

SOUTH FLORIDA



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THE VOICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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## COVER STORY

# Forward Thinker



A commitment to good government that includes advocating for public safety and the importance of law and order has made Steve Bovo the South Florida PBA's choice for county mayor. Bovo knows how important the PBA endorsement has been and pledges to make sure law enforcement will always have a voice in county government. His track record shows he doesn't make promises. Bovo takes action.

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**Bravo!**  
**A tribute to a fallen officer**



**House flipping for a brother**



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## THE PRES SAYS

# A vote of confidence for the police



STEADMAN  
STAHL

Working the response to Hurricane Andrew in 1992 confirmed perhaps the most basic principle of society. Amid that destruction, we realized we can do without power and we can do without the trash being picked up. The one basic service we cannot do without is the police.

Look at what defunding the police in New York City has created: a 348 percent increase in crime in July. Chicago just hit 500 homicides for the year. And in Seattle, where elected officials ordered the surrender of six blocks of the city to a radical group by telling the police to stay out, there have been multiple rapes, multiple people shot and multiple people murdered.

We have never been more inspired by the work of our members and the way you are putting yourselves on the line. Demonstrations and protests notwithstanding, you have not been deterred by the No. 1 killer of police officers across the country.

You are out there facing the invisible killer of COVID-19, making sure you are protecting the public, making sure everything stays orderly. We are working as hard as we can to support you in this endeavor and will continue to make sure treatment is available for those who are hit with the virus.

We are so proud of how every law enforcement officer continues to serve without giving in to the consequences of COVID-19.

All of you are heroes, no matter what you see or read from the news media or hear from elected officials. I know you are frustrated with the anti-police culture that seems to be growing. I can tell you that your union is devoted to holding elected officials to a pretty simple concept: Either you want lawlessness, or you want law and order.

Our members should never forget that you have an extremely large segment of the community that overwhelmingly supports the police. But you have a group of agitators out there who want total chaos. You have a group of anarchists who don't want jails. They don't want jails! How does that even work?

It's disappointing for me to see what's going on around this county. Everything they are telling us is that we shouldn't be categorizing these lawless agitators who are burning down buildings, that we shouldn't paint them with the same brush. But local elected officials have no problem taking the same brush and painting us with it, we're all rogue cops.

We have a mayoral candidate running who wants to do away with foot chases and warrant bu-reaus. That's outrageous coming from an elected official. And when you hear that, it makes me all that more impassioned to get involved in the upcoming elections.

I can't stress how these elections have consequences. When you see elected officials making their campaigns based on defunding the police, it's all that much more important for us to be engaged.

And the one thing we're looking for right now is the leader who is going to get us through this. That's why we're getting behind Steve Bovo for mayor. He wants to be a leader not just for one segment of the community, but for the entire community. He wants everybody to have a voice, not just one small group.

For us, Steve is a candidate who does not want to blame the police for all of society's woes. For us, he has made promises with a commitment to not defund police departments, to commit to the training, to make sure officers have the equipment they need to keep the community safe for all.

We support training. That's where the money needs to stay in the police department. We don't need elected officials who want to put millions of dollars into independent review boards. They want to blame the unions for the ills of the police department, but the unions have no say in who gets hired. One of the most important aspects of hiring is the psychological evaluation. But what does government do in that regard? They look for the lowest bidder. They are not willing to invest in those kinds of programs, but they are willing to invest in another layer of oversight.

Supporting candidates like Steve Bovo will keep politicians from listening to the ones who are throwing rocks at the police, burning down stores and looting. I think this presidential election has everybody amped up with the us-against-them mentality. But let me be clear here: Elections do have consequences. If a certain segment gets elected, lawlessness wins.

But I believe the worst of times bring out the best of us. I am very proud of our officers doing tremendous work in one of the most difficult times in history. I equate this to soldiers coming back from Vietnam and being spit on. People will look back on this and be ashamed of spitting on us and throwing rocks at our guardians.

So don't ever forget that our response makes the difference in the eye of the storm.  
And don't forget to vote.

Steadman Stahl, President  
steadman@sflpba.org



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# The pandemic didn't stop Florida voters



JOHN A. JENKINS  
EXECUTIVE  
VICE  
PRESIDENT

Welcome back, everyone, to our second issue of the new *Heat* magazine. I hope everyone was somewhat able to enjoy their summer breaks and vacations even given the COVID-19 pandemic situation. One thing is certain, it forced millions of people to #stayhome, cook more and enjoy themselves and their families in the comforts of their own homes.

The pandemic did not discourage the voters of Florida and Miami-Dade County from voting. Many Florida voters risked their health to come out and vote in person and take advantage of early voting, while many others mailed in their ballots. In Miami-Dade County, 423,320 ballots were cast out of 1,499,402 registered voters, and in Broward County, 316,973 ballots were cast out of 1,222,720 registered voters. These turnouts of 28.23 percent and 25.92 percent of registered voters were a record for primaries in Miami-Dade and Broward. We need to keep the momentum going in order to endorse and select the best candidates who support the police and value the safety of our public and communities.

With that said, we want to congratulate our South Florida PBA-endorsed candidates who won their elections outright in the Aug. 18, primary:

- Oliver G. Gilbert III, Miami-Dade County Commission District 01
- Joe A. Martinez, Miami-Dade County Commission District 11
- Rene Garcia, Miami-Dade County Commission District 13
- Felicia Simone Robinson, State Representative District 102
- Dotie Joseph, State Representative District 108
- Kevin Chambliss, State Representative District 117
- Pedro Garcia, Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser
- Joseph Perkins, Circuit Judge Group 55
- Carmen Cabarga, Circuit Judge Group 57
- Mavel Ruiz, Circuit Judge Group 67
- Christine Bandine, County Judge Group 24
- Joshua David Fuller, Bay Harbor Islands Council Member
- Elizabeth Trioche, Bay Harbor Islands Council Member
- Dennis Ward, Monroe County State Attorney
- Billy Wardlow, Monroe County Commissioner District 3
- Clayton Lopez, Monroe County Commissioner District 6

Every year, it sounds like we are repeating the same rhetoric. It cannot be stressed enough to our members, friends, family, the PBA board of directors, municipal representatives, and those who support us the importance of voting. This is where you can effect real change. Encourage them to go and vote. It cannot be overlooked.

Speaking of change, with all the anti-police and defunding narratives these past few months, the amount of support for law enforcement during early voting was overwhelming, with many people coming up to us expressing their love and support of the police. I was visiting a polling site during early voting in August, and I had the pleasure of meeting Rose earlier in the morning. Around midday, she came back with



Thank you, Rose, for stopping by the polls to give this very special gift to Executive Vice President John Jenkins.

a hand-painted “Thank you, I back the blue” canvas artwork that she made for me. It was very touching to see that the kids still appreciate and look up to our profession. Rose, I again thank you for this true act of kindness. You are a future leader.

The general election coming up in November will be important and will determine who will be the president of the United States. Early voting will run from Oct. 19 through Nov. 1. If anyone is interested in volunteering to come out and support your police officers at the polls, please do not hesitate to call Sonia Castro at 305-593-0044 or email her at [sonia@sflpba.org](mailto:sonia@sflpba.org). As always, if you have any questions, concerns, or developing issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at 305-593-0044 or [jenkins@sflpba.org](mailto:jenkins@sflpba.org).

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# Miami-Dade's first COVID line-of-duty death



DAVID  
GREENWELL  
VICE  
PRESIDENT

As I reflect on my previous *Heat* article on “Policing During the Pandemic,” I am doubling down on the seriousness of this virus. So far this year, the number-one killer of law enforcement officers in the U.S. has been COVID-19. As of this writing, 32 officers have been killed in traffic crashes, 30 have been killed by gunfire, but 97 officers have died of COVID-related illnesses.

On July 31, Miami-Dade had its first line-of-duty death from COVID-19. Corrections Officer Jairo Bravo, assigned to TKG, passed away from complications related to COVID-19. He was only 48 years old. Our thoughts and prayers are with

we still tested positive, and then again two weeks later on the next test. The doctors explained that even though you may be feeling fine, the virus can linger in your system for weeks, possible even a couple of months, which is why you may continue to test positive. In my case, I originally tested positive on June 12 and didn't get my first negative result until July 27.

Thankfully, my family was lucky in that we only experienced symptoms for about a week, and they were not that serious. But so many others have not been that lucky. Many suffer from more serious symptoms and even end up in the hospital for extended periods of time, while still others don't make it. As I previously stated, so far this year, 97 law enforcement officers have died from COVID-19. So this is why you have to take every precaution you can. The difficulty with this virus is that it is so easy to spread because often, once you've been exposed, you are infectious before you have even begun to show symptoms yourself. You are still living your life without knowing that you may be spreading the virus to others. This is why you should take this very seriously and do everything you can to reduce your risk. Personally, I always tell others to act as if everyone you meet is infected, because you just never know. Please try to limit your contact with others as much as you can. Follow social distancing rules when with others. Wear a mask. Don't touch your eyes, mouth or nose, and wash your hands often. Hopefully, following these steps will help reduce the chances of you or a loved one getting infected.



I was honored to attend Correction Officer Bravo's funeral.

his family. For more information on our fallen officers, go to [www.odmp.org](http://www.odmp.org). This just emphasizes how serious and deadly this virus can be, especially if you have pre-existing medical conditions or are elderly. You should be taking extra precautions to protect yourselves and those whom you live with. For the latest information on COVID-19 (how it spreads, how to protect yourself, symptoms and testing), go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

Speaking from personal experience, I had COVID-19. On the evening of June 11, I just didn't feel right and had a slight headache. I took my temperature, and it was 99.5. I immediately quarantined myself in my bedroom. I called the MDPD Department safety officers, Sergeant Nitza Dominguez and Officer Carel Valdes, both of whom helped me tremendously throughout the ordeal. I contacted Sergeant Jorge Rodriguez, who got me in for testing the next day at Hard Rock Stadium. On June 14, I got a call from the Florida Department of Health advising me that I was positive for COVID-19. They stressed that I should contact my personal physician and make sure that I was quarantining. Strangely, I got another call on June 16 from FDH advising me that I was negative.

I requested to speak to a supervisor and reported the conflict. He advised that it was impossible that I was negative because my report clearly showed the word “positive” in red letters. Even though I quarantined myself from the first symptoms, and we were extremely careful to follow all CDC recommendations in my house, unfortunately I did pass it to my wife and daughter. Their symptoms were a bit more serious than mine: low-grade fever, aches and pains, chills, sore throat and fatigue. After about seven days, we were all feeling much better; but after two weeks,



Congratulations to Sergeant Jody Wright on her promotion.

On a different note, I would like to congratulate PBA Board of Directors member Jody Wright on her promotion to sergeant. I'm honored to call her my good friend. Remember that she was shot during the murder of Officer Jose Somohano in south Miami-Dade on Sept. 13, 2007. She chose not to go out on disability, and instead she elected to fight and continue doing what she loves. She has had more than 30 painful surgeries to correct her leg. She is an outstanding person, cop, friend and a true inspiration. God bless you, Jody, in your new assignment.

As always, stay safe, wait for your backup, and know that the PBA is always here for you. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me at 305-593-0044 or [greenwell@sflpba.org](mailto:greenwell@sflpba.org).

# No more debate needed on the Second Amendment



**CAPTAIN  
NIZAM "ISH"  
ISHMAEL  
TREASURER**

The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution reads: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Now more than ever, Americans are exercising their rights to bear arms.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people have been acting crazy. Toilet paper, hand sanitizer and protective equipment have been in high demand. However, no one thought that firearms would be a high-demand item as well. Many states have released prisoners for home detention amid the pandemic. Because of COVID-19, prisoners who are near the end of their sentences, who are older or who are deemed not dangerous are back in society again.

In Maryland, a scumbag who raped a woman in 2019 was released from jail in April 2020 because of coronavirus. He was scheduled to stand trial for rape, sodomy, strangulation, abduction and burglary. This piece of crap located his accuser and killed her outside her apartment. Thank goodness police were able to catch up with him, but only after a vehicle pursuit, again putting the community at risk. Amid the pandemic was the George Floyd incident in Minneapolis. Out of this came the "defund the police" rhetoric. Many Americans, after processing what was happening in our country, feel the need to protect themselves.

According to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), there has been a surge in background checks on Americans who are purchasing firearms. When a person buys a firearm, an ATF form must be completed. The government does not track firearms sales, but it does track background checks that are required to buy firearms from licensed dealers. Since 1998, more than 355 million checks have been done, leading to more than 1.5 million denials. As you all know, the common law-abiding citizen purchases a legitimate gun, and the criminals obtain their guns elsewhere. Look at the following chart: As you can see, there is a massive increase

## NICS Firearm Background Checks:

November 30, 1998 - July 31, 2020

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
1998											21,196	871,644	892,840
1999	591,355	696,323	753,083	646,712	576,272	569,493	589,476	703,394	808,627	945,701	1,004,333	1,253,354	9,138,123
2000	639,972	707,070	736,543	617,689	538,648	550,561	542,520	682,501	782,087	845,886	898,598	1,000,962	8,543,037
2001	640,528	675,156	729,532	594,723	543,501	540,491	539,498	707,288	864,038	1,029,691	983,186	1,062,559	8,910,191
2002	665,803	694,668	714,665	627,745	569,247	518,351	535,594	693,139	724,123	849,281	887,647	974,059	8,454,322
2003	653,751	708,281	736,864	622,832	567,436	529,334	533,289	683,517	738,371	856,863	842,932	1,008,118	8,481,588
2004	695,000	723,654	738,298	642,589	542,456	546,847	561,773	666,598	740,260	865,741	890,754	1,073,701	8,687,671
2005	685,811	743,070	768,290	658,954	557,058	555,560	561,358	687,012	791,353	852,478	927,419	1,164,582	8,952,945
2006	775,518	820,679	845,219	700,373	626,270	616,097	631,156	833,070	919,487	970,030	1,045,194	1,253,840	10,036,933
2007	894,608	914,954	975,806	840,271	803,051	792,943	757,884	917,358	944,889	1,025,123	1,079,923	1,230,525	11,177,335
2008	942,556	1,021,130	1,040,863	940,961	886,183	819,891	891,224	956,872	973,003	1,183,279	1,529,635	1,523,426	12,709,023
2009	1,213,885	1,259,078	1,345,096	1,225,980	1,023,102	968,145	966,162	1,074,757	1,093,230	1,233,982	1,223,252	1,407,155	14,033,824
2010	1,119,229	1,243,211	1,300,100	1,233,761	1,016,876	1,005,876	1,069,792	1,089,374	1,145,798	1,368,184	1,296,223	1,521,192	14,409,616
2011	1,323,336	1,473,513	1,440,724	1,351,255	1,230,953	1,168,322	1,157,041	1,310,041	1,253,752	1,340,273	1,534,414	1,862,327	16,454,951
2012	1,377,301	1,749,903	1,727,881	1,427,343	1,316,226	1,302,660	1,300,704	1,526,206	1,459,363	1,614,032	2,006,919	2,783,765	19,592,303
2013	2,495,440	2,309,393	2,209,407	1,714,433	1,435,917	1,281,351	1,283,912	1,419,088	1,401,562	1,687,599	1,813,643	2,041,528	21,093,273
2014	1,600,355	2,086,863	2,488,842	1,742,946	1,485,259	1,382,975	1,402,228	1,546,497	1,456,032	1,603,469	1,803,397	2,309,684	20,968,547
2015	1,772,794	1,859,584	2,012,488	1,711,340	1,580,980	1,529,057	1,600,832	1,745,410	1,795,102	1,976,759	2,243,030	3,314,594	23,141,970
2016	2,545,802	2,613,074	2,523,265	2,145,865	1,870,000	2,131,485	2,197,169	1,853,815	1,992,219	2,333,539	2,561,281	2,771,159	27,538,673
2017	2,043,184	2,234,817	2,433,092	2,045,564	1,942,677	1,901,768	1,742,546	1,925,146	1,967,104	2,030,391	2,382,788	2,586,138	25,235,215
2018	2,030,530	2,333,193	2,767,699	2,223,213	2,002,992	1,935,691	1,835,318	2,073,296	1,956,681	2,086,895	2,393,043	2,543,385	26,181,936
2019	2,165,094	2,053,886	2,644,851	2,334,249	2,349,309	2,312,309	2,030,661	2,366,824	2,207,312	2,393,609	2,574,752	2,936,894	28,369,750
2020	2,702,702	2,802,467	3,740,688	2,911,128	3,091,455	3,931,607	3,639,224						22,819,271
2021													
TOTAL													355,823,337

**NOTE:** These statistics represent the number of firearm background checks initiated through the NICS. They do not represent the number of firearms sold. Based on varying state laws and purchase scenarios, a one-to-one correlation cannot be made between a firearm background check and a firearm sale.

in background checks starting in March 2020 through July 2020. The numbers being reported are more than 22 million for the 2020 calendar year so far. The highest number of background checks was more than 28 million in all of 2019. If the pace continues, this will be a record for background checks and will result in more sales of firearms.

Americans are buying firearms because all the uncertainty and unrest have them concerned about their safety. In the past, firearms sales spiked because an event like a school or mass shooting occurred, and some lawmakers now want to enhance the gun control laws. In fact, many of the current elected officials are advocating that gun stores should be temporarily closed during the pandemic, arguing that the surge in purchases could pose a safety threat if buyers aren't trained properly, new guns aren't stored safely and background checks aren't completed. Yes, that is their argument. The presidential administration has made it clear that these gun stores are essential businesses and should stay open

during the lockdown alongside pharmacies, gas stations and grocery stores.

What happens next is that many of us already owning guns, so just go out and buy a few more. Then there are the new gun owners, the millions of people suddenly owning a firearm for the first time. Many first-time gun owners have fears over looting, violence and burglaries, which have prompted them to purchase firearms as a means of self-defense should law and order continue to break down. Many people in society suffer from depression, and when there are more firearms in circulation, the gun-related suicides and "suicides by cop" increase. More firearms in residences and vehicles means more stolen firearms and more shootings. From Jan. 1 to Aug. 14, nearly 40 South Florida PBA members have had to discharge their firearms in the line of duty.

Be safe out there, as we all know what happens when firearms fall into the hands of irresponsible individuals. Contact me at [ish@sflpba.org](mailto:ish@sflpba.org) or at 305-593-0044.

# Creating a safer environment for officers and inmates



LIEUTENANT  
JERMAINE  
LAWSON

The month of September is already upon us. Even though it is customary to celebrate our fallen heroes during the month of September, I am going to break with tradition to recognize and highlight a remarkable achievement by a department I have never mentioned or written about in any of my previous articles. This agency came on board just over two years ago.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to visit their facilities a few weeks ago to see how management and staff were coping during the COVID-19

pandemic. All the officers I spoke with had nothing but positive things to say in response to the measures that upper management implemented to prevent an outbreak in their facilities.



The Miami-Dade Corrections Pre-Trial Detention Center 7X3 Kitchen Staff, from left, Officer D. Shropshire, Officer H. Jean-Pierre, Officer T. Renroe and Officer N. Higgs.



From left: Lieutenant J. Lawson with Monroe County Sheriff's Department of Corrections Sergeant R. Salter and Corporal L. Fertillien.



From left, Officer K. Maxwell, Lieutenant J. Lawson and Officer D. Williams.

After spending the day evaluating the measures that were implemented, it gives me a newfound respect and appreciation for the job they are doing. This department must be applauded for their readiness in response to the pandemic. With the assistance of Sheriff Ramsey, Captain Crane and his command staff developed strict guidelines and implemented new sanitation policies which prevented outbreaks in their facilities. This proactive approach resulted in a safer environment for the officers and inmates alike. Throughout this pandemic, they did not have a single officer or inmate in any of their facilities test positive for the virus. That is an outstanding achievement and should not go unnoticed. I want to extend my gratitude to Sergeant Lawson and her crew at the Plantation Key facility for their warm reception and courtesy toward us. A big thank-you to Captain Crane and his entire command staff at the Monroe County Detention Center for taking time from their busy schedules to give us a tour of their facility. Special thanks to Sheriff Ramsey for his warm hospitality and kind gestures toward us. This department is a model for others to follow. Way to go, and keep it up.

On a somber note, one of our members became the first casualty of COVID-19 in the month of July. The news of Officer Jairo Antonio Bravo's passing hit our department and our community hard. The stress of this pandemic made the impact more difficult for us to take. The outpouring of support for his home-going service was exceptional, as many came out to pay their last respects. This is nothing more than what he deserves.

Also, I want to thank the Miami-Dade Police Department for their support and for coordinating the motorcycle detail for the motorcade from the church to his final resting place at the Hollywood cemetery. Let us take a moment to honor Officer Jairo Bravo for his contribution to MDCR during his short tenure with us. Officer Bravo will be forever etched in our hearts.

Also in the month of June, two of our members experienced

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

# "Do not fear, for I am with you"



AL LOPEZ  
CHAPLAIN

To our brothers and sisters in law enforcement, with a saddened heart we notify all our members that the St. Michael's Annual Service, normally held in September, will be canceled. As we traverse through these uncertain times, we must be aware of the present danger of this pandemic and the need to isolate and protect ourselves and those around us. We have rescheduled the event for Sept. 24, 2021 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, and God willing, we shall by then be out of this looming danger. I offer this prayer to our brothers and sisters who daily go out into the streets to do their duty with honor and valor.

Let us pray...

Gracious God, during the pandemic, we pray this day for police officers, correctional officers, 911 call takers, dispatchers and all first responders. Hear our prayer. God who calls all humanity to serve, you called first responders to their professions to protect and to save. You gifted them so that they might bring their best training and experience to bear. Receive the anxiety they feel as they sense and respond to the heightened anxiety in our communities. You are the God who said, "Do not fear, for I am with you; I am your God." (Isaiah 41:10) Strengthen, help and uphold them now in this time of need.

God of comfort, God of all mercy, as citizens act out their pain and fear in ways detrimental to their own wellbeing, it also threatens the wellbeing of those who respond to calls for help. You promised to be near to the brokenhearted, and to save the crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18) Be with your people now in their distress and protect those who respond to their calls for help. Lord God, whose peace surpasses all understanding, be with those people for whom home does not offer a sanctuary. Obligated to shelter at home, victims of domestic violence are now at heightened risk, and those who respond to their calls for help are likewise endangered. Let all in danger find a ready sanctuary in you (Exodus 25:8) and let those who love violence know your very soul despises them.

(Psalm 11:5) Heavenly Father, you give all people not a spirit of fear but a spirit of power and of love and of self-control. (2 Timothy 1:7) In these times when social distancing is essential to prevent the spread of the virus, send that Spirit to those fearful citizens who feel they must lash out at officers with spitting and hitting. Calm them and let your self-control replace their wrath, so that those officers and first responders who respond to calls for service are not placed at risk.

God, the source of all gratefulness, we join police officers and first responders in giving thanks for those who comply by staying at home in these times. Those who do right silence the ignorance of the foolish (1 Peter 2:15), and we pray for the foolish who do not comply, for criminals, drug dealers and those citizens who believe themselves immortal. Fill them with your wisdom so that they may come to know they put themselves — and others — at risk, including those who respond to their calls for help. God, the Lord of all that was and is and is to come, the visible and the invisible. We lift before you these officers and first responders as they contend with the invisible enemy: COVID-19. Assure them by your almighty and unshakable power that you shall prevail against the cosmic powers of this present darkness. (Ephesians 6:12) O God from whose sight no creature is hidden (Hebrews 4:13) and who sees everything under the heavens (Job 28:24), let not the toil of the support staff be forgotten. Bless and sanctify the work of administrators, records staff and custodians. Keep us ever mindful of the risks they too assume and the stresses they bear for serving in these times. Lord God, for the abiding love with which you receive these and all the prayers we offer — those spoken and those unspoken — we give you thanks. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

## Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil: May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do you, o Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

## LAWSON CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10



Officer M. St. Jour, center, receives the Miami-Dade Corrections Employee of the Month award from Sergeant F. Edwards (left) and Captain A. Yeber.

major tragedies. The loss of a child for any parent is very traumatic and devastating. Even though their ordeals are over, the trauma that stems from tragedies of this magnitude is never easy to come to terms with. As an organization, let us continue to support them in whatever way we possibly can. A little sincerity will go a long way, and please keep them in your prayers. In closing, to all our members going through a rough time coping with this pandemic, it is important to keep the following in mind: Correctional staff serve as a line of defense between the good in our society and deviant individuals.

Regardless of whether it is widely recognized, our society depends upon correctional employees and administrators to keep deviant individuals securely out of our communities until they are deemed ready to return. Do not lose hope or faith in the value of your role in maintaining public safety and protecting your communities — your impact is greater than many will ever realize. I want you to know that you are always in our prayers. We are here to offer support and assistance in whatever way we can. Please stay strong; this too shall pass.

Contact me at [Lawson@sflpba.org](mailto:Lawson@sflpba.org) or 305-593-0044.

# Virtual 9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance



DENNIS  
BAMBACH  
RPOC  
PRESIDENT

Hope that you are all staying safe and healthy. This is a trying time for the world, and I am sure you join me in praying that this will all be over soon.

Due to the pandemic, the annual 9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance to honor the heroes killed in the line of duty, sponsored by the POAT, will be virtual. It will be posted on the POAT website on Friday, Sept. 11 at approximately 9 a.m. It is important to pay homage to all the first responders who died while doing their jobs so, if possible, please consider attending this virtual event.

The RPOC represents members in 33 states. In those states, we are interested in knowing if any of our members have formed groups of retirees that get together for outings, luncheons, etc. We would appreciate receiving contacts for those groups by visiting [www.rocpba.org](http://www.rocpba.org) or calling the RPOC office at 305-594-2848 or 866-594-2848. We are trying to keep in touch with members to see how many groups are out there talking to each other.

## Training notice

As of this writing, Retirees Open Shoot is still on for Sept. 21, but pending streamlining a system that would allow smaller groups to shoot and obtain your qualification cards at the same time, as has been suggested by members of this group. If and when changes are made, notifications will be sent via RPOC and posted on our Facebook page as well.

## A call for new board members

As you all know, some members of the board are not getting any younger, a few having kindly served for the past nine to 18 years. Being on the board is a great experience, and we would encourage all qualified members to become more involved and consider running for office when the next election occurs in September 2022.

## Stay connected with our e-mails

If you have not done so yet, please sign up for our informative RPOC emails. You can do so by logging onto our webpage at [www.rocpba.org](http://www.rocpba.org), clicking on the "Join Email List" tab at the top right side of the page and completing the form. Our emails will keep you updated with useful retiree information such as birthdays, social events and shooting schedule. RPOC members can also share photos and contact other members on our own Facebook page. It is restricted to members only and is monitored by your board of directors. You can contact us at 866-594-2848 or 305-594-2848.

## New members

We would like to welcome the following new members: Jose Monteagudo, Hialeah/Key Biscayne; Ana Fuste, MD Corr; Mike Crowley, MDPD; Alfredo Torres, FIU PD; Juan Delcastillo, MDPD; William Gilliland, MDPD; and Darrol Johnson, MD Corr.

## 2021 reunion

I am optimistic that we will be able to hold our annual RPOC Reunion in 2021. The reunion dates will be April 22 thru April 25. It will once again be at the Marriott Lake Mary. They have

been very gracious in keeping the costs for both rooms and meals reasonable. Since our organization consists of retirees, we like to keep the reunions as affordable as possible while still providing an enjoyable experience.

As mentioned before, luncheons at the Miccosukee are cancelled for the year, and our annual Christmas luncheon has also been cancelled.

## Remembering our deceased members

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of the following members who were called home:

**Retired Bureau Commander Mark M. McGrath, 66.** Commander McGrath was cremated, and a closed family service will be held at a later date.

**Anthony "Tony" Borowski Jr., 81.** Graveside services with military honors were held on March 20, 2020, at Sarasota National Cemetery

**William "Randy" Baker, 74.** Graceland Funeral Home handled the arrangements. Randy was cremated, and a private family service was held.

**Normando J. Gregorisich, 67.** A memorial service at Massons Funeral Home was scheduled for Aug. 29, 2020.

**Oscar Perez, 64.** No other information is currently available.

## 2020 scholarship winners

John Fraley, chairman of the Otis Chambers Scholarship Fund, and the RPOC Board are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2020 Otis Chambers Scholarship. The three recipients submitted applications which were reviewed by Professor Paul Rittenhouse of Florida International University.



## Jade Ruiz

Jade Ruiz graduated from the Miami-Dade School District Terra Environmental Research School Miami. Jade is currently enrolled at the University of Central Florida majoring in biology on a pre-veterinary track toward a degree as a doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM).



## Nicole King

Nicole King graduated from Broward County College with an associate in arts degree in marketing. She will be pursuing her goals at the University of Central Florida this summer and hopes to be accepted into the Walt Disney World program for continuing education. Nicole King is the niece of RPOC member Richard (Dick) Magaldi.

## Jada Heron

Jada Heron is a third-year student enrolled at the University of Central Florida majoring in accounting with a minor in economics. Jada plans to continue her studies and will strive for her master's degree in accounting and become a CPA. Both Jada and Jade are the granddaughters of Noel Heron, a RPOC member who retired from Miami Dade Corrections in 2006.

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# One incident, four potential arenas



**CRISTINA  
ESCOBAR  
ASSISTANT  
GENERAL  
COUNSEL**

I have been a PBA attorney for the past 16 years. Prior to the PBA, I worked as a prosecutor for the Dade County State Attorney's Office. In my time at the PBA as legal counsel, I have assisted many officers with in-custody death and/or police-involved shooting call outs, internal affairs investigations, FDLE proceedings, disciplinary matters and consultations. A common question I get called about is: "I was relieved of duty and I don't know why."

As frustrating as getting said news is, the unfortunate reality is that departments can relieve you of duty (ROD) pending investigations. These investigations can be of the criminal or administrative type. Either way, if you are ROD pending an investigation, it is important to know that there are what I refer to as the four potential arenas to an incident. In other words, the same incident can result in four independent actions: criminal, administrative/IA, FDLE and/or civil. Not all have to happen, but some certainly can.

For example, while we hope it will never actually happen, theoretically you get ROD pending an investigation regarding an allegation of excessive use of force. A use-of-force allegation is potentially a criminal charge (such as battery or aggravated battery), therefore the department (and/or the investigating body) after conducting its investigation will present the case to the state attorney's office (SAO). At this stage, sometimes you will receive what is referred to as a "prior to" letter from the SAO. This letter is the state seeking to get a voluntary statement from you prior to making a decision on filing charges — hence the name. No officer should ever just provide a voluntary statement, even if you believe it will clear everything up. As hard as it is to absorb, when the SAO sends a "prior to" letter, it's because you are being considered a potential defendant. As such, it is important to remember that just like any defendant, you have rights as provided by the U.S. Constitution; that is, the right to remain silent and the right to an attorney. Therefore, if you receive said letter, or have a detective knocking on your door asking for a statement, prior to providing any statements that could be used against you, remember that you have the right to contact your PBA attorneys for guidance or representation.

On that same allegation, if the SAO declines criminal charges, the SAO will advise the department to handle the matter administratively. If the matter is to be handled administratively, IA will send you a notification that you are being ordered to provide a compelled statement, which means that you have no choice and must provide the statement. The rules for voluntary and compelled statements differ, but for the purposes of this article, compelled statements have certain protections (commonly known as Garrity). Regardless of the protections afforded by Garrity, pursuant to Florida Statute 112.532, you as the subject officer have the right to an attorney, and the PBA recommends you always exercise that right. Some of my clients have told me, as they sit across from me with discipline that arose from an IA that they attended without an attorney, that they did not want to bother us because the allegation was "BS." I can appreciate that, and that may be true, but everyone needs to know that the PBA attorneys want to be contacted to attend these IAs even if the officer feels the allegations are BS. We want to be involved from the onset of any case, not just to ensure that your rights are protected, but to also make sure the process is fair and just.

## 2020 PENDING GRIEVANCES

This list represents the pending grievances filed at the various departments represented by the South Florida Police Benevolent Association as of July 31, 2020. The PBA legal staff receives numerous other complaints that are resolved by other means.

### DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT

<b>ANIMAL SERVICES</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>CORRECTIONS</b>		
Association	1	
TGK	2	
MWDC	1	
CBS	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>EL PORTAL</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>HIALEAH</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>HOMESTEAD</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>KEY WEST</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>MDPD</b>		
Association	2	
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>MIAMI GARDENS</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>MONROE COUNTY DETENTION</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>NORTH BAY VILLAGE</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>NORTH MIAMI</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>OPA LOCKA</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>SWEETWATER</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL GRIEVANCES</b>		<b>26</b>

If the IA allegation is sustained, departmental disciplinary action will follow, and of course your PBA attorneys will represent you through the process. However, FDLE can also proceed with its own disciplinary action. Once again, it is very important that if you receive an FDLE notification, you notify the PBA right away.

Lastly, once an incident is investigated criminally, administratively and by FDLE, it can (and often does) result in a civil action against you. If and when you get served with a civil complaint, usually naming the county, the department and all of the officers involved in the alleged incident as respondents, you should contact the PBA as soon as possible. Though in most civil lawsuits the officer will be represented by the county or city attorney, there are some circumstances where the county or city may initially decline civil representation. That is why once served, you need to see your employer's legal department to make sure they are aware that you have been served. But you, once again, need to contact the PBA so that we can make sure that your rights are protected.

In conclusion, whether an incident results in a criminal, administrative, FDLE or civil action, members are encouraged to contact the PBA legal department. There are many other intricacies related to this subject matter, but for purposes of brevity I was unable to elaborate on all of them here. The bottom line is that representing our members to the best of our abilities is what we strive to do, and that includes ensuring that your rights are protected every step of the way. Thank you for what you do!

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# SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

## VIRTUAL 9/11 CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE

As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and after taking into consideration the state of our county, it was decided that a short version of the 9/11 Ceremony will be posted on the POAT website on Sept. 11, 2020.

This annual ceremony serves to remember and honor our country's heroes who were killed in the line of duty responding to the attack on our nation, as well as those who responded who have been lost since then. It is important that we never forget all the heroes who perished that tragic day.

We would like to thank Barbeque 58, located across the street from Miami-Dade Police Department Headquarters, for selecting the Police Officer Assistance Trust (POAT) as their charity of choice for their soft-opening event held Aug. 5-7.

Thanks for your support and stay safe.



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# All Good With

# BO



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## **PBA's endorsed candidate for Miami-Dade County mayor will be good for citizens, good for government and good for the police**

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Esteban Bovo often carted his young son, Esteban Jr., to Brothers to the Rescue and events for similar organizations. As a veteran of the Bay of Pigs, Esteban Sr. wanted his son to experience the mission of helping others as a gesture of humanity, rather than a political act.

Senior didn't care much for politics, especially those spawned from governmental gluttony. So he had his boy take part in dispensing necessities of life like food and clothing to those in need. Senior tried to instill simple values in his son built on the small family business he started and the desire to see a free Cuba.

"I wasn't always a happy camper having to go along with him. But he said, 'Get in the car.' And I went," Esteban Jr. recalls. "My dad cared a lot about what went on in our community, and I realized the amount of effort, service and work small business

owners have to go through to be successful. And how quickly government can wedge its way into that."

Early in life, Esteban "Steve" Bovo learned a lesson about the value of government by the people and for the people. "Good government," as he evokes, is the foundation of his campaign as a candidate for Miami-Dade County Mayor.

And a platform that counts as one of its four pillars making public safety a non-negotiable aspect of great government has made Bovo the South Florida PBA's endorsed candidate. PBA members' boots on the ground played a huge role in helping Bovo emerge from the Aug. 18 primary into the Nov. 3 general election runoff against an opponent who has unequivocally and publicly advocated for policies that jibe with much of the anti-police political rhetoric inhibiting the safety of so many communities.

"I don't get to the runoff without the endorsement of the PBA, and I don't think I have a campaign without their support,"



Bovo confirms. Take a scroll through his Facebook page to see Bovo wearing his mask with the PBA logo during many of his campaign stops. Bovo knows just how big of a factor law enforcement and public safety can be to good government.

“You see this conversation of defunding the police, of chastising those folks out there providing the blanket of protection, but I think we have to put first responders at the apex of respect,” he continues. “I realize it has become unpopular to manifest your support for the police, but this conversation of defunding – I realize the community isn’t down with any of that. So I am responding with my position of getting back to core services. We have to pay our women and men to do a core service that many of us cannot do.”

#### Good words

Good government very well might be tattooed somewhere on Bovo’s persona, if not his body. But this is not a concept etched in ink. It’s a mission inscribed in blood, sweat and tears, spawned from being raised by Cuban immigrants who lived and breathed the privilege of freedom and honed during an illustrious career of government service.

As a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 2008 to 2011 and as Miami-Dade county commissioner for two

terms, Bovo has built a record that screams politics cannot continue to be above the priorities of the taxpayer. As a county commissioner, Bovo has become known for effecting real change, often being the lone voice in doing so.

**“We understand the role police play in our community. And if you really take it to the macro level, law and order leads to stability in the community.”**

His actions speak loudly in fighting against the corruption that has plagued the county for so many years. And amid his long list of accomplishments, Bovo is particularly proud of working to ensure county employee benefits and retirement reflect fairness and equity and authoring and passing legislation creating an opioid task force to adopt best practices.

Yes, he has ruffled some feathers along the way. But isn’t that the fight-or-flight PBA members and their families need in good county government? Isn’t that what is needed to move Miami-Dade forward, as Bovo’s campaign slogan advocates?

“We are disrupting the interests of some very deep pockets with radical agendas; however, I have no doubt this is the correct course for the future of our county to be truly prosperous for its residents,” Bovo emphasizes. “We cannot afford to go back to the days when Miami-Dade was a national laughingstock because of the rampant corruption that existed in our county.”



Mayor Candidate Steve Bovo with South Florida PBA Treasurer Nizam “Ish” Ishmael (left) and President Steadman Stahl.

Close your eyes for a minute and hear Bovo’s splendid oratory that means business. It is filled with pride in his heritage and a bass line that truly lets freedom ring with an unmistakable campaign promise:

“Cronyism and corruption will be replaced by transparency and accountability,” he underscores.

#### Good deeds

Bovo’s vision and commitment to move Miami-Dade forward begin with the reliance on conservative and effective governing for families and taxpayers. The other side of politics tends to make promises during election season. Bovo makes commitments, and his most ardent ones include:

- Oppose and veto any effort that increases property taxes and/or seeks to raise the millage rate.
- Eliminate no-bid contracts by requiring transparency and fairness in the procurement process.
- Keep neighborhoods and schools safe.
- Protect beaches and the Everglades for quality of life and prosperity.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



## ALL GOOD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

- Work with state and federal partners to address water quality issues.
- Put forth a serious transit expansion plan.

If you think Bovo has not thought this through, then you really don't know Steve. He has put forth more than a campaign platform. He has created a "4x4 Plan" as a roadmap for his first four years in office, which includes the pillar of public safety (more about that shortly).

Apparently, there is no time to waste in moving Miami-Dade forward.

"We're about to hit a four-year cycle that will drastically impact the next 20 years of what the county will look like," Bovo warns. "There is such a contrast about where Miami-Dade goes from here, and that's what motivates me on a daily basis."

Three fourths of the plan adds to the meaning of good government.

First is to improve residents' quality of life primarily by identifying solutions for existing services and infrastructure before problems arise. Having proper water management and protecting water resources, properly managing healthcare systems to protect the aging population, keeping property taxes low and expanding housing options are among Bovo's core objectives to improve quality of life.

Having learned the importance of small business to the community from an early age, Bovo knows that stimulating small business must be a cornerstone of any roadmap to a vital future for Miami-Dade County. He includes repealing burdensome regulations of small business, supporting signature events and attractions that will bring jobs to the county and collaborating with the private sector to create programs to equip the next generation of the county's workforce as part of the plan.

During his time on the county commission, Bovo fought to allocate approximately \$8 billion over the next 40 years for transportation infrastructure. The part of the plan to implement effective transportation initiatives inspires another podium pledge Bovo wants to reverberate to voters.

"I cannot continue to watch our residents pay hundreds of

dollars each year to simply move across the county in the course of their daily lives," he explains.

## Good to be here

Examining the need to promote safe communities – the aspect that Bovo calls the most critical part of the plan – leads to another significant sound bite:

"I don't think the residents of Miami-Dade County want to become another New York City, Chicago, Portland or Seattle," Bovo charges.

If New York City had followed some of Bovo's plan, crime probably would have not increased even a fraction of the 348-percent hike in July. If Chicago deployed the same, the city probably would be at just a slice of the more than 500 homicides that have victimized citizens there through August 2020.

Bovo's strategy is tried and true. He initiated "Operation Blue and Brown," which increased patrolling and community policing strategies in Liberty City. He pledges to expand on that program that was not just successful in coordinating law enforcement agencies, but also created a dialogue between residents and law enforcement officers about how to

achieve more effective policing.

He wants to expand the use of body cameras, but not just to enhance the overall trust and safety of the public. He believes body cams will also protect officers from being subjected to unwarranted unrest and falsehoods. He wants to invest in other new and emerging technologies that will promote community – and officer – safety. He plans to make the most important investment in a safe police force: expanding mental healthcare options for first responders.

Anybody who has reviewed Bovo's 4X4 Plan knows there is no mention of the narrative mucking up liberal-run metropolises. There is not a single reference to defunding the police.

"We understand the role police play in our community. And if you really take it to the macro level, law and order leads to stability in the community and economic stability," he reasons. "Those things don't happen when you have lawlessness."

And when it comes to law enforcement, Bovo has made a campaign promise he fully intends to keep.

"Under me as mayor, the police of Miami-Dade County will realize that all lives matter," he pledges. "I don't submit to the narrative that one group is more valuable than another. Blue lives matter, too."

When early voting began for the primary, Bovo was at some precincts where citizens told him they were voting for him because of his support for law enforcement. But the support from a precinct closer to home accentuates why Bovo is the right choice to move Miami-Dade County forward.

Eighty-two-year-old Esteban Bovo Sr. is ailing but still giving instructions from his bed. When his son first told him about running for mayor, Esteban offered his standard advice.

"He told me to make an assessment of who else is running and if somebody was running who was more qualified than me, maybe I shouldn't do it," Bovo revealed. "If not, go for it."



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# D-Days

**As talk of defunding the police continues, how can PBA members remain determined to do their jobs?**

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Golden-aged ladies from Carol City, Liberty City and Cutler Ridge each called longtime South Florida PBA board member Charles Nanney within a few days of each other recently to ask the burning question. “Major” – as they knew Nanney when he served with the Miami-Dade Police Department – “are they really going to defund the police?”

Nanney knew each of these women from serving with their neighborhood Crime Watch. He related how their pleas not to let it happen included affirmations that, “We love the police.” Anybody who has been emotionally charged by the threats against law enforcement during the past few months – physical, verbal and financial – knows that the love tends to flow most amorously from high-crime areas like Liberty City and Carol City.

“Don’t worry, they’re not going to defund the police,” Nanney confirmed he told his golden girls. He furthered the perspective by articulating how defunding would leave police departments to fight crime like playing Whac-A-Mole.

“No matter how much you defund, the primary responsibility of policing is 9-1-1 calls, and you need a minimum number of officers for proper response,” reported Nanney, who retired after 31 years with the Miami-Dade PD as a division chief and is now an assistant chief in South Miami. “There’s no more fat to cut, and if you did, instead of waiting a half-hour for an officer, you would be waiting an hour. When a burglar strikes, do you want somebody there in five minutes or 20 minutes? The more cops you defund, the more your family members can be a victim of crime.”

Nanney represents law enforcement who have been hearing too much of the “D” word. Such testimony seems urgent to address proclamations from faint-hearted elected officials, confrontational public advocacy groups and the sensationalizing news media about de-escalation and use-of-force policies, dialing back officers’ rights and the dreaded “D” word.

## Debunking defunding

Advocacy of defunding has led PBA members to cast these people using another “D” word rhyming with “plumb spit.” But there are elected officials who join the elderly section of police fandom in adopting the anti-defunding rhetoric.

One of those is Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz, who advocates the need for respecting the police as a pillar of society.

“Dade County officers are the trained in the most professional and best way possible,” Diaz reasoned. “They are given the best equipment and have the knowledge to do the jobs

they have to do, which is one of the hardest in the world. Are there improvements needed? Always. The person who says you don't need improvement is a failure to the day you die."

Diaz equates the question of what's causing all the defunding talk with the question about the meaning of life. He explains that it's not that the police are doing anything wrong but more about the way society is metamorphosizing due to extraordinary situations taking place. And because all members of society walk around with a camera and because of the diarrhea of social media, so many situations are posted for tens of thousands of people to see.

Now, consider that many of those extraordinary situations are perpetrated by bad people – criminals, if you will – and therein draws the line between law and order and lawlessness that law enforcement must enforce. Certainly, officers sometimes need to take extraordinary measures to hold the line, which includes use of force and doesn't always facilitate de-escalation.

But nobody wants to be accountable to that more than law enforcement officers.

"Cops, by far, of any profession have the most oversight, and rightfully so," Nanney clarified. "An individual officer has more power than the president when it comes to an individual's civil liberties on the street, so of course you want a lot of oversight. But people need to realize that policing in 2020 is the most professional it has ever been. People are taking out what happened in Minneapolis and what has happened all over the country on all police, and it's very demoralizing. We tell our officers not to take it personal, but it's easier said than done. They all love being cops, and they want to be treated fairly based on their behavior, not something the media hypes up."

### **Deterring defunding**

Defunding discussion has tilted the playing field against law enforcement officers, who seem dragged down by concerns of unfair retribution for taking action they have been trained to pursue. So how do you police in a landscape where cameras are waiting to sensationalize even the most minute hiccup or manipulate footage to take a proper response out of context?

Diaz calls on his military training to address this question. As a Marine, he learned to assess the terrain you are fighting in, the assets you have, the strength of your opponent and know all the things that can save your life and complete your mission. To defuse defunding deterrence, he advises officers need to have the intel to understand what is before them.

"The officer is a sentinel, a protection for us as citizens who wants to make a living for his or her family and have a life of wellbeing," Diaz added. "It is important that they continue to learn, but it is important that we continue to enhance our officers by helping them through this metamorphosizing world."

He worries that the boots on the streets – a term of endearment Diaz has coined – are being set up for failure. So many situations, he asserts, require them to respond even before backup can arrive. And so many responses leave them feeling ambushed.

But the commissioner marvels at how in the wake of an increasingly challenging harm's way, officers generate so many professional responses.

"You always have a percentile that might not be the best individuals on the job. But these are very, very, very few numbers who are usually weeded out in the system," Diaz noted. "So my belief is that we have to continue to not only fund our police officers, but enhance the funding by giving them more tools because with the development of technology and everything moving at such a fast pace, it's very difficult to keep up."

Additional funding, in fact, might be well spent to enhance community policing. Not the type of community policing that

comes in the form of passing out cookies and on-duty cops coaching kids.

Nanney advocates for the type of community policing that builds relationships with business owner and homeowners. When he ran a northside district for Miami-Dade, Nanney made sure his officers spent time each day talking to citizens, community leaders and kids. Every three weeks, he would take his command staff out to do the same.

The action was designed to combat one of the major influences he believes is contribution to defunding discourse.

"The biggest issue is that people are not raised to respect authority," Nanney detailed. "Instead of a bad guy doing what he's supposed to, he resists. Cops can't de-escalate when somebody is resisting. It's not an option to let them go."

### **Downplaying defunding**

Talk filling Zoom meetings that would have been echoing through the halls of Tallahassee references the "D" word to the point of exasperation for Florida PBA Executive Director Matt Puckett. That "D" has nothing to do with democracy, and when legislators bring it up, law enforcement officers really only hear "D'oh."

"Defunding can't even be discussed," Puckett charged. "I don't know what dictionary they got the word 'defunding' from, but that term has to be cut out of the lexicon. If they say 'defund,' they don't have us. We're not going to come to the table. We can talk about reform. We have ideas we have expressed. We have partners we are working with. But it can't just be, 'You guys are horrible.' It can't just be, 'We're going to take all your money away.' It has to be, 'Here's how we can make some changes.'"

Defunding has been registering in the polls, according to Puckett, but probably because candidates are using it as a campaign tactic. It's not exactly a majority, though Puckett added that support for police is, still polling in the high 80s and, in some locales, the 90s.

Fortunately for law enforcement, those who work in the state's executive branch do get it. Puckett verifies that Governor Ron DeSantis, Attorney General Ashley Moody and Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis continue to endorse law enforcement.

"Ashley was very instrumental in getting our input to the [U.S.] Senate version of the police reform bill," he added. "She brought us in, talked with us and made sure our thoughts were conveyed."

Reform talk certainly can start with offering more resources of non-sworn civilians to respond to social-service related calls. Law enforcement has been on the record for years about taking measures to make sure the police are not the catch-all to address every problem in the community.

Of course, measures would need to be taken to address what happens if those responses get out of control. But if it's not using law enforcement officers who don't have the training to respond to something like a mental health issue, then anything that can cut down on calls is worthy of being part of talk about reform.

"If it's thoughtful, not punitive, and we can sit down and work on it where change makes sense and makes improvement, we can probably reach some agreement," Puckett explained.

But any discussion would result in a warning to be careful. The public has been here before, and you don't need to go all the way back to the 1960s or '70s to recall what can happen. Legislation was swirling and people were in the streets protesting four years ago. But then it stopped almost overnight in July 2016.

"That was when the assassination of five officers in Dallas happened," Puckett reminded. "We certainly don't want to see that again."

# *'In any way he could help you, he would'*

## Fond memories of South Florida PBA member Jairo Bravo

■ BY KAREN STAHL

Every morning, Officer Jairo Bravo hopped in his car and headed to Dunkin' Donuts for his routine coffee order: black, with just a little bit of sugar.

It was the 5 a.m. fuel he needed to transport inmates during his three years at South Florida Reception Center with the Florida Department of Corrections.

And when Bravo began working at Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center (TGK) with the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department (MDCR) on Jan. 27, that coffee order made the leap with him.

"He was used to being up really early," recalled Tiquanza Martin, who worked at the Florida Department of Corrections with Bravo and made the move to MDCR at the same time. "He really used to have that coffee with him every morning, and I remember laughing about it and him just smiling and saying, 'This is how I get it done.'"

Bravo, 48, tragically passed away on July 30 from complications related to COVID-19 after battling the virus in the hospital. He was humble and kind to every person he encountered — with a particular affinity for his MDCR Lateral Class No. 54.

A touching motorcade funeral procession led to the burial service for the fallen hero on Aug. 11, with Bravo's family, friends, South Florida PBA members, MDCR command staff, MDCR honor guard and the Miami-Dade and Hollywood police departments in attendance.

Martin had a glass plaque made with a photo of their Lateral Class from graduation with an inscription reading, "In loving memory of Officer Bravo," accompanied by his badge number. On the day of the burial, the class presented the plaque to Bravo's family.

"It's definitely still shocking for me. I have my days," said Martin, who has 11 years on the job. "I have those times a lot when I can't believe it, like I literally saw him a month or two ago, riding in the car with him."

Bravo's family currently lives in Nicaragua, where he was raised, with the ex-



*In Memoriam*

**Jairo Bravo**

Miami-Dade Corrections  
Department

End of Watch: July 30, 2020

ception of his aunt and his cousin. His cousin set up a GoFundMe to assist with funeral costs, as the hardworking hero often helped his family by sending money home whenever he could.

And in his most recent position on the afternoon shift with the MDCR, he contributed to the safety of the facility and the community at large by providing safe



Jairo Bravo (left) stands with fellow academy graduates.

custody of inmates, supervising the distribution of meals and medication, escorting inmates throughout the facility and searching for the possession of contraband.

Juan Diasgranados, the public affairs manager of MDCR in the Community Affairs Unit, confirmed that the loss of Bravo was a devastating shock to the entire community.

"It's heartbreaking. It's tough because while everyone else can stay at home during this pandemic, officers still have to report to work," said Diasgranados said. "He came over to [MDCR] because he heard great things about our department, and it always hurts to lose one of



Jairo Bravo works outside during his Lateral Class No. 54 training after joining the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department on Jan. 27.

our own.”

Martin carpooled with Bravo during their training sessions when they both came on the job with the MDCR in January. He approached her before their classes began and offered to pick her up at 5:45 a.m. to be at the department by 7 a.m. every day — and he always refused the gas money Martin tried to give him.

“He was always quiet and humble, and in any way he can help you, he would,” Martin shared. “He was just a very nice gentleman — easy to talk to, and everybody liked him and looked out for him any way that they could.”

On those car rides, Bravo loved sharing stories about his family in Nicaragua, which he got to visit during an early January trip before coming on the job at MDCR. He told tales about his late father, who passed away last year. He talked about his love of corrections and joked about situations he encountered with the Florida Department of Corrections. He shared about his health and fitness journey.

And, of course, he always had a black coffee with just a little sugar and no cream in the cup holder when he picked up Martin.

Bravo texted her on July 20 with a note sharing that he was in the hospital with



COVID-19, but he'd keep her updated on the condition.

Just 10 days later, she was on vacation when she received a text in their Lateral Class group that read, “RIP Officer Bravo.” The loss shook the entire department.

The hero will always be remembered for his dedication to his work and family, especially with his tenure at MDCR tragically cut short. The officers in the department will continue protecting others from the virus to honor Bravo's legacy.

“Bravo truly loved every single one of us, and I will truly miss him,” Martin said. “He will always hold a very special place in my heart.”



A memorial service for the fallen hero is held on Aug. 11 with family, friends and fellow brothers and sisters in blue in attendance.



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# Fixer Uppers

South Florida PBA members renovate house  
as officer's newborn son battles for his life in the hospital



■ BY KAREN STAHL

Sweat mixed with tears as Alejandro Muñoz wiped his brow and watched his brother in blue, Rosmel Hurtado, turn the corner with a patrol vehicle escort on June 19.

The beating sun tangled with inescapable humidity. Neighbors cheered on their porches. Sirens blared. And Hurtado emerged victorious from his car, holding his infant son.

His first step on the pressure-washed driveway marked a triumphant transformation from the grim hospital room of the past two months to a beautifully renovated home, courtesy of South Florida PBA members from the Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade Corrections Department.

“Oh my God, I don’t think there was a dry eye there,” recalled Muñoz, who has 15 years on the job. “It was really great. [Hurtado] wanted us to come in, but we’re like, ‘No, with the whole COVID thing, don’t worry about us — it’s not about that. Just enjoy your new family.’”

The family was beyond ready to get in their home and celebrate their now-healthy baby after the fight they had just endured.

At 37 weeks pregnant in late March, Eddimary Hurtado went to the hospital and took a group B streptococcus (GBS) test. She wanted to ensure that she wasn’t infected with the group B strep bacteria, which can cause serious infections in newborns. Her test came back negative.

Just a couple days later, Eddimary came down with a fever, which the hospital staff treated with Tylenol. But, on April 5 when their son arrived, another GBS test came back positive. The baby had been born with the harmful bacteria.

“Within five hours, the baby’s health started deteriorating rapidly. They took him in to get reexamined and they noticed that his blood sugar was down and his oxygen was only 50 percent,” Hurtado said. “They could no longer do anything for him at [Baptist Hospital of Miami], so they had to transport him to Nicklaus Children’s Hospital.”



Rosmel and Eddimary Hurtado bring their infant son home on June 19 after a two-month battle for his life at Nicklaus Children’s Hospital to a renovated house by South Florida PBA members.

Within 24 hours of delivery, the doctor sat with the couple and gave them a 30 percent probability of their son surviving. And so it began: the most distressing and anxiety-inducing two months in the lives of Hurtado and his wife, while their infant remained hospitalized.

“My coworkers were very supportive. They couldn’t come inside, but across from the room was the parking lot,” Hurtado said. “God is big. And he put me right in the room across from the parking lot. You could see directly into the room, and they all came praying with me there. It was very touching for my wife and the whole family.”

But little did Hurtado know that in the midst of hospital visits, his coworkers at the Miami-Dade Police Department were planning a massive homecoming.

Muñoz noticed that Hurtado’s recently purchased home needed fixing. So he approached his supervisor, Jason Escobar, about completing a renovation as Hurtado’s son battled a stroke



Officers with the Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade Corrections Department renovate the home of their brother in blue while his newborn son is hospitalized.

and blood clots in the hospital.

"Once [Muñoz] told me about it, I was like, 'Absolutely. Let's go for it,'" Escobar said. "He made all the contacts possible with Lowe's and radio station personnel, who provided paint. He just needed the green light."

When Hurtado went to his first day back at work on June 8, his coworkers had prepared an emotional presentation letting him know the project would kick off the next week.

"[Hurtado] just started to cry," Muñoz revealed. "We work for the Neighborhood Resource Unit, so this is what we do all day. And then you sit down and I see that my coworker needs help. You're just like, 'Man, what can we do for him?'"

The team began work on June 17 and fought against a tropical storm and intense heat while painting, fixing electrical issues, installing stucco, repairing the roof, power washing and cleaning up the yard.

Just two days later, the baby was cleared earlier than expected to return home. Muñoz put the finishing touches on the house to ensure that it was ready for the family's arrival.

"It was amazing, the overwhelming outreach of people that wanted to help," he said. "We had retired police officers who grabbed hammers and shovels and got out there. Neighboring districts brought us food the first day. Everybody worked hard, which was amazing because it was a lot of work."

When Hurtado and his family pulled into the driveway on June 19, balloons swayed in the wind as the group that had been working on the house wiped their brows, grinned and applauded the healthy baby entering his new home.

With the intense work of Muñoz and every law enforcement officer who pitched in to help, Hurtado's five-year house renovation plan had been completed in just three days.

Hurtado, his wife and their baby are able to rest and recover in their beautiful house, which Muñoz is already planning to help in the future with upkeep.

"I can't really put into words what all this means to me. I'm very grateful," Hurtado said. "Not everybody would do this kind of hard work for a coworker, but we're more than just coworkers — we're a family. We're a thin blue line family."

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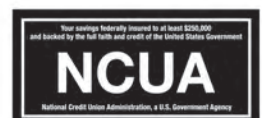
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# Members Only Section

Celebrating South Florida PBA members and the way they serve every day

## Gratitude for law enforcement stretches from South Miami to Pinecrest

The civil unrest in the country hasn't been able to put a damper on the appreciation for law enforcement that has reverberated throughout South Florida this summer. One such example occurred on June 24, when a caravan appreciation parade — which began as 30 vehicles and grew to 165 — drove through South Miami.

"We started out as something very informal, something very small," said Gromy Latour, one of the lead organizers for the appreciation caravan. "We appreciate the police, appreciate all they're doing."

As vehicles decked out in red, white and blue made their way from Coral Gables and passed by the Coral Gables Police Department before arriving at the South Miami Police Department, appreciative honking and cheers filled the streets along with homemade signs.

"I was telling every single car, I was telling them two things," relayed South Miami Police Chief Rene Landa. "'Thank you,' and 'It really means a lot.'"

Signs with sentiments such as "We all matter," "Thank you for your protection" and "Support the police" made it to the South Miami Police Department, where officers were eagerly waiting to exchange appreciation with the attendees in the caravan.

But the excitement didn't stop in South Miami. Not long after that celebration wrapped up, another appreciation event kicked off on July 18 for the Pinecrest Police Department. The rain couldn't stop a parade with Cub Scout Pack 711 showing its law enforcement officers an abundance of gratitude.

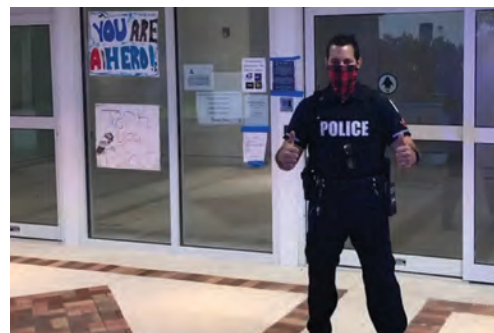
"We want to say thank you to all the wonderful police officers," one of the Cub Scout leaders shared with the department. "To the men and women who are keeping us safe through the pandemic — thank you."

The pack decorated the department with homemade signs that read, "You are a hero!" and "Thank you police!"

And as the pandemic rages on through the end of the summer, one thing is certain: community members in South Florida will continue finding creative ways to express their appreciation for all the law enforcement officers who are working tirelessly to keep them safe.



Above photos show the appreciation for members in the South Miami Police Department.



The appreciation for members in the Pinecrest Police Department include than-you notes from Cub Scouts.

# Miami-Dade members advocate breast cancer awareness

The Miami-Dade Police Department kicked off its Police Power in Pink campaign with the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer on Aug. 11. The American Cancer Society initiated its first-ever nationwide virtual kickoff to celebrate raising money for breast cancer research and awareness.

The Miami-Dade Police Department's campaign within the nationwide event is designed to honor loved ones who have lost the battle with breast cancer while standing beside others who are currently fighting.

A fundraising initiative is underway for the Miami-Dade Police Department. With a \$1,000 goal, the department currently sits at No. 12 out of 46 teams competing in fundraising. Miami-Dade County will honor the campaign with a drive-in concert on Oct. 3 at the Miami-Dade County fairgrounds and a drive-through tribute parade to follow.

The Police Power in Pink campaign is off to a great start, and officers with the Miami-Dade Police Department hope to pick up even more momentum ahead of the October fundraising events.



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# Bal Harbour PD receives new wheels from county commissioner

The Bal Harbour Police Department will be riding in style thanks to Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally Heyman, who donated 10 bikes to various municipalities in District 4 on Aug. 5.

Each cruiser-style patrol bike given to officers is part of the ongoing effort to safely suppress the spread of COVID-19 in Bal Harbour. Heyman shared that she can't wait to see law enforcement officers cruising through community areas on the bikes.

"Making it easy to commute through parks, beaches, boardwalks and places people congregate is the objective," Heyman noted. "Compliance to health and safety measures to combat COVID-19 numbers is our goal."



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# Community thanks members for ensuring pandemic safety

Deliveries of masks and hand sanitizer support law enforcement. Kind words are more meaningful than ever. Meals are shared, although they cannot be eaten together.

Throughout these difficult times, the ongoing bond between officers and the community has not only been maintained — in many ways, it's been strengthened. Law enforcement needs more support than ever, and the past few months of donations show that grateful community members are willing to step up

to the plate.

As officers hit the streets every day to continue the oath of serving and protecting the public, the public has undoubtedly proved that we are stronger when we work together.

Through generous deliveries of personal protective equipment (PPE) with delicious meals and snacks, residents of South Florida ensure that officers' hearts and bellies remain full as they continue fighting the silent enemy.

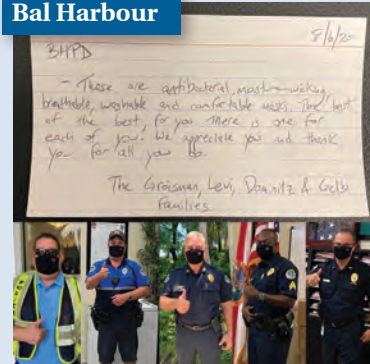
## Aventura



Aventura Vice Mayor Howard Seth Weinberg, along with others, visited the Aventura Police Department on Aug. 4 to bring meals and honor the city's men and women in blue who make the world a better place.



## Bal Harbour



The mayor of Bal Harbour, Gabriel Groisman, along with his family and other families in the community, stopped by the department on Aug. 6 to provide officers with antibacterial, moisture-wicking, breathable masks to ensure safety while out on the streets.

## El Portal



The Miami-Dade Citizen's Crime Watch, a nonprofit crime prevention program, provided face shields and hand sanitizer to the El Portal Police Department to distribute to seniors in the area on July 30 as they continue quarantining in their homes.

## Monroe County Sheriff's Office

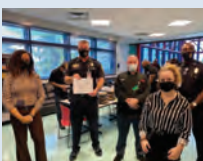


Rotary Club of Key West President Jim Olive presented Monroe County Sheriff Rick Ramsay with thank-you notes on Aug. 20 signed by every Rotary member to be distributed to the sheriff's office. Olive took special care to let Ramsay know how much he appreciates officers' efforts during this time.

## Key West



Lieutenant Matt Haley had the honor of greeting Navy Seabee Kaleb Maggart, his wife Joanne, and their kids Addie and Colton on July 30, as they brought food and treats to their law enforcement officers at the Key West Police Department.



Red Lobster of North Miami made a special delivery to the North Miami Police Department on Aug. 11 to treat them to a hearty meal of delicious seafood and biscuits. The team at Red Lobster wanted to make sure the officers were taken care of during these trying times.



## North Miami

## West Miami



A community member from Home Depot reached out to the West Miami Police Department to donate masks, gloves and sanitation products on May 14 in appreciation for their service.

## Sweetwater



Marilu and Herman Chavez of Miggy's Gift, a nonprofit organization committed to the education and awareness of melanoma skin cancer, stopped by the Sweetwater Police Department on May 7 to donate some much-needed face masks to grateful officers.

## Sunny Isles Beach



Officers at the Sunny Isles Beach Police Department enjoyed a pizza party courtesy of Domino's Pizza on Aug. 12, complete with eight full pies and drinks to fuel the officers through their shifts.

# Members go above and beyond for their communities

South Florida PBA members filled backpacks with school supplies for an unprecedented school year. They conducted weekly food drives supporting community members' families. They ensured that healthcare workers stayed fueled while continuing to fight the virus.

These are just some of the ways South Florida PBA members have been engaging with their communities as they bat-

tle COVID-19. Members are flexing their creativity to figure out how to safely interact with residents while providing vital community outreach.

Here is a look at some of the amazing outreach from South Florida PBA members that illustrates the importance of giving back to their communities.

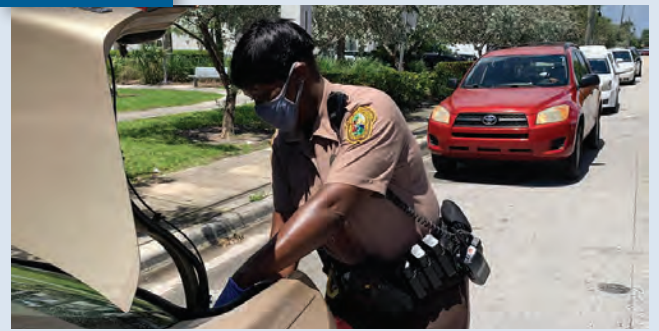
## Hialeah Gardens



The City of Hialeah Gardens and the Hialeah Gardens Police Department partnered with Mater Academy, a not-for-profit educational organization operating 13 charter schools in South Florida, for a food distribution event on May 8 for community members in need.



## Miami-Dade



## Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department



The Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department knows that whether students are schooling virtually or on campus, school supplies are vital to success. The department partnered with the Citrus Family Care Network on Aug. 5 to donate stuffed book bags to help foster children in Dade County start out the school year on the right foot.



Members of the True Gospel Holiness Christian Center wanted to celebrate the ongoing work of Miami-Dade Police Department officers getting out in the community with weekly food drives. They decided to recognize them with plaques for their hard work on July 25 to encourage them to keep giving back to residents and serving the public.

## North Miami



The North Miami Police Department supported the Citrus Family Care Network with their school supply drive on Aug. 3 to help give children in foster care the resources and support they need to succeed this upcoming school year.



## Sweetwater



The Sweetwater Police Department, along with Sweetwater Mayor Orlando Lopez, headed to Mercy Hospital Miami on May 14 to support fellow first responders by providing lunch to all the hospital staff as they continue battling the virus.

# Key West Police Department celebrates two promotions

In a socially distanced outdoor ceremony on Aug. 10, Key West Police Chief Sean Brandenburg swore in Jason Castillo as the department's newest lieutenant leading the Information Services Division. Castillo came on the job in Key West in 2002 and is being promoted from his position as sergeant in the Professional Standards Division.

The new lieutenant, who was born and raised in Key West, has served as a road patrol officer, school resource officer, accreditation manager and a youth division detective. He is the son of Housing Authority Executive Director Manuel Castillo.

His family was in attendance for the ceremony, with his father pinning his new badge and his children lovingly pinning his lieutenant bars.

Two days later on Aug. 12, Brandenburg swore in Alex Rodriguez as the department's newest sergeant.

Rodriguez was born and raised in Key West. He came to the department in 2011 and has subsequently earned a number of commendations, including a Lifesaving Award and a Valor Award. Along with his colleagues, the new sergeant has also received several Unit Awards for going above and beyond the line of duty.

The Key West Police Department is looking forward to seeing what the newest lieutenant and sergeant will bring to their roles.



## New officer sworn in to the El Portal Police Department

Emilie Garcia Poveda became the newest member of the El Portal Police Department on July 28 after being virtually sworn in during a Zoom council meeting.

Her law enforcement career kicked off the next day with a masked visit to the station to receive her badge and agency photos. The El Portal Police Department cannot wait for Poveda to begin her adventure with the team.



## Monroe County Sheriff's Office member retires after 33 years

In a special retirement lunch with Monroe County Sheriff's Office staff on Aug. 18, Special Operations Specialist Angie Glover bid adieu after 33 exceptional years of service.

Sheriff Rick Ramsay, friends and coworkers were in attendance to celebrate Glover's well-deserved retirement. The sheriff's office wishes her the best on this next phase of life.



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# A path to healing

## FHE Health's 'Dr. Sachi' guides first responders through recovery

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Becoming the grounding force to direct Shatterproof – the specialized treatment program for first responders at FHE Health – has dispatched Dr. Sachi Ananda on an amazing faith- and knowledge-building path:

Vietnamese refugee as a child who settled with her family in Spokane, Washington.

Grew up in a military family, where she saw the effects post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have.

Pursued a career in journalism before being laid off from the newspaper she worked for.

Followed a spiritual path back through Buddhism on which she met a teacher doing addiction work.

Family members and significant others battling problems with alcohol.

Completed a master's in mental health counseling and a doctorate in clinical sexology.

Became a chemical dependency counselor.

"When I had an emotional crisis, I found my teacher who helped me on a personal and professional level look outside myself for my strength," Dr. Sachi discloses. "This spiritual teacher was doing addiction work, and I decided I wanted to do that, too. If I could find that strength within, I thought it could help me become a stabilizing force for clients in recovery."

Could there be a more qualified person to drive Shatterproof's No. 1 goal to help first responders return as soon as possible to their roles as public servants in their communities and families than Dr. Sachi? Shatterproof employs evidence-based therapies, innovative medical care, neuro-rehabilitative services and a comprehensive wellness program to help first responders successfully manage their conditions and/or achieve lifelong recovery from drugs and alcohol.

Dr. Sachi is trained in one of those innovative therapies Shatterproof utilizes known as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). Other certifications she has obtained and specialized skills she has developed to treat first responders include motivational interviewing, relapse prevention, sex therapy and family interventions.

All of which have equipped Shatterproof to be a consummate option for addressing the fact that roughly one in three first responders develop a behavioral health condition like PTSD as a result of their jobs.

"We are using state-of-the-art technology in conjunction with psychiatric and psychological trauma intervention to address the need for first responders to get treatment for addiction and mental health issues that are contributing to the increase in the number of suicides in the field," Dr. Sachi reasons. "That has helped us to quickly impact first responders in their healing process and get them back to work and back to their communities as soon as possible."

Under Dr. Sachi's direction, Shatterproof has made breakthroughs with three aspects of treatment for first responders fighting addiction and mental health ailments. They are designed to help first responders overcome specific obstacles and increase their ability to manage emotions during stressful situations without turning to self-medication.

One approach features neuro-rehabilitative services such as



Dr. Sachi Ananda, director of the Shatterproof program for first responders at FHE Health.

brain mapping. A scan – or map – shows the impact repeated exposure to stress has on areas of the brain and how dependence on chemicals throws the brain out of balance. Computer-generated analysis of the brain's electrical activity pinpoints any brain activity that is outside of the norm.

"First responders are very concrete thinkers because they have to be," Dr. Sachi details about why neuro-rehabilitative services have success. "It's basically simulating the neurochemistry of the brain so it can be rebalanced."

Neuro-rehabilitative services are coupled with trauma therapy to move to the second aspect of specialized treatment for first responders. This includes EMDR, which mimics the process of going to sleep but puts traumatic memories that might be stuck in the unconscious into the conscious life and reprocesses them to keep them from perpetuating emotional disturbances.

"We do another brain map at the end of the treatment that actually proves the brain chemistry has changed through the neuro treatment and therapy," Dr. Sachi adds. "For first responders, seeing is believing."

The third aspect is based on community healing. First responders live in quarters exclusively built for them on FHE's campus in Deerfield Beach, Florida. They can replicate the bonding and family atmosphere that reinforces the safe haven the job can provide.

"The distrust of being on guard all the time is dissolved quicker because in this environment, they can trust right away," Dr. Sachi notes. "When they have learned to trust again and be open and OK about sharing that they have struggles and stressors, they are much more open to ask for help from their family and their peers. They feel they can connect with people, so they don't go back to drugs and alcohol."

Dr. Sachi calls the transformation that first responders who come through Shatterproof make a human experience. It's that experience that makes her feel like the path was supposed to lead her here.

"The people we treat here go back and show that there's nothing wrong with getting help," Dr. Sachi emphasizes. "If they get the treatment, they can come back to functioning at a higher level. It's a win-win for everybody."

# Coronavirus and sleep



**DR. MICHAEL DOBLIN  
SLEEP  
SPECIALIST**

A big reason that people get sick, whether from the common cold or coronavirus, is due to lack of sleep when our bodies make T-cells, also known as white blood cells. This process is part of our immune system that fights viruses and keeps us from getting sick.

We need a minimum of a solid seven hours of sleep each night in order to keep our immune system functioning optimally. People who have gotten even six hours of sleep are far more likely to get sick. A good night's sleep is more of a factor than age, sex, race, income, stress or poor habits like smoking and drinking in determining whether or not someone gets sick.

Some pointers that will help in getting a good night's sleep during these stressful times are as follows.

- If you watch the news or read about COVID-19 before bed, that information may end up in your dreams; sometimes the dream maybe be so impactful that it will wake you up. The dreams that wake you up, you remember more vividly; for that reason, do not read

about or watch the news less than two hours before bedtime.

- Go to sleep at the same time and wake up at the same time.
- Do not hang out in bed; your bed is only for sleeping.
- Do not have any caffeine at least 10 hours before bedtime so your body has time to metabolize the caffeine.
- Minimize your alcohol intake because the metabolizing alcohol is sleep disruptive and can ruin a solid night's sleep.
- At least a half hour before bedtime, do something relaxing, such as reading a book or having a conversation with your family about past pleasant experiences.
- If you snore or have obstructive sleep apnea, you are not getting the solid sleep required to prevent the coronavirus or, for that matter, even the common cold.

*Dr. Michael Doblin has been involved in treating snoring and obstructive sleep apnea. He is dedicated to educating people and helping them sleep better.*

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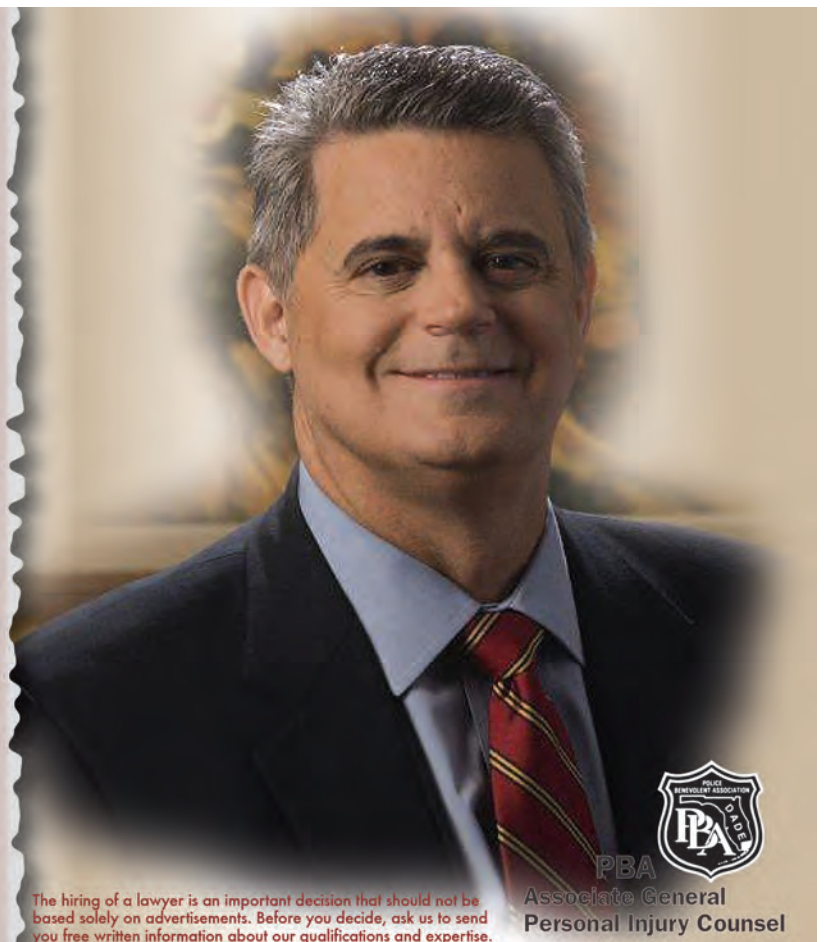
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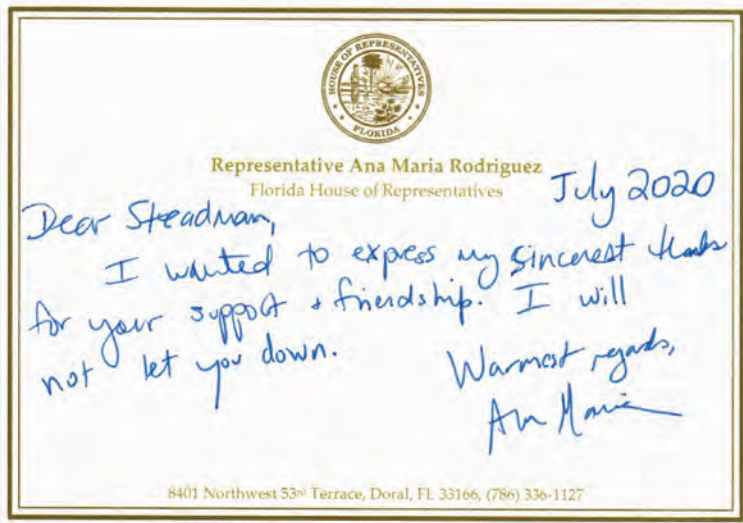
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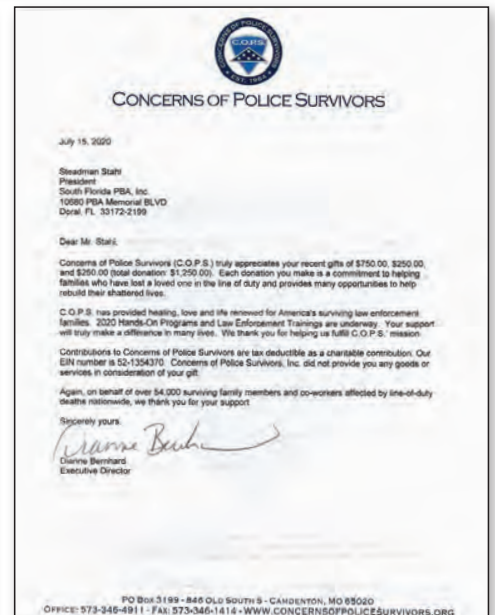
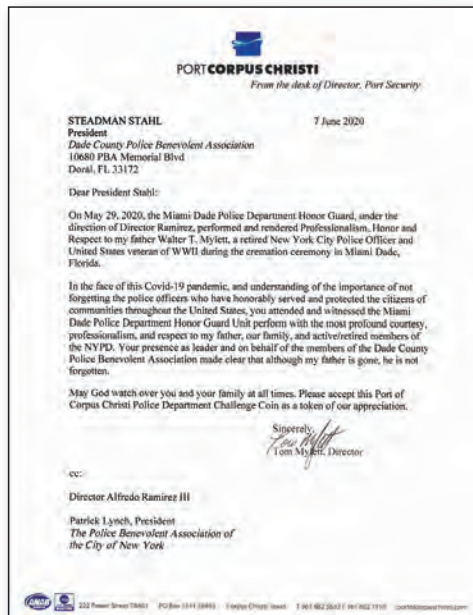
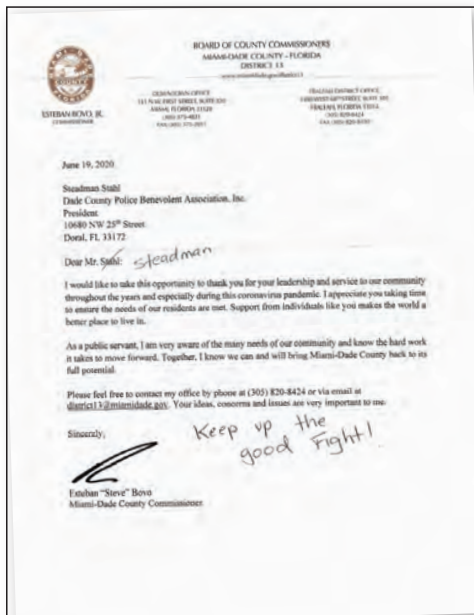
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	Population	Persons per sq. mile
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Citrus County	139,271	243

\*Official US Census

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