investment supports the infrastructure of The Children's Trust.

**Recommended Action:** Authorization to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) competitive solicitation for the office reconfiguration project at the current office space being leased by The Children's Trust from the Children's Advocacy Complex, LLC (United Way) at 3150 SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, and that supports the infrastructure of The Children's Trust.

**Budget Impact:** Funding in the amount up to a maximum of \$350,000.00 for this resolution is projected to be available in FY 2024-2025.

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**Description Of Services:** This resolution seeks approval for the Trust to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to complete the final phase of its office reconfiguration project for the remaining sections of the current office space being leased by the Trust, in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00. This final phase will address the remaining two sections of the office space that need to be modernized and will continue the concepts for an open office design, increasing natural lighting, and flexible seating that allows for collaboration among staff. Funding recommendations will be returned to the board for approval to be awarded in October 2024.

**Background:** During fiscal planning for FY 2020-2021 the Board set aside \$10,000,000.00 for future capital expenses. At that time, Trust staff was investigating purchasing a building for the Trust office. During the coronavirus-2019 pandemic (pandemic), staff reconsidered the need for purchasing a building and, with Board approval, ultimately decided to extend the lease with the Children's Advocacy Complex, LLC in lieu of purchasing a new facility. The lease was extended until 2030. During fiscal planning for FY 2021-2022 the Board reduced the set aside accordingly to \$400,000.00 for the purpose of capital expenses/office reconfiguration.

On June 13, 2022 resolution #2022-55 was approved by the board of directors for \$126,618.11 to complete phase one of the office redesign that provided meeting pods and stand-up desks to address the immediate need for space to conduct private conversations and provide flexible seating. Resolution #2023-51 was approved on June 12, 2023 for phase two of the office reconfiguration project for \$167,078.87. This phase created an updated flexible open office design that allowed the flow of natural light into the office, additional meeting rooms, and collaboration spaces in three of the five spaces within the office.

This resolution is requesting authority to issue an RFP for the final phase of the office redesign. The Children's Trust's existing furniture was purchased and installed in 2007. The manufacturer is no longer in business, therefore finding replacement parts is exceedingly difficult. Despite ongoing maintenance, the current furniture shows wear and tear over the years and its replacement is necessary.

**Geographic Area:** N/A

The foregoing recommendation was offered by \_\_\_\_\_ who moved its approval. The motion was seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this **17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2024.**

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY

Approved by County Attorney for form and legal sufficiency \_\_\_\_\_

## The Children’s Trust Board Meeting

**Date: June 17, 2024**

**Resolution: 2024-45**

**Strategic Framework Priority Investment Area:** Learning & Quality Improvement: Technology Design Solutions

**Strategic Framework Headline Community Results:** This investment supports all headline community results.

**Recommended Action:** Authorization to renew services and execute related agreements with multiple IT vendors, and to waive (in part) the formal competitive procurement process **[2/3 vote]** in a total amount not to exceed \$2,004,130.00, inclusive of \$50,000.00 contingency for IT budgeted enhancement projects, for a term of 12 months, with two agreements commencing on October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025.

**Budget Impact:** Funding in the amount of \$2,004,130.00 for this resolution is projected to be available in FY 2024-2025.

**Description of Services:** This resolution seeks funding to renew various services utilized for the operations of The Children’s Trust and to enter into related agreements with the vendor and/or partners in the case where The Children’s Trust is a member of or participant in a consortium/committee, such as SAMIS and Miami IDEAS Consortium. The services, vendors, and funding amounts are as follows:

Service	Vendor Name	Usage	Estimated Funding Amount <small>(Indicating changes in funding from prior year, if applicable)</small>
Microsoft Enterprise license, Adobe Creative Cloud and PowerBi	SHI International Corp.	Microsoft products for basic computer needs such as email and word processing. Adobe Creative Cloud for the creation of multimedia artifacts and enhanced PDF documents. PowerBI for dashboards to ensure efficient data visualization and analysis.	\$151,462.00 (Increase of \$46,462.00 due to the addition of the advanced PowerBI license.)
GPaaS	Confident Clouds and Core Integrator	Confident Clouds provides hosting, maintaining, and supporting The Children’s Trust’s accounting system. Core Integrator provides hosting, maintaining, and supporting the document management systems that contain all spending-related documents and approvals prior to monies being spent.	\$146,000.00 (No increase. Amounts combined from previous resolution.)

Service	Vendor Name	Usage	<b>Estimated Funding Amount</b> (Indicating changes in funding from prior year, if applicable)
SAMIS	Florida Alliance of Children's Councils and Trusts (FACCT)	Fee for the utilization and maintenance of the Services and Activity Management Information System (SAMIS). The Children's Trust is a member of the SAMIS Collaborative, which refers collectively to the Statewide SAMIS Management Committee (SMC) and the SAMIS Management Group (SMG). The Florida Alliance of Children's Councils and Trusts (FACCT) is the SAMIS Collaborative's fiscal agent.	\$32,000.00 (Decrease of \$18,000.00 due to additional members added to FACCT)
Trust Central	Webauthor.com, LLC	The consolidated software as a service solution that allows The Children's Trust and its funded providers to capture, track, and report information related to Program Metrics, Contracting, Solicitations, Records Management, Performance Measurement, and Customer Relationship Management. The Business Intelligences Reporting and the Integrated Data Repository allow the staff to extract and report on the data entered in Trust Central.	\$261,000.00 (Increase of \$31,000.00. Amount includes Web hosting services previously shown as separate contract.)
IT Infrastructure as a Service	BMK Media Consulting Corporation	IT Infrastructure Support providing the following managed services: host hardware, software, servers setup and maintenance, storage, network equipment, and other infrastructure components.	\$98,368.00
Project Management Tool	Asana, Inc.	A project management tracking tool to support The Children's Trust priority projects, track progress, and monitor related tasks.	\$27,000.00
Internet Connection Services	AT&T	The dedicated managed circuits for internet access from The Trust's office.	\$26,000.00 <sup>1</sup>
CollaborNation	CypherWorx, Inc.	The Trust Academy Learning Management Content System (LMCS) used to track training given and taken by Trust staff and provider staff.	\$61,800.00 <sup>2</sup> (Increase of \$1,800.00)
Health Office Anywhere	Frontline Technologies Group, LLC dba Frontline Education	Software as a service solution to track school-based health clinic encounters.	\$185,000.00 <sup>3</sup>

Service	Vendor Name	Usage	Estimated Funding Amount (Indicating changes in funding from prior year, if applicable)
WELS	WELS System Foundation	Comprehensive programmatic data system for the Thrive by 5 early learning quality improvement system and A\$CEND salary supplement application. Provides full-time Help Desk support for A\$CEND.	\$865,500.00 <sup>4</sup> (Increase of \$500,000.00 as WELS is now replacing the Children’s Forum’s Professional Development Registry.
Miami IDEAS (Integrating Data for Effectiveness Across Systems) Consortium for Children	University of Miami	This Integrated Data System provides the secure technical platform and software services for ongoing data acquisition and processing to link data across systems, inclusive of ensuring proper legal data sharing agreements and governance and providing data analysis and dissemination support.	\$150,000.00 <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This item is funded from the operating expense budget line.

<sup>2</sup>This item is funded from the learning and quality improvement budget line.

<sup>3</sup>This item is funded from the health and wellness budget line.

<sup>4</sup>This item is funded from the thrive by five early childhood development budget line.

<sup>5</sup>This item is funded from the program evaluation and community research budget line.

Additionally, The Children’s Trust requests a \$50,000.00 contingency for IT budgeted enhancement projects or to be added to the agreements listed above, as needed, and the delegated authority to award these contingency funds. Projects are currently estimated to be at least one year before they start. As such, this contingency can cover additional costs incurred during the project that may not have been previously anticipated. This allows for greater flexibility when completing projects and ensures all necessary enhancements can be completed during the project timeline rather than waiting another fiscal year to meet the required enhancements.

**Background:** The Children’s Trust leases software services from several vendors. These software services are crucial to the daily business activities of staff by facilitating their ability to perform assigned tasks, including interacting with providers efficiently, capturing data, tracking funded program activities, and tracking overall program performance.

**Licenses and Permits:** The software services that are license payments are being presented for renewal following the procurement policy, Exemption to Formal Competitive Solicitation Process, G-9, Licenses and Permits for the operation of The Children’s Trust. The board previously approved these services, and their renewal allows for continuing The Children’s Trust operations. The Children’s Trust requests a procurement waiver for software services that are not licensed.

**Request for Procurement Waiver (requires approval of a 2/3 vote of board members present):** This resolution requests a waiver (in part) of the procurement process to negotiate and execute agreements with certain vendors for software solutions that were initially

Resolution 2024-45 – Software as a Service renewal (Technology Design Solutions, Research & Programs)

June 17, 2024



selected through a competitive solicitation and/or quote process and are now tailored to meet The Children’s Trust’s operational needs. Once the services were solicited, the staff at The Children’s Trust worked with the software vendors to customize the software, making it specific to The Children’s Trust use and concomitantly resulting in a software product adapted for The Trust. Due to the investment in time, effort, and funding, it is not practical or economical to solicit these services.

Additionally, two services (Project Management Tool and CollaborNation) were procured through a quote process per the procurement policy, and the Miami IDEAS Consortium was initially a match contract. The table below describes the procurement method and background for each service.

<b>Software</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Procurement Method and Background</b>
GPaaS	Confident Clouds and Core Integrator	Procurement waiver: The vendor Merge IT was selected as part of a formal competitive procurement process, RFQ #2017-07, and approved at the June 2017 board meeting. Merge IT is changing agency ownership to Confident Clouds, but the services and personnel have remained the same. Core Integrator was selected as part of a formal competitive procurement process, RFQ #2017-07, and approved at the June 2017 board meeting.
SAMIS	Florida Alliance of Children’s Councils and Trusts (FACCT)	Exemption G-9: This is the data collection software for the Children’s Services Councils, of which The Children’s Trust is a member.
Trust Central	Webauthor.com, LLC	Procurement waiver: This software is an extension of SAMIS and thus was selected for the additional enhancements that created Trust Central. This vendor is in the vendor pool established through RFQ #2017-06 and approved at the March 2017 board meeting.
IT Infrastructure as a Service	BMK Media Consulting Corporation	Procurement waiver: This vendor was selected as part of a formal competitive procurement process, RFQ #2020-30, and approved at the March 2020 Executive Committee meeting.
Project Management Tool	Asana, Inc.	Procurement waiver: This software was selected in 2020 as part of a quote process as it was less than \$50,000.00.
Internet Connection Services	AT&T	Quotes: This service was selected as part of a quote process as it was less than \$50,000.00 and approved at the June 2020 board meeting.
CollaborNation	Cypherworx, LLC	Procurement waiver: This software was selected as part of a quote process as it was \$50,000.00 and approved at the October 2018 board meeting.
Health Office Anywhere (formerly known as Healthmaster)	Frontline Technologies Group, LLC dba Frontline Education	Exemption G-9: This software was selected as part of a formal competitive procurement process, RFQ #2018-10, and approved at the October 2018 board meeting.

Software	Vendor Name	Procurement Method and Background
WELS	WELS System Foundation	<p>Procurement waiver (relating to A\$CEND): This software was selected as part of a formal competitive procurement process, RFP #2015-05, and approved at the May 2015 board meeting as part of the Early Learning Coalition award. In March 2019, it was approved through a procurement waiver.</p> <p>Exemption G-10 (relating to the Professional Development Registry): In 2024 the Early Learning Coalition issued a competitive solicitation to procure WELS software for additional services of creating a uniformed system to be utilized countywide that will be utilized by The Trust and integrated with current systems managed by WELS. Procurement Policy 2000 G-10 provides The Children’s Trust with an exemption to the competitive process for piggyback contracts.</p>
Miami IDEAS Consortium for Children	University of Miami	<p>Procurement waiver: This software was initially created through a partnership with the University of Miami, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, The Children’s Trust, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, and the Miami-Dade County Community Action and Human Services Department Head Start/Early Head Start program, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES).</p> <p>The Children’s Trust funding began in March 2018 (Resolution #2018-41) to sustain the continuation of the software created by the federal funding.</p>

The foregoing recommendation was offered by \_\_\_\_\_ who moved its approval. The motion was seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this **17<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024.**

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY

Approved by County Attorney for form and legal sufficiency \_\_\_\_\_



**Media Highlights  
May 2024**

## Could this 16-year-old Miami talent competition winner be the next Elton John?

BY HOWARD COHEN  
UPDATED MAY 17, 2024 2:27 PM



How do you deem a teen's exciting instrumental composition the best of the best over an exquisite harmony vocal performance? Or over a timely spoken word performance of female empowerment that could give "Barbie" script writers a run for the Oscar? Or over an achingly detailed solo cello performance or a rock band of high schoolers covering a rousing '80s hit that bested Bon Jovi's original?

You do so with years of experience observing the arts — and sometimes with some lively judges' dressing room debate among seasoned Miami-area professionals.

Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre, together with presenting sponsor The Children's Trust, announced the 2024 winners of the 14th annual Young Talent Big Dreams, a local, free youth talent competition that has spread its search across Miami-Dade County every year since 2010.

For Young Talent Big Dreams, students, ages 8 to 18, living in Miami-Dade, are invited to compete in nine categories that tap their talents. The competition features six individual categories: pop/rock/rap vocals, musical theater/jazz standards/classical vocals, dance, musical instrument, original spoken word, and original vocal and/or instrumental composition. There are also three group categories for dance, musical instrument/bands, and vocal groups.

A three-month marathon of preliminary and semifinal competitions at the Miracle Theatre in Coral Gables, the Dennis C. Moss Cultural Arts Center in Cutler Bay and Sandrell Rivers

Theater in Liberty City that drew hundreds of contestants culminated in the finals at the Miracle on Saturday, May 11. Prizes include cash awards, master classes with industry professionals, performance opportunities and performing arts scholarships.

The finals competition, after a series of audition rounds that began in March, was held on the Actors' Playhouse stage at The Miracle Theatre.

As a volunteer judge for Young Talent Big Dreams since the "Star Search"-styled competition's inception 14 years ago, it would sound like a disservice to previous winners who have gone on to perform at community events and who have pursued their artistic fields nationally, to call the 2024 finalists the best of the bunch.

So I'll just say that while watching the evening's grand prize winner pounding the piano with a rousing tune he wrote — while doing almost everything to that piano to entertain an audience except playing it upside down — I was reminded of a historic moment in pop music history.

In May 1970, Robert Hilburn, the influential pop music critic for the Los Angeles Times, [wrote a review](#) that British pianist-songwriter [Elton John](#), now 77, credits with giving him his break in the United States. Hilburn's opening paragraph in that now legendary review began: "Rejoice. Rock music, which has been going through a rather uneventful period lately, has a new star. He's Elton John, a 23-year-old Englishman whose United States debut Tuesday night at the Troubadour was, in almost every way, magnificent."

As Gerry Ibarra, a 16-year-old from Terra Environmental Research Institute in the Kendall area, delivered his exhilarating piano performance of his original piece entitled, "Rat Race," I flashed back to the fancifully staged scene in the Elton John biopic movie, "Rocketman." That image showed the future superstar levitating at his piano at the L.A. music club as Hilburn's review flashed across the screen.

This kid was good. Better than good. We were seeing some of the best of the best young talent Miami has to offer. After the obligatory judges' stage pose with the winners, I leaned over toward Gerry and whispered, "You ever hear of Elton John?"

The young musician and composer didn't break his smile or waves to the audience of family, educators and arts-enthusiasts. Gerry has heard of the older star. He liked the compliment.

Gerry was crowned the Original Composition Winner and the Overall Grand Prize Champion by four judges: David Arisco, artistic director, Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre; Shamele Jenkins, artistic director of Lip, Tongue & Ear Poetry Productions and executive director/immediate past president of the Miami-Dade County Foster & Adoptive Parent Association; Ruby Romero-Issaev, executive director/CEO of Arts Ballet Theatre of Florida; and yours truly, a 33-year veteran Miami Herald reporter with a background in pop music and theater criticism.

Gerry received \$500 cash provided by Actors' Playhouse, and four tickets to Universal Orlando along with a hotel stay for two nights courtesy of WSVN-7News.

“Actors’ Playhouse is immensely proud of the role that we have played in nurturing young performers for over 35 years, including the past 14 years through the Young Talent Big Dreams competition,” said Barbara Stein, executive producing director of Actors’ Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre. “It is exhilarating to watch these young talents shine.”

Adds James Haj, president and CEO of co-presenter, The Children’s Trust: “We believe in investing in developing skills and talent in Miami-Dade County’s youth, and Young Talent Big Dreams is one way we do so. Through various partnerships across the community, we are able to provide more opportunities for children to engage in the arts and create a community where creativity thrives.”

### **The 2024 YTBD winners**

Here are the judges’ selections of the best of the best. The 2024 Young Talent Big Dreams contest winners:

- **Original Composition and Overall Grand Prize:** Gerry Ibarra, 16, Terra Environmental Research Institute.
- **Individual Dance:** Maribelle Juvier, 12, Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer.
- **Individual Vocal – Broadway/Jazz/Classical:** Stephanie Aguiar, 16, Somerset Preparatory Academy.
- **Individual Vocal – Pop/Rock/Rap:** Luna Meneses, 17, Doral Academy Preparatory High School.
- **Individual Original Spoken Word:** Salandra Singleton, 17, Miami Norland Senior High School.
- **Individual Musical Instrument:** Harmoni Warren, 16, Arthur & Polly Mays Conservatory of the Arts.
- **Group Vocals:** Mariachi featuring Dylan Bustos, 13, and Shantel Ruiz, 12, of Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer.
- **Group Dance:** The Quadratic Four featuring Tylah Dorsonne, 14; Shannon Millan, 13; Ariannah Wright, 15; and Azariah Wright, 13; students at Arthur & Polly Mays Conservatory of the Arts.
- **Group Musical Instrument/Bands:** The Atomic Lollipops featuring Atlas Alvarez, 18, Miami Southridge Senior High School; Nya Fabian, 16, Homestead Senior High School; Ray Garcia, 16, South Dade Senior High School; Natalia Gomez-Mieses, 16, Homestead Senior High School; Kevin Perez, 18, Homestead Senior High School; and Liz Ponce, 17, Dade Preparatory Academy.

# 'Young Talent Big Dreams' attracts top performers

Bella Callejas  
Miami Times Staff Writer May 28, 2024 Updated 21 hrs ago



[Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre](#), in partnership with [The Children's Trust](#), recently announced the winners of this year's 2024 Young Talent Big Dreams (YTBD) competition. Now in its 14th year, the event has cemented itself as a lifeline for young artists seeking to showcase their abilities and receive professional feedback.

This year's countywide talent competition drew more than 300 participants – ranging in age from 8 to 18 – over a period of weeks.



“A wonderful thing that I noticed this year is we had so many alumni returning, some competing in different categories or continuing to participate because they enjoyed it so much,” said Earl Maulding, Actors’ Playhouse director of theatre for young audiences, who leads YTBD. “The competition matured, meaning that the performers took a chance on themselves, and the judges provided feedback to help them grow. This growth opportunity was a supportive environment where young performers could quickly develop their skills.”

One of the most enticing aspects of the competition is its range of categories, which include pop/rock/rap vocals, musical theater/jazz standards/classical vocals, dance, musical instrument, original spoken word, and original vocal and/or instrumental composition. Additionally, there were three group categories for dance, musical instruments/bands and vocal groups. This variety allows a broad spectrum of talent to shine.

Maulding explained that even though not every performer walked out a winner, Actors’ Playhouse provided experiences and mentorship for all the competition’s participants.

“We called the finalists to set up performance opportunities where they had to go somewhere they had never been before, for people they didn’t know,” said Maulding. “And they had to walk in as young professionals and take the stage no matter what the situation.”

Salandra Singleton, a 17-year-old student at Miami Norland Senior High School and a member of the Viking Freedom Writers, won for Individual Original Spoken Word. Singleton captivated audiences with a performance of her deeply personal original poem, “Cause I’m A Woman.”

She shared that she explored in her piece “Things that women experience on a day-to-day basis, like not being valued in their relationship or being scrutinized because their clothes are too tight. It’s basically saying, even though I do this, or be this, or do what I’m told to, I can never get it right because I’m simply a woman.”

Singleton prepared for the competition by practicing in front of a mirror to build her confidence. Despite her stage fright, she managed to channel her emotions and deliver a powerful performance. Winning the competition left her feeling shocked and proud, as it validated her

talent and hard work. She's now motivated to pursue future opportunities in spoken word and to work toward becoming a published author.

Maulding praised Singleton's ability to take her personal experiences and express them powerfully on stage, noting, "The fact that she was willing to stand on stage by herself and share her experiences in a strong, commanding, yet personal way set an unbelievable example."

Harmoni Warren, the 16-year-old winner of the Individual Musical Instrument category, is a multi-instrumentalist known for her proficiency in cello. While she prefers that instrument, she has played tuba and trumpet in various school bands, expanding her musical repertoire. Performances with esteemed ensembles like the K.U.M.C. Orchestra and Nu Deco N.X.T. Youth Ensemble have showcased her versatility and dedication to music.

Maulding expressed high expectations for her future.

"I expect to see that girl playing with the finest symphony orchestras anywhere in the world someday," he said of Warren. "Her touch and connection with her instrument were extraordinary."

Warren performed for the first time in the competition this year; to prepare she practiced extensively, focusing on the demanding cello piece she would perform at YTBD. Despite feeling anxious and scared backstage before she went on, she said once she was on stage she felt confident and at ease.

"It was a lot for me anxiety-wise. I was scared, but once I was on stage, I was good. It was smooth sailing from there," she said.

Warren's favorite part of the competition was watching all the other performances after she finished her own; she said she found it inspiring to witness the diverse talents of other young musicians. As for her future aspirations, she expressed a desire to become a music educator.

“I’ve been inspired by music teachers that I’ve had to be better not only in my musicianship, but in life in general,” she said. “I want to be that person for someone, that second home for someone the way that these teachers here at my school have been for me.”

Another act that received high praise was The Quadratic Four, winners of the Group Dance category. Its members – Tylah Dorsonne, 14, Ariannah Wright, 15, Azariah Wright, 13, and Shannon Millan, 13 – attend the Arthur & Polly Mays Conservatory of the Arts.

Formed during a student choreography month in their dance class, Quadratic Four chose Whitney Houston’s “I Will Always Love You” as the centerpiece of their performance. What began as a choreography project soon blossomed into a bonding experience for the group.

Dorsonne emphasized the importance of chemistry among the group members, attributing much of their performance’s impact to their shared love of dance. Their choreography, fueled by their creative imagination, is a testament to their passion and dedication.

“When we heard a song, we automatically knew that we wanted to make a piece to it. And all of a sudden, we came up with choreography, and it just all came together,” she said.

At the competition, she and her fellow dancers impressed judges with their classical technique and strong unified performance. Indeed, Maulding highlighted their commitment to technique and style, saying, “They were classically trained, projecting their energy in a very classical style of dance. Their strong unison dancing made them stand out as a cohesive unit rather than individuals.”

Reflecting on their journey, Dorsonne acknowledged areas for improvement but remained excited about future competition opportunities. Her advice to aspiring artists was simple yet powerful: “Give your best and embrace the experience fully.”

# MDC Alumni Hall of Fame Ceremony Honors 10 New Inductees

Ceremony raises funds for scholarships while recognizing alumni who are civic and business leaders

Posted by [MDC News](#) on [May 24, 2024](#).



Miami Dade College recently honored a new class of outstanding community leaders at its 22<sup>nd</sup> MDC Alumni Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony held at the Loews Coral Gables Hotel.

The annual Hall of Fame ceremony recognizes alumni who are civic and business leaders in the community and across the nation while raising vital funds to support student scholarships. Since 2003, more than 410 alumni have been inducted, representing various industries, from banking, journalism, marketing, public service, education, public safety and non-profit to name a few. MDC's Hall of Fame is the signature fundraising event of the Miami Dade College Foundation.

Watch a [short video of the festivities](#) from MDC's social media account.

“It is my privilege to honor a new group of exemplary leaders who join over two million MDC alumni making an impact in the community,” said MDC President Madeline Pumariega. “We are proud of their professional and personal accomplishments, and we thank them for their support and paving the way for future MDC students and alumni.”

#### **Meet the 2024 MDC Alumni Hall of Fame inductees:**

##### **Banking**

**Vania Laguerre**

**Sr. Vice President, Local Market Executive**

**Bank of America**

Laguerre’s illustrious career at Bank of America embodies the essence of leadership, community engagement, and unwavering dedication to fostering economic mobility. Her tenure at Bank of America spans three decades and showcases a remarkable evolution from roles in compliance, risk, business management and leadership to her pivotal position as the Local Market Executive. She orchestrates the firm’s strategic vision and philanthropic efforts in Miami, championing the cause of economic empowerment along with optimizing the delivery of Bank of America’s integrated resources to address financial needs. Her leadership extends beyond professional boundaries, embracing a passionate commitment to mentorship and diversity.

##### **Business**

**Jesus Lebeña**

**Sr. Vice President, Corporate Operations**

**MasTec Communication Group**

Lebeña exemplifies a remarkable career in global business and operations management. With over 25 years of experience, his expertise spans across supply chain, strategic sourcing, fleet operations, safety, business process improvement and mergers & acquisitions. At MasTec Communications Group, Lebeña oversees a broad spectrum of operations, including supply chain, facilities, fleet operations, safety & training and vendor management. His career milestones include pivotal roles at Motorola Corporation, where he contributed significantly to supply chain and operations and was ranked among the top 10% Outstanding Performers. He served as the Past President of the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana, where he participated in organizing Carnival Miami, the largest Hispanic festival in the United States.

##### **Education**

**Mari Tere Rojas**

**School Board Chair, District 6**

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

Rojas, Chair of the Miami-Dade County School Board, the third-largest A-rated School District in the nation, has shown commitment to education and community growth by taking proactive steps to solve pressing issues, including academic excellence, school safety, mental health and addressing the teacher shortage. Most recently, the Prime Minister of France named her Officer

of the Order of Academic Palms, the highest honor granted to academics and cultural education figures. She was also featured the book “Cuban American Women Making History.” Numerous awards include Elected Leader, Fiscal Management, National Distinguished Principal and Region IV Principal of the Year, The National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, Governor’s Sterling, Magnet Schools of America National Merit, and The Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement.

## **Pharmacy**

**Stephanie Ann Perez**

**Central Pharmacy Pharmacist**

**Publix Supermarkets, Inc.**

As a pharmacist for Publix Supermarkets, Inc., Perez significantly contributes to healthcare and patient well-being. Her professional journey is marked by her expertise, empathy and commitment, which are evident in her various roles within the field. Prior to Publix, Perez specialized as a Fertility Pharmacist, a position that honed her skills in patient care and empathy. This experience was integral in shaping her approach to pharmaceutical practice, focusing on patient-centered care and therapy management. Her proudest accomplishment is the successful balance of her professional responsibilities as a pharmacist and her personal life as a wife and mother of three. Her ability to manage these roles effectively highlights her dedication and commitment to both her family and her profession.

## **Journalism – Print**

**Alex Mena**

**Executive Editor**

**Miami Herald**

Alex Mena’s illustrious career in journalism, marked by his rise to the position of Executive Editor at *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*, embodies a story of relentless dedication and professional excellence. He began his career in the media industry as a clerk at *The Miami Herald*, where he later held various key roles, including Managing Editor and Deputy Managing Editor before his current position as Executive Editor. Over the years, Mena’s career trajectory has been nothing short of remarkable. In addition to overseeing both daily papers, he serves as the McClatchy Florida Regional Editor, overseeing the Bradenton Herald. His responsibilities include steering the editorial direction, managing newsroom operations and ensuring journalistic excellence across multiple platforms.

## **Marketing**

**Heide Dans**

**Vice President**

**WOW MARKETING**

Heidi Dans has significantly impacted her hometown of Miami through dedicated philanthropy and leadership. Alongside her husband, Jose “Pepe” Dans, she established WOW MKTG in 2005, an agency that excels in marketing and advertising, and also champions community engagement and support. Her extensive volunteer work includes organizations such as Miami

Children’s Museum, Nicklaus Children’s Hospital and the American Cancer Society. Leadership roles, including mission chair of the American Cancer Society Gala, chair of the Miami Children’s Museum and co-chair of the Nicklaus Children’s Hospital Diamond Ball, highlight her ability to mobilize resources and awareness for crucial causes. She continues to serve as gala chair for the Chapman Partnership for the Homeless, marking her third term in this pivotal position.

**José “Pepe” Dans**

**President**

**WOW MARKETING**

José “Pepe” Dans is a paragon of entrepreneurial spirit and cultural advocacy in marketing. His early exposure to the media world began with selling ads in high school. His career exemplifies his foresight and adaptability in a rapidly evolving industry, marked by a progressive climb through various renowned media outlets. Dans demonstrated a unique understanding of market needs and audience engagement from his impactful sales tenure in television at *WAMI-Channel 69* and *WFLX* to his strategic leadership at *Univision Network*. In 2005, he channeled this expertise into founding *WOW Factor*, which transformed into *WOW MKTG*, a full-service agency dedicated to amplifying the voice of the Hispanic market and beyond. Under Dans’ stewardship, *WOW MKTG* has expanded from a modest startup to a thriving multi-million-dollar enterprise.

**Non-Profit**

**James R. Haj**

**President and CEO**

**The Children’s Trust**

Haj has significantly improved the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade. Under his leadership, The Children’s Trust has seen unprecedented growth, expanding its reach and impact across the county. His tenure at Southwest Miami High School, his alma mater, was marked by his ability to drive positive change, leading the school from a ‘D’ to an ‘A’ grade, a testament to his transformative leadership. This success was a precursor to his significant roles in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system, where he served as Assistant Superintendent of Labor Relations and Compensation and Administrative Director for both South and Central Region Offices. His time at MDC was a pivotal period that shaped his path as an educator and advocate for children.

**Public Safety- Fire**

**Chief Raied S. Jadallah**

**Miami-Dade Fire Rescue**

With a distinguished career in the fire service spanning over 28 years, Jadallah has been a cornerstone of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue. As the Fire Chief, he leads nearly 3,000 employees, oversees various critical aspects of fire rescue operations and coordinates with county leaders and government agencies to enhance public safety goals. He began his career with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, advancing through the ranks from firefighter to Deputy Fire Chief. As an

adjunct professor at Florida International University, he co-developed the Incident Command System Simulator Program, which integrates design factors and adult learning principles. His involvement in major incidents such as the Surfside Champlain Tower South Collapse and COVID-19 response showcase his leadership in critical situations, and earned him numerous awards and commendations, reflecting his exceptional service and dedication.

### **Public Service**

**Ashley V. Gantt**

**State Representative, District 109**

**Florida House of Representative**

Gantt's journey from inspired educator to the founder of Gantt Legacy Law, P.A. (GLL), exemplifies her dedication to service. She joined Teach for America and taught at Miami-Dade County Public Schools, where she shaped the minds of middle and high school students. She later transitioned into law to champion the rights of the underserved. As a Broward County Assistant Public Defender, her prowess in the courtroom was recognized with consecutive "Hat Trick" awards, highlighting her exceptional trial skills. Gantt's leadership within the T.J. Reddick Bar Association, a fellow with the Florida Bar Wm. Reece Smith Jr. Leadership Academy, and the Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association illustrates her dedication to mentoring and elevating others in the profession.

### **About the Miami Dade College Foundation**

Founded in 1965, Miami Dade College Foundation raises essential private funds to support scholarships, academic programs, and support services so MDC students have the opportunity to pursue their dreams. MDC Foundation also supports world-class arts and cultural programming at MDC that enriches the community. In 2022-2023, MDC Foundation distributed \$26.8 million to benefit the students and programs of MDC. Known as Democracy's College, MDC changes lives through accessible, high-quality teaching and learning experiences that prepare students for tomorrow's workforce. Miami Dade College is the largest degree-granting institution in the nation. The college's eight campuses offer more than 300 distinct degree pathways, including several baccalaureate degrees in biological sciences, engineering, data analytics, information systems technology, education, public safety, supervision and management, nursing, physician assistant studies, film, and others. **For more information about the MDC Alumni Hall of Fame**, please visit [www.mdc.edu/halloffame](http://www.mdc.edu/halloffame).