



HEAT

THE VOICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Representing those brave enough, strong enough, and proud enough to wear the badge

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2026



DEPUTY DEVIN JARAMILLO

MIAMI-DADE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

END OF WATCH: NOV. 7, 2025



Your Savings Deserve More. Get a Guaranteed 3.80% APY*.



At Dade County Federal Credit Union, we're committed to helping your money go further.

For a **limited time**, you can open a **12-Month Share Certificate** (CD) and earn a phenomenal **3.80% APY***.

This is a smart, secure way to build your nest egg, offering a **Guaranteed Return** so you know exactly what you'll earn. It's also accessible, as you can start with a minimum opening deposit of only **\$500**.

Don't miss out on this limited-time offer!

**Scan the QR code to open your new 12-Month CD today
and let us help you reach your financial goals.**



*APY=Annual Percentage Yield. 3.80% APY 12-Month Share Certificate (CD), effective 9/22/2025; minimum opening balance of \$500. All terms are subject to early withdrawal penalty and/or fees which may reduce earnings. Loan programs, rates, and terms may change or be discontinued at any time without notice. Membership is required. Federally Insured by NCUA.



John Kazanjian
President
Palm Beach & FL PBA

"Injured Response Pharmacy takes care of our PBA members."

At the PBA, taking care of our members is our highest priority! As first responders, we are often more concerned with taking care of others than we are with ourselves. I, personally, had a health scare that required surgery, and luckily, I'm doing well. The best part is that it was fully covered by workers' comp with benefits provided under the Heart and Lung Bill. Navigating a workers' comp claim can be difficult, which is why I want to introduce you to Injured Response Pharmacy (IRP). They can help you navigate any workers comp claim such as a physical injury, Heart and Lung, PTSD, or Cancer, and deliver your meds directly to your home or office, and it's all free. I use their service and never have to worry about getting my meds on time. Also, everyone has direct access to Alberto Gil, the CEO of IRP and a long-time supporter of the PBA across the state. You'll never receive a bill from Injured Response Pharmacy. Don't use your health insurance for something that should be covered for you 100% for the rest of your life! If you have high blood pressure, heart disease, or an existing claim that you are receiving medications for, contact IRP today.



**INJURED RESPONSE
PHARMACY**



If you suffer from:

- High Blood Pressure
- Heart Disease
- PTSD
- Depression
- Cancer
- And more...

We can help you.



FREE DELIVERY on all prescriptions



Pharmacist consultations available



Exclusive VIP Service to all First Responders



Connect with us!
@injuredresponsepharmacy

ENROLL TODAY!

Alberto Gil | 954-868-1084

www.InjuredResponsePharmacy.com

Preferred Pharmacy of the
South FL and FL PBA



IN THIS ISSUE



COVER STORY Page 18

HONORING A FALLEN HERO: A TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY DEVIN JARAMILLO

Cover & Funeral Photography Courtesy of Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office

Remembered for his compassion, dedication, and deep commitment to serving his community, Devin's legacy continues to inspire all who knew him.

MESSAGES FROM THE PBA

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| • The Pres Says..... | Page 6 | • Inside Story: Pig Roast Bowl | Page 22 |
| • The Dish from Ish..... | Page 8 | • Reflections | Page 31 |
| • A Weekend of Healing | Page 10 | • POAT News..... | Page 35 |
| • Corrections Corner..... | Page 12 | • RPOC News | Page 36 |
| • South Florida PBA Legal Corner..... | Page 14 | • Honoring Retired Members..... | Page 38 |

INSIDE STORIES



PBA Pig Roast Bowl



Reflections

REACH SOUTH FLORIDA'S FINEST!

Advertise in HEAT Magazine and connect with law enforcement professionals and community leaders. Get your brand noticed!

Contact us today to place your ad:
Heat@sflpba.org • 305-610-7008



Main Number: 305-610-7008

Email: HEAT@SFLPBA.org

www.dcpba.org

NIZAM "ISH" ISHMAEL

PBA Editor

ish@sflpba.org

LINDA CARTA

Publisher / Advertising

heat@sflpba.org

MONICA MARULANDA

Art Director

LYAN BABILONIA


Staff Writer / Copy Editor

CHRISTINA CASTRILLON

Staff Writer / Copy Editor

VOLUME 43, NO. 6

The Heat is a bimonthly publication dedicated to law enforcement and criminal justice professionals operating in Miami-Dade County, Monroe County and throughout the State of Florida. ©2025 22 STARS AGENCY, LLC. Reproduction of any part of this magazine without express written permission is prohibited. Address subscription inquiries and address changes to Heat@SFLPBA.com. Reader comments and editorial submissions are welcome, but neither the Publisher (22 Stars Agency, LLC.) nor the South Florida Police Benevolent Association assumes any responsibility for the return of unsolicited material. The Publisher manages and controls all advertisement relationships and ultimately retains the right to accept or reject any advertisement. The acceptance of advertisements by the South Florida Police Benevolent Association does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised. Neither the Publisher and the South Florida Police Benevolent Association, nor any of their officers and/or employees, make any warranty, express or implied, including the warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process included in any written or submitted content or in any advertisement. The views and opinions of any advertiser or third-party article contributor do not necessarily state or reflect those of either the Publisher (22 Stars Agency, LLC.) or the South Florida Police Benevolent Association and are not used for advertising or product endorsement purposes. The Publisher and/or the South Florida Police Benevolent Association assume no financial responsibility for errors in advertisements.



**In times like these,
you can't afford to be
without our protection.**

The coverage you need, that only we can provide.

The Admin Duty Policy is unique to Spectrum Advisory Group and is underwritten through Wellfleet. It is a very affordable policy used for officers who are placed on admin duty, admin leave, suspended, or terminated.

Coverage can include: officer involved shooting (OIS), in-custody death, excessive force complaint, or any disciplined action coming from an officer doing their job.

- **Sole provider of Admin Duty coverage**
- **Covers admin duty, admin leave, suspension, or termination**
- **12 months of coverage/30-day elimination period**
- **\$1,000, \$2,000 or \$3,000 monthly benefit**



SpectrumAdvisoryGroup.net

For a FREE Consultation Contact:
Executive Vice President

Michelle Jotz

TEL (702) 429 - 7202

EMAIL mjotz@spectrumadvisorygroup.net

THE PRES SAYS



STEADMAN
STAHL

The recent elections were a little bittersweet for me because they were my last. But I was genuinely excited to see such a large group step up and run for office and I feel we have a great new Board of Directors. What really stood out is that everyone who was elected reflects the full makeup of the people we, as law enforcement, represent. It's a broad, honest cross-section of our membership, and I'm looking forward to working toward our future and whatever challenges lie ahead. Every day, what we see is real commitment—improving lives, improving working conditions, improving contracts, and continuing to push forward for our members.

At the time of this article, we just lived through an incredibly difficult couple of weeks that culminated in the tragic loss of one of our deputies: a friend, a young man only 27 years old, Devin Jaramillo. He worked first with the City of Coral Gables and later transferred to the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office. It was a horrific, senseless act that reminds us all how frail life is, and how quickly something we perceive as routine can turn deadly in just seconds. Devin was everything you hope for: not just in a police officer, but as a son, a brother, a human being. His loss is a reminder not to take anything for granted. Hug your loved ones. Reach out to the people you haven't spoken to in a while. Don't let the days slip by.

The coming together of Echy's father and Devin's father at the Pig Roast was one of the most emotional moments I have ever witnessed. None of it was planned. There were no speeches or introductions. When they saw each other—when their eyes met—no words were needed. It gave me great pause and reflection. It reminded me of what truly matters and how connected we are, regardless of agency, patch, or jurisdiction. We forget that sometimes, with the noise of daily life, disagreements, politics, or whatever else gets in the way. Moments like that make you ask yourself if any of those disagreements ever really mattered.

This year's Pig Roast—our fourth—arrived at exactly the right time. I've learned you don't fight higher powers, and this event came when we needed it most. It's grown into one of our largest events of the year, and it takes an enormous amount of people to make it happen: volunteers, restaurants, businesses, elected officials, the different agencies, and our entire community. None of it works without all of them. And on that Saturday, there were no boundaries and no county lines; we all came together, in this centered place, and had a really good time with family and friends, raising money for the right cause, the Love Fund, which absolutely helps our members in extremely difficult and trying times. The camaraderie, the rivalry, the laughter, the fellowship... we needed that. I needed that. It allowed me to step back from the hustle and the heartache and focus on the things that truly matter.

As we move forward, I can honestly say I'm ready to leave 2025 behind. It has been an extremely trying year. My hope is that as we enter 2026, we carry forward what we've learned: reflection, perspective, and a renewed sense of purpose.



SOUTH FLORIDA PBA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STEADMAN STAHL
President

DAVID GREENWELL
Executive Vice President

NIZAM "ISH" ISHMAEL
Vice President

JENNIFER VALDES
Secretary

ALEX MUÑOZ
Treasurer

KARLOS RAMOS
Sergeant-at-Arms

ROBIN PINKARD
Chaplain

DIRECTORS

Victor Abbondandolo

Mitzie Brown

Angela Carter

Mike Clifton

Lazaro Cortes

Marcos De Rosa

Marjorie Eloi

Deborah Fleites

Eduardo Gaitan

Jorge Interian

Joseph Kelly

Al Lopez

Christine Marte

Sean McVay

Lisa Nesbitt Bell

Angel Posada

Orlando Ramos

Anthony Rodriguez

John Saavedra

Orlando Sosa Jr.

MaryAnn Stahl

Michael Tabernero

Joel Valdes

Jody Wright

REPRESENTATIVES

Nubia Azrak

James Boone

John Childress

Alkibiades Dodge

Elizabeth Fernandez

Labrance Fertilien

Phil Ford

Katrina Fuentes

Ronnie Hufnagel

Devyn Maher

Doug Melendez

Jose Nadal

Rafael "Ralph" Pagan

Frank Pajon

Julio "JP" Priede

Christopher Rodriguez

Alberto Seda

Richard "Smitty" Smith

Danny Torres

Brett Underhill

Alexia Wilson

The President's Gallery



We've secured meaningful contracts, improved benefits and working conditions, and kept the PBA front and center for the people we represent. I want to continue that good work. I want to push it forward. And I want the progress we've made to continue long after I'm gone. I'm proud of this Board, proud of what

we've accomplished, and proud of what we're going to continue to accomplish as we move ahead ... Together.

Steadman Stahl
South Florida PBA President
steadman@sflpba.org



Wealth is a choice
(one you can make).

Our goal is to shine a light on decisions that have a compounding effect — as time passes, your load gets lighter and freedom builds. Your hard work will be worth it.
Let us help.



**CERTIFIED
FINANCIAL
PLANNER™**
Professionals



**NO
ACCOUNT
MINIMUM**



**HOUSE
CALLS**



**30+ YEARS
IN BUSINESS**

2398 S. Dixie Hwy Miami, FL 305-858-1628 www.tonkinsonfinancial.com

Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser.

THE TOP FIVE REGRETS OF THE DYING: LESSONS IN LIVING AND LEADING



As we close out 2025 and prepare to enter 2026, this is the perfect time to pause, reflect, and rebalance. The end of the year always brings a mix of pride in what we have accomplished and a reminder to refocus on what truly matters. For all of us in law

enforcement, it is easy to get caught in the constant cycle of calls, reports, and responsibilities. But reflection helps us recharge and approach the next year with clearer priorities both on and off the job.

That is why I found Bronnie Ware's book *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying* so powerful and worth sharing.

Bronnie was an Australian palliative care nurse who spent years working with patients in their final weeks. Because she was not a family member, people often felt comfortable opening up to her about their deepest thoughts and reflections. Over time, she noticed the same themes and lessons surfacing again and again, regrets from people who had reached the end and could finally see what really mattered.

Her insights are not just moving stories; they are powerful reminders about life, balance, and purpose. And in a profession like ours, where duty, service, and sacrifice are part of the job, these lessons hit especially close to home.

Regret #1: I wish I had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

Many of Bronnie's patients realized, too late, that they had ignored their own dreams in order to meet expectations from others such as family, bosses, or society. She wrote, "Most people had not honored even half of their dreams and had to die knowing it was due to choices they had made." In our line of work,

it is easy to get caught up in meeting everyone else's expectations including supervisors, the department, and the public. But living true to yourself means remembering what drives you: integrity, purpose, and your personal code of honor. Do not lose sight of who you are or what matters to you beyond the badge.

Regret #2: I wish I had not worked so hard.

Nearly every patient Bronnie cared for mentioned this regret. They missed their children's youth, their partner's companionship, and life's simple joys because they were chained to their jobs. Law enforcement can be all consuming with long hours, shift work, callouts, and the constant pressure to be available. But one day, when the uniform comes off for the last time, what matters most are the relationships we have built and the memories we have made. Balance does not mean lack of commitment; it means giving time and energy to what is most important both on and off the job.

Regret #3: I wish I had the courage to express my feelings.

Many people told Bronnie they had suppressed their emotions out of fear, fear of conflict, rejection, or vulnerability. Some even developed health problems from the stress that built up over the years. In law enforcement, we are trained to stay calm, composed, and in control. But bottling up everything comes with a cost. It is okay to talk about what is weighing on you, whether it is stress, frustration, or even gratitude. Honest communication builds trust, strengthens teams, and improves mental health. Sometimes the bravest thing you can do is to speak up.

Regret #4: I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

Many people became so focused on work and responsibilities that they let meaningful friendships fade. Later in life, they deeply regretted not keeping those connections alive. The bonds we build in this profession are unlike any other. We see each other at our best and our worst, and those relationships often carry us through the hardest times. But even

THE DISH FROM ISH

beyond this job, it is important to stay connected with the people who ground us, old friends, mentors, and former partners. A quick message, a call, or a cup of coffee can go a long way. Staying connected keeps us human, grounded, and supported.

Regret #5: I wish I had let myself be happier.

The final and perhaps most profound regret Bronnie recorded was about happiness. Many of her patients did not realize until the end that happiness was a choice. They stayed stuck in old patterns, routines, and fears long after they could have let them go. Happiness does not mean life is perfect; it means appreciating the moments that make it worthwhile. Take pride in what you do, but also give yourself permission to laugh, relax, and enjoy the people and moments that bring you peace.

These five regrets are not just reflections from the dying; they are lessons for the living. The people Bronnie cared for could not go back and change their

choices, but we still can. As we move into 2026, let us use this time to reflect, recharge, and recommit to what truly matters. We can choose to live with intention, balance, and purpose. We can choose to put time and effort into our relationships, express gratitude, and allow ourselves to find joy in the everyday moments.

We spend our careers protecting others. Let us make sure we also protect our own time, relationships, and peace of mind. When the job ends, it will not be the calls or cases we remember most; it will be the life we built along the way and the people who were part of it.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving, and to those of various faiths: **Happy Hanukkah/Hanukkah Sameach, Happy Kwanzaa/Habari Gani and Merry Christmas.** Wishing all our members a safe, healthy, and fulfilling 2026. Stay balanced, stay strong, and keep looking out for one another. Please feel free to contact me at ish@sflpba.org or at (305) 593-0044.



THE ALVAREZ LAW FIRM

Alex Alvarez

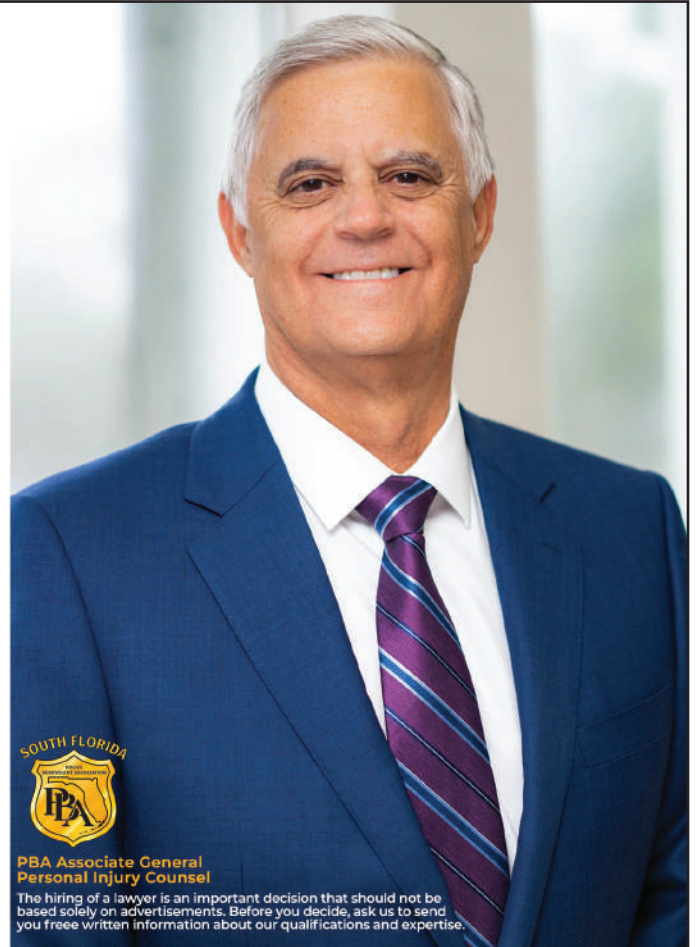
Former Metro Dade Detective,
honorably retired.

Trial Lawyer handling
Personal Injury and
Wrongful Death Matters.

Victims of Medical Malpractice,
Nursing Home Abuse and
Automobile Accidents.

**Special Fees extended to officers
and their families**

3251 Ponce De Leon Blvd. Coral Gables, FL 33134
Office: 305.444.7675 - Toll Free: 877.445.7675
intake@integrityforjustice.com



“WE REALLY NEEDED THIS”—A WEEKEND OF HEALING AT THE 4TH ANNUAL PBA PIG ROAST



This past Saturday, our PBA family gathered for the 4th Annual Pig Roast—an event that, in any other year, would have been about good food, traditions, and camaraderie. But this year, it carried a weight we all felt the moment we arrived.

Over the past several weeks, our department has endured a deeply painful chapter. The loss of Deputy Devin Jaramillo, the first officer slain in three years, has left an emotional heaviness on every badge, every family, and across our community. Even as the PBA continues to offer counseling services, we know that not everyone is ready, or comfortable, seeking help that way. For many, grief settles quietly, internally, in ways words don't always reach.

For me, this loss struck differently than ever before. I'm not just a police officer, I'm a father of three sons, one of whom hopes to follow in my footsteps. He

plans to start in corrections and eventually transfer to policing. Watching him pursue this path fills me with pride, yes, but also with a sharp, humbling fear. Every parent worries for their child, no matter their age or experience, but knowing firsthand the realities of this career makes that worry a weight I carry deeply in my chest.

That's why Saturday mattered. What began as a simple annual gathering became something much more meaningful: a chance to breathe again. A moment to reconnect. A space where people who have been hurting could stand shoulder-to-shoulder, without expectation, and just be together. One of the most powerful moments of the day came when the father of Echy, another young officer whose life was taken three years ago, joined us. He and Deputy Jaramillo's father met for the first time, speaking quietly, privately, each carrying a pain no parent should ever endure. Those who witnessed the moment understood how significant

and healing it was—not only for them, but for all of us who hold their sons’ memories close.

Throughout the afternoon, amid conversations, shared stories, and the familiar comfort of roasted pork cooked with love, one phrase echoed again and again:

“We really needed this.”

And we did. Not because the loss has faded... it hasn’t. Not because the grief is over...it isn’t. But because healing sometimes begins with something as simple as showing up for one another. With a handshake. A hug. A moment of recognition that none of us is carrying this weight alone.

At Deputy Jaramillo’s services, that weight felt heavier. I watched the Law Enforcement brotherhood stand shoulder to shoulder in grief, honor, and solidarity. We mourned the legacy Devin never got the chance to create, the years he should have had, the service he was ready to give, the life he should have lived. And yet, even in this darkness, I found hope

Hope in the officers who continue to step forward.

Hope in the families who support them.

Hope in the belief that compassion, courage, and

service still matter in this world.

My son is part of that hope in the future. And while I will always worry—every shift, every call, every late-night phone vibration—I also believe in him, and in the brotherhood and sisterhood that will walk beside him. I believe in the strength of this profession, even on its darkest days.

The PBA is committed to supporting our officers and their families, not only through services and resources, but through community. Saturday’s gathering reminded us that strength comes not from pretending we are unaffected, but from acknowledging our shared hurt and standing together through it. To everyone who attended, volunteered, cooked, and contributed in any way: thank you! Your presence made a difference. It reminded us that even in the hardest moments, we remain a family.

Sometimes, as we saw on Saturday, family is exactly what gets us through. And as long as the next generation continues to serve, we will continue to stand with them...together, as one family.

South Florida PBA Members: First Consultation FREE!

Returning clients enjoy
10% OFF the following:

- Physical Exams
- Deworming
- Vaccines
- Surgeries
- In-House Labs (intestinal Parasite Exam)
- Radiographs
- Dental Radiographs

*Must have proof of membership to receive discount.

Don’t Wait—Call Today



305-221-3105
11439 SW 40th St, Miami, FL 33165

 @westbirdvet



Carlos F. Smith, DVM

GRATEFUL TO SERVE: A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE PBA



Winning the election for Sergeant-at-Arms is one of the greatest honors of my career, and I'm still absorbing the weight of what it truly means. This moment isn't just about a position it's about trust, teamwork, and the brotherhood and sisterhood that make our profession stand tall. I am

deeply grateful for the overwhelming support, encouragement, and faith so many of you have shown throughout this journey.

When I decided to run, it wasn't about seeking a title. It was about stepping forward with purpose to serve the men and women who give everything to protect our communities and uphold the values of our profession. From the beginning, I held onto the belief that leadership is rooted in listening, showing up, and doing the work when it truly counts. It's about being the kind of teammate others can rely on not only during the good moments, but especially in the difficult ones.

Throughout this campaign, I had the privilege of speaking with members from every corner of our union. Each conversation reminded me of the pride, resilience, and heart that define who we are. Hearing your stories the sacrifices, the challenges, and the quiet victories that never make the headlines reinforced exactly why I wanted to serve. You are the reason I ran, and you are the reason I will pour everything I have into this role.

To my fellow officers, thank you for believing in me. Thank you for the messages, the calls, the encouragement, and even the silent gestures of support that spoke louder than words. Your trust humbles me and fuels my commitment to serve with honesty, strength, and dedication. To the executive board and leadership team, I'm grateful for your unwavering support, guidance and example. I look forward to continuing our work

together, united in purpose and committed to advancing the mission we all share.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family, my wife, my children, and my loved ones who stood by me through every late night, every conversation, and every step of this process. Your support, patience, and love made this possible. You remind me daily that leadership begins at home, in the values we carry and the people who keep us grounded.

As I move forward in this role, I give you my word that I will serve with humility, consistency, and heart. I will be a voice for those who need to be heard, a bridge for those

seeking understanding, and an advocate for fairness and unity within our ranks. My focus is simple: to strengthen the bond that already defines our PBA and to ensure that every member feels represented, respected, and supported.

Finally, I want to honor two heroes whose loss continues to weigh heavily on us, Sgt. David Cajuso and Deputy Devin Jaramillo. Their service, sacrifice, and the way they lived their lives will never be forgotten. Their families, their units, and our entire law-enforcement community carry the weight of their absence every day. As I step into this role, I carry their memory with me. Their dedication reminds us why unity matters, why our bond is sacred, and why we must continue supporting one another through every trial. And no matter which union we belong to, we all stand as one within the Thin Blue Line united by a shared purpose, shared sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to each

other. Their legacy strengthens my commitment to lead with integrity, compassion, and purpose for them, for their families, and for every member who gives this profession their all.

Thank you again for this incredible honor. I'm proud to serve you, and I promise to carry this responsibility with everything I have.

With deep gratitude and respect,

Karlos Ramos

Sergeant-at-Arms

South Florida Police Benevolent Association

786-502-5030

Ramos@dcpba.org



Lifting my heart to God at this years Pig Roast event for our PBA family, may His protection surround us and His presence sustain us.



GOOD GREEK

MOVING STORAGE



NATIONAL MOVER OF THE YEAR

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AFTER LAW ENFORCEMENT

OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- OWNER/OPERATOR
- SALES
- OPERATIONS
- REAL ESTATE AGENTS
- CUSTOMER SERVICE
MANAGEMENT

SCAN NOW



"The Good Greek" Spero Georgedakis
Founder & CEO

TO START YOUR
SUPERHERO JOURNEY



OFFICIAL MOVERS



GoodGreek.com • GoodGreekTeam.com • GoodGreekAutoTransport.com
ElGreco.com • GoodGreekInsurance.com
(866)-774-1748

CONSEQUENCES FOR
INTERNAL AFFAIRS?



Over the course of a law enforcement career, there is a high possibility that you will receive a notice to appear at internal affairs. The notification will be made, an attorney will be secured, and evidence will be reviewed. The question is, what if all the evidence is not there? What if the investigator did not produce all witness statements or all video evidence? What if they didn't even interview all the identifiable witnesses in the matter? Do you proceed? Can the investigator be required to interview them? The answer has multiple facets.

The Police Officer and Correctional Officer Bill of Rights provides a list of evidence that they must turn over before beginning the interrogation of any subject officer. Florida Statute 112.532, states, "All identifiable witnesses shall be interviewed, whenever possible, prior to the beginning of the investigative interview of the accused officer. The complaint, all witness statements, including all other existing subject officer statements, and all other existing evidence, including, but not limited to, incident reports, GPS locator information, and audio or video recordings relating to the incident under investigation, must be provided to each officer who is the subject of the complaint before the beginning of any investigative interview of that officer." If this is not provided, your lawyer should request evidence. Your lawyer will ask them to interview the identifiable witness and/or provide any documentation that is identified during the investigation, if it is not in the official records. What if they refuse? Florida Statute provides your remedy.

If Internal Affairs fails to comply with your request, your lawyer will rely on Florida Statute 112.534 and initiate a compliance review hearing procedure. The first step is to notify the investigating officer that there is an intentional violation and request the violation be remedied. If the investigator does not remedy the violation, their supervisor should be notified, and the interview of the officer will cease. The refusal to proceed with the interview cannot constitute insubordination and/or any policy violation. Written notice of violation will be sent to the head of the agency, noting the specific violation and the facts to support it. This would be the third attempt to cure the violation without proceeding to hearing. If the head of the agency refuses to remedy the

violation, a hearing will be held within ten calendar days. Who makes the decision? What happens during the hearing? What is the outcome? The hearing decision is made by a panel of three people. One person chosen by the officer, one person chosen by the agency, who will mutually choose the third member of the panel. The members of the panel will be from the same field but can be of any rank. The panel will have the responsibility to determine whether the investigator or agency intentionally violated the requirements of the Bill of Rights. Your lawyer will have the burden of proving that the violation was intentional. They will make their findings in writing and submit it to the agency head and the officer.

What if the panel finds the violation intentional? The head of the agency must remove the investigator from the case and commence an investigation against the investigator. The investigation will be initiated to determine the level of discipline to be imposed. If the allegations are sustained, the investigator shall be referred to the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission for an act of official misconduct or misuse of position.

As law enforcement officers you are provided with great protection by the Florida Statutes. The lawyers at the PBA will demand that internal affairs abide by the requirements of the Police Officer and Correctional Officer Bill of Rights. If they refuse, our lawyers will exhaust every remedy to protect you and your rights as a member of the PBA.

2025 PENDING GRIEVANCES

This list represents the pending grievances filed at the various departments represented by the South Florida Police Benevolent Association as of October 31, 2025. The PBA legal staff receives numerous other complaints that are resolved by other means.

DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT:	
AVENTURA PD	1
CITY OF MIAMI PD.....	3
MIAMI-DADE SHERIFF'S	
Association.....	2
Aviation.....	1
Intracoastal.....	1
Total.....	4
MIAMI GARDENS PD	1
MIAMI GARDENS PD (CAPTAINS).....	1
MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S (DEPUTY).....	1
OPA-LOCKA PD	1
TOTAL GRIEVANCES.....	12

A taste of gratitude for our
community's heroes.

Tres Leches

FACTORY

◆ SINCE 2001 ◆

Stop by and show your badge for a sweet deal!

15% OFF SPECIAL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mention this ad. Valid ID required. Valid 'till 02/15/2026



@3lechesfactory

5213 NW 79th Ave. Doral, FL 33166
Ph: 305.477.1009 / 786-795-0039 (text)

HOMERUNS FOR HEROES

KICKBALL TOURNAMENT

2026

The Police Officer Assistance Trust invites you to participate in the
Twelfth Annual

“Homeruns for Heroes”

Kickball Tournament

February 6th thru 7th, 2026

Location: Kendall Indian Hammocks Park 11395 SW 79 Street

Team Registration Entry Fee: \$ 400.00

Deadline: December 1, 2025

Team T-Shirts are included

For further information contact: Major Thamy Gonzalez at 305-216-6605 or U302132@mdso.com



“Proceeds from this event will go towards the Police Officer Assistance Trust”



Call 305-216-6605 or email u302132@mdso.com to request material in accessible format, information or access for persons with disabilities, or a sign language interpreter 7 days in advance

SOUTH FLORIDA



May 16

Annual PBA
Law Enforcement
Awards Gala

June 6

Fishing Tournament

2026
UPCOMING EVENTS

February 22

Frontline Invitational
Jiu Jitsu Tournament

November

Pig Roast Bowl Series

THANK YOU for supporting Law Enforcement - Follow us @southfloridapba



sfipba.org

Thank You notes to **THE PBA**

Good morning, Kelly,

I hope you are doing well.

After working 25 years as a law enforcement officer in Florida and nearly 18 years with Miami Gardens, I retired last month as a Police Captain.

I apologize for not reaching out to PBA sooner. I have been a little overwhelmed getting everything prepared for retirement.

I truly appreciated all of the efforts made by the South Florida PBA over the years. I have been a member through the ranks of officer/detective, sergeant, and captain. I am very proud to have been a member of the organization. I am most grateful for the groundbreaking work that was done to create the first Captain's collective bargaining agreement. That work has truly laid a new foundation for the future. Please let the entire staff, representatives, and legal counsel know their work makes an immense impact on the lives of police officers of all ranks and their families.

With the deepest gratitude and thanks,

Captain Michael Dillon, Retired



JAMES BAIARDI,
STATE CORRECTIONS PBA PRESIDENT

Steadman,

Thank you for your Presence
and Support at the recent Corrections
Gala. Your Participation made a
Real difference and Showed the
Strong Commitment the Florida PBA
has to our Correctional Professionals.
Thank you for your support of
the Correctional Officers Chapter!



November 10, 2025

President Steadman (Stahl)
South Florida Police Benevolent Association
10080 PBA Memorial Boulevard (NW 25th Street)
Doral, FL 33172

Dear President Stahl,

On behalf of the Cabrera and Benincourt families, as well as our entire team at E.C. Management Corporation (ECM), I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the thoughtful video you sent congratulating us on receiving the Ronald Award. Your kind words truly meant a lot to us – especially considering that my husband, Emilio Cabrera, the founder of ECM, is a former Police Lieutenant. Your message was shared during the McDonald's Atlanta Field Office Summit in front of an audience of over 2,000 McDonald's franchisees and leaders, making an already special moment even more meaningful.

Receiving the Ronald Award for the second time is an honor that extends beyond our business. It represents the hard work, dedication, and heart that our entire ECM family puts in every single day. As small business owners, giving back to our community isn't just something we do—it's at the core of who we are.

Each year, McDonald's presents this award to a select group of Owner/Operators who not only run outstanding restaurants but also embody the values of the brand. With only two Ronald Award winners per McDonald's field office each year, being recognized again is truly humbling.

Emilio and I became McDonald's franchisees in 1983, and just a few years later, in 1987, we were honored to receive our first Ronald Award. Looking back at that moment and now receiving it again, it's incredible to see how much we've grown—not just in the number of restaurants we own, but in the remarkable people who make up our team today. Now, with our son Anthony and his wife Deshiz, along with our daughter Stefanie and her husband Bryan, we have six dedicated approved owner/operators leading the way. And beyond our family, we have six dedicated approved owner/operators leading the way. And beyond our family, we are surrounded by an incredible team that shares our commitment to serving others.

Having the support of friends like you makes this journey even more special. Thank you again for your kindness—it truly means the world to us.

With gratitude,

Hilda Cabrera

Hilda Cabrera
Owner/Operator

E.C. Management Corporation PO Box 43-2720 • Miami, FL 33243

305.817.9072 • hcbm_mcd

SAVE THE DATE



LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS GALA

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026



Honoring a Fallen Hero:

A Tribute to Deputy

Devin Jaramillo

Story by: Lyan Babilonia Art by: Jonnycastleroart

The life of Deputy Devin Jaramillo, a dedicated young officer known for his courage and compassion, ended far too soon on November 7, 2025. At just 27, Devin was tragically killed while responding to an emergency call for a traffic accident. Though his time was brief, his unwavering commitment to his community, his family, and the law left a lasting impact on all who knew him.

A DEDICATED OFFICER

He fulfilled his duty to the fullest until his last breath. Devin first distinguished himself in the Coral Gables Police Department before moving to the Kendall district under the Miami-Dade County Sheriff's Office. He carried out both roles with honor and dedication. Even on his days off, the young officer chose to work, driven by a single desire: to leave a lasting mark on the community.



He also worked off-duty details at Kendall Regional Hospital, where he was well loved by staff and colleagues. It was especially painful when he was later transported to that same hospital, where they did everything possible to save his life, but sadly, it was not enough.

FOLLOWING IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

His love for law and order came from home. He chose to follow in the footsteps of his father, a retired detective. Devin became a hero whose memory will live forever in the hearts of all who loved him—a message that resonated deeply with those present at his burial.

Today, not only is his family in mourning, but so too are all members of law enforcement and the wider community. Even amid their grief, there is a shared sense

of gratitude for everything this fallen officer gave to his parents, siblings, family, and friends during his brief life.

Major Lonny R. Allen recalled first meeting Devin when he visited him at the hospital following a traffic accident in which he suffered contusions. Even then, Devin was remarkably attentive. His strong ethics and desire to serve were evident, and he insisted on returning to work as soon as possible, demonstrating the passion he had for his duty.

Allen echoed the words of Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz, noting that the news of his murder has saddened everyone because he was “a son, a brother, a friend, and a squad mate.” For any human being, facing life without a loved one is a profoundly hard blow, which is why the community must show empathy for all officers and reject any act of violence like this.

COLLEAGUES AND MENTORS REMEMBER DEVIN

On the other hand, Lieutenant Manny Regueiro had the privilege of working not only with Devin but also with his father, David Jaramillo.

Regueiro first met the young officer in his twenties at the Kendall station in March 2025 and immediately recognized him as the living image of his father. From that moment, their relationship grew closer, thanks to Devin's character and dedication.

On the day of the murder, Regueiro was off duty when he suddenly began receiving messages and calls informing him that an officer had been shot. At that moment, he changed clothes and rushed to the scene, where he realized the victim was Devin.

“I just broke because, you know, any officer down is

tragic, but because of the relationship that I had with his dad for many years and getting to know him in the short time that I did, it really hit me hard.”

“He was everything a wonderful young man could be. He was the future of a department. He was a phenomenal



person; he was fearless, he was confident, he was happy. He went out of his way to help everyone. And his dad should be very, very proud of who his son was, because Devin was someone who brought joy to everyone’s life,” says Regueiro.

“He always protected those who couldn’t protect themselves; Devin’s dedication to serving others was not a choice, it was his calling.”

Regueiro told Heat Magazine that he was able to hug his father at the funeral home. The retired detective personally asked him to take care of his son-in-law, an officer who also works in the Kendall district.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ROOTS

“I’ll carry you in my heart for the rest of my days,” said his dad at the loanDepot Park memorial service prior to his funeral on November 18, 2025.

“Today I stand here with a broken heart because now I have to face life without Devin. There are no words for what it feels like to lose a child,” says his mom, Yolanda

Jaramillo, who also added how proud her son was to wear his police badge, “not for recognition, but because he wanted to make a difference.”

“He lived bravely, he served honorably, and he loved deeply,” she added.

Devin was part of the community he served, having been born at Baptist Hospital in Kendall, the city where his life was tragically taken. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from Miami Killian Senior High and went on to earn a degree in criminal justice and public administration from UCF. His path then led him to the FBI Internship Academy at Quantico and subsequently to the Coral Gables Police Department, where he served three years with distinction, according to Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz.

IN JANUARY 2024, HE JOINED THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE



The sheriff recognized his “great energy and sense of duty.” Everyone who met him knew that he didn’t wear the uniform to satisfy his ego, but to serve people. She shared stories she had heard about Devin — a person who lifted others up and brought calm when others felt



fear. He was an introverted young man who loved his black-and-white cat, Chloe.

His friends from the Coral Gables Police Department will also remember him forever. He brought out the best in himself every day, and his friendship with them continued despite his lateral to Kendall.

The sheriff also described him as an old soul who loved motorcycles and enjoyed outings with his dad, especially to the Keys. It's no secret that his hero was his dad, and he loved his mom with all his heart. As a good Latino, the way to his heart was through the stomach. He loved his mom's picadillo and chicken fricassee, which is why he learned the recipes to cook for his college friends in the dorm at UCF, winning everyone's heart away from home. The smell of his mother's unconditional love traveled hundreds of miles.

Another person who melted his heart was his niece.

Family stories were truly countless.

The sheriff celebrated his life, noting that he lived by the values his parents instilled in him: "integrity, sacrifice, unwavering duty, and love."

"To my colleagues I would say, I know we're hurting, but we will heal and we will overcome," emphasized Cordero-Stutz.

Many people have mourned Devin's passing—his mother, his father, loved ones, the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office, his colleagues, and an entire community that feels the void of his absence. Yet, even in grief, there is comfort in knowing that Devin lived with courage, integrity, and dedication. His life, though tragically short, serves as a reminder of the difference one person can make. For all he gave and the joy he brought to those around him, we honor his memory and say: thank you for your service. R.I.P.



MY FIRST TIME *AT THE* **PBA PIG ROAST BOWL**

By Christina Castrillon Photos by: Golden Rose Media & Yeniset González



Officer Gallardo of the North Miami
Police Mounted S.W.A.T. Unit

I grew up first-generation Cuban-American, raised by parents who believed hard work and humility were the only ways to survive in a country that opened its doors to a new opportunity in life. In the Miami of the 80s, cops were... well, cops. To a kid like me, they felt overbearing, presumptuous, intimidating. I didn't fear danger, but I did fear the uniform. They were the people you avoided eye contact with, the people who showed up only when something had already gone wrong. And for me, as a typical teenager with attitude, many times it did.

So if someone had told that teenager that decades later she would be standing in the middle of a Pig Roast, surrounded by law enforcement, shaking hands with brass, listening to stories of bravery and loss, I would've laughed. Or actually... run.

But life has a way of surprising us, especially when we're brave enough to say yes at the exact moment everything feels uncertain.

After 35 years in the entertainment industry, I found myself unemployed, starting over, searching for purpose in a world that suddenly felt unfamiliar. And then this opportunity came along: to interview the law enforcement community, write their stories, and breathe their air. Not as a cop. Not as part of the system. But as an outsider with an open notebook, a curious mind, and a respect I didn't have as a teenager

It changed my world.

The truth is, my first step into "their world" didn't happen at the Pig Roast.

It happened months earlier, at the PBA Gala.

I walked in that night as someone who had spent her entire life on the outside looking in. I thought I knew what law enforcement was—at least what society taught me to believe. But then I started meeting the award nominees. And as I stood there listening to story after story, something inside me shifted. It didn't make me part of law enforcement; it made me understand them with a depth I still struggle to describe.

Everyone I've met in this profession has greeted me with no pretense, no ego. Just sincerity, humility and gratitude. They consider themselves honored to serve others, without dwelling on the sacrifices involved—something I wasn't used to.

We expect law enforcement to hold the world together even when their own world might be falling apart. Who am I to judge?

So to make a long story short... this was my experience, and here's my story:

Welcome to the Pig Roast



I expected smoke. I expected noise. I expected heat. What I didn't expect was heart.

The first tent I approached belonged to Hialeah Firefighters Benevolent, where Alexander Anchía grinned with the mischievous confidence only a firefighter can muster. When I asked what inspired their cooking approach, he didn't skip a beat:

"Our inspiration was to show the PD that fire knows how to do a pig roast way better than they can!"

A few tents down, Hialeah Police—last year's champions—were laser-focused on defending their title. Captain Chris confessed, without shame or hesitation, *"Lots of garlic, lots of love... and ChatGPT."* As flattering as it was, the smell of garlic did most of the heavy lifting.



Pig Roast Bowl Series producer Louis Fonseca, Doral PD Chief Edwin López, and Officer Lauren Perez celebrating a championship for the books!



Foodie, podcaster, and Pig Roast Bowl Series producer Kiko Suárez

Miami Beach Firefighters' Victor White, a rookie to the event but not to roasting, spoke with quiet pride about the mojo blend he's perfected over years at home and on shift. *"A few other secret ingredients,"* he said, raising an eyebrow. *"We're praying it turns out well."*

Miami Fire Bomberos Lechonereros teamed up with Miami's Best Blinds for a hybrid technique involving fruit wood smoke and a Caja China finish. The Biltmore's Shawn walked me through the traditional Cuban prep—Naranja Agria, garlic, salt, and even shaving the pig first thing in the morning. FIU's ROTC team smiled and told me they used "12 natural herbs and spices" and absolutely nothing more was getting disclosed.

This wasn't just cooking. It was pride, culture, identity, and good chaos.

The Producers: Louis Fonseca & Kiko Suarez

I stopped one of the producers of the event, a man with equal parts humor and heart, and asked him how they

choose the pigs every year.

Kiko Suarez grinned: *"We don't choose the pigs—the pigs choose the men."*

Then, after a beat: *"Cops don't always talk about what they're going through. But they show up. They cook. They stand next to each other. That's how they heal."*

Louis Fonseca, founder of the PBA's Pig Roast 4 years straight, shared his emotions with quiet intensity: *"Backing the Blue isn't just a tagline—it's personal. It's our mission. This event takes a year of planning, bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community. Our officers are first responders, and this year presented huge challenges: how do you push through and get to the finish line? Faith, God, teamwork, and a deep understanding that it was needed more*



@ganasconcanas didn't just dance on stage... they took over.



Restaurateur Joaquín Ortiz enjoying every bite at the judges' tent.

than ever carried us forward. As a military veteran committed to philanthropy and community, my goal has always been to unite people, to bridge gaps. Tropical Park holds special meaning, with the Law Enforcement Memorial here. We started this event when 'Defund the Police' was a slogan. Our aim has always been to make a difference, to lead by example."

Alex Muñoz, PBA Treasurers Quiet Fear

Later, I sat with Alex Muñoz, who opened his heart with the kind of honesty that catches you off guard. A father of three boys, he told me one of them wants to enter corrections, then law enforcement—following in his footsteps into a world that has taken so much from so many.

"I'm proud. Of course I am," he said. "But I'm scared too. Because you never stop being a dad."

I felt that fear. I understood it. Because even from the outside, I now knew what the badge could cost.

Backstage with Alvaro Zabaleta, The Host

Then I had the pleasure of meeting, Alvaro, the go-to MC



for every PBA event. If you know Alvaro, you know he talks fast, moves fast, thinks fast, and somehow juggles five conversations at once while still keeping the program flowing. He didn't deliver any big speech this year; he simply stepped up, handled the awards, and kept things moving the way he always does with that signature Alvaro energy.

When I asked him what this event means to him, he paused just long enough to give me this:

"At the end of the day, it's everyone coming together for a great cause, especially now, in such sensitive times. Seeing the law enforcement and public-safety family stand together means everything. The Jaramillo family was here today, and moments like that remind us what the Love Fund is all about. It's always better to be in a position to give than to receive."

"Whenever I'm asked to host, I want to truly contribute to the right cause. These events are emotionally tough, but when you stay focused on the purpose, the rest follows. I pray every day that the names we've lost are the last ones ever added to that wall."

The Sponsors and Community

Then there were the sponsors—the people who quietly keep the event running.

Mike Dion from Dion Generator Solutions spoke with a calm sincerity:

"We've sponsored other events, but this one is special. It's about helping the families."

Quirch Foods' Marlis Pérez told me:

"One place, one spot, one team. This is one of the most meaningful events we support all year."

Narcotics Deputy Eric Garcia, sponsored by Aetna, joined the competition after the PBA learned that he also BBQs on the side. *"It felt great to be invited. My first year. I'll be back next year."*

Locos x Grill's Hu Wa Xin Fong, who once competed as the only Venezuelan among 50 teams and won, showed me his deboned porchetta, rolled by hand, seasoned Asian-Latin fusion style. Passion doesn't even begin to describe it.

And the volunteers came out as well to serve, smile, and honor the officers.

"We enjoy volunteering because we're honoring the officers."

The Judges

The judges carried their own stories.

Culinary impresario Tony Guerra explained that everything about this event is pure heart.

"Everyone here is doing it from the heart, all for a meaningful cause."

Restaurateur Joaquín Ortiz broke down his approach like a scientist studying art—fat, salt, acid, heat, even the color of the skin. By the color of the skin? Only he knows what a pig has been through before falling prey to the infamous Pig Roast. *"At the end of the day,"* he said, *"it's a mystery box."*

The Awards

Ft. Lauderdale Police, the "Rookies of the Year," were glowing:

"Better? Impossible! We'll be back next year to be the champions."

305 BBQ took Best Chicharrón with a simple:

"It feels great!"

City of Miami Fire nearly jumped in place winning People's Choice.

Their recipe?

"Uh... it's a secret!"

And Doral Police Chief Edwin López, whose team won both Champion and Most Funds Raised titles, summed it up like a prayer:

"Two great wins. But raising the most funds is the heart of this event. God is good."

The Heartbreak and the Healing

But beyond the competition and the fun, something deeper pulsed through the air.

This year, two families met for the very first time: the family of fallen Officers Devin Jaramillo and Officer Cesar "Echy" Echaverry.

A moment of unity born out of unimaginable loss.

That one moment shook me to my core. I don't have children of my own, and yet I suddenly found myself standing before Echy's father, expected to interview a man whose world had been shattered. Every part of me whispered, This isn't the right moment. And maybe it wasn't — but it was a moment that had to happen.

Thankfully, his daughter Sandra stepped in with a grace and steadiness that held all of us together. She guided him, guided me, and created a space where the conversation could happen gently, respectfully.

Two Fathers Meet for the first time

Two men united by love and loss; Two fathers carrying memories no parent should bear;

Two families forever changed by tragedy.



For the first time, the fathers of Officer Cesar “Echy” Echaverry and Deputy Devin Jaramillo, both lost in the line of duty, met in person. Their courage inspires us every day.

There were no speeches. No cameras. No grand gestures. There was a connection that felt sacred.

I realized then that grief doesn’t always come in tears. Sometimes it’s just recognition; of one man understanding what another man was feeling. The genuine hug and cries that they alone understood

Steadman put it best:

“This year brought two families together in a way that couldn’t have come at a more meaningful time. Moments like this, fellowship, unity, shared purpose, are why we do what we do.”

Jaramillo’s stepmother looked me in the eyes as she said:

“Don’t take life for granted. Love your friends, love your family. Keep God in your heart.”

And Sandra, Echy’s sister spoke about destiny with a strength only grief can carve:

“Although I wish I had my brother here with me I still would want him to have been what he wanted to be; that to me is more important than what I feel. If God put in your heart the calling to be an officer, you pursue it. When you love what you do, you do it with all your

heart, no matter the risk.”

These weren’t interviews. They were reminders.

What I Learned

Somewhere between the smoke, the garlic, the laughter, and the tears... I understood what this event really is.

Yes, it’s a competition; Yes, it’s a celebration; Yes, it’s an excuse for all jurisdictions with no boundaries, no matter the patch, come to ‘roast’ each other while roasting their pigs.

But it is also a gathering of people who carry each other through the darkest moments of their lives. A day where departments, families, civilians, kids, businesses, judges, and survivors stand in the same sun, under the same sky, for the same purpose.

To give...To honor...To heal.

And for someone like me—someone who grew up afraid of the uniform—this Pig Roast became something I never expected:

A place where I finally understood the heart behind the badge.



FLORIDA FIRST RESPONDER LEGAL TEAM



Your Florida First Responder Legal Team is committed to educating and assisting First Responders, their friends, and families in pursuing all benefits available under the law to obtain the best outcome for injured workers and their families. As you know, many First Responders are afflicted with heart disease, hypertension, hepatitis, chronic back injuries, hearing loss, and more. These conditions can be work-related, as a matter of law, whether it occurred on or off duty. Although these conditions may be work-related legally, employers and insurance carriers often wrongfully deny claims. This is where we can step in to obtain the best care and the most benefits available for our clients. For First Responders, a work injury involves much more than a simple workers' compensation claim. There are employment, pension, PSOB, and Social Security issues that overlap and affect each other. Our years of experience enable us to work to ensure that every client receives the maximum benefits he or she is entitled to. We are centrally located to provide a variety of legal services to our First Responder community statewide.

SPECIALIZING IN:

Heart/Lung Bill Claims

Motor Vehicle/Motorcycle Accidents

Pension/Service-Connected Disability

Personal Injury/Physical Injury Claims

PTSD/Mental Health Claims

Public Safety Officer Benefits

Social Security Disability

Wills & Estates

Workers' Compensation Claims

Call today for a free legal consultation:
866-HELP-4911



Eric V. Hires, Esq.
Eric@HiresLegal.com
407-841-1902



Paul A. Kelley, Esq.
Paul@KelleyLawGroup.org
321-285-2550

Florida First Responder Legal Team is proud to be the preferred practitioners of the Palm Beach County, South Florida, and the Florida PBAs.



Kelley Law Group



AFTER LAW ENFORCEMENT: A SERGEANT'S **REFLECTIONS** ON RETIREMENT AND PURPOSE

By Lyan Babilonia



When Sergeant Sean Fuerstenberg of the Grafton Police Department in Wisconsin shared a heartfelt article about the emotional challenges many officers face after retirement, he didn't expect it to go viral. His honest reflection struck a chord across law enforcement circles nationwide — sparking deep conversations, praise, and even debate.

Some readers connected with his empathy and truth-telling. Others questioned why any retiree would struggle when life after law enforcement can be full of new opportunities.

With about two years left before his own retirement, Fuerstenberg has spent years observing what happens when the badge comes off. He's seen dedicated officers face unexpected loneliness, identity loss, or the sense that their departments forgot them. For that reason, he started a conversation—not about endings, but about preparation, purpose, and perspective.

After the overwhelming response to his original piece, *The Silence After the Badge*, Sergeant Fuerstenberg spoke with HEAT Magazine about what inspired him to write it, how he's preparing for his own next chapter, and what advice he has for those nearing or already in retirement.

Q&A WITH SERGEANT SEAN FUERSTENBERG

HEAT: You're about two years away from retirement. How are you feeling as that milestone approaches?

Fuerstenberg: It's a mix of emotions. There's pride in everything I've accomplished and gratitude for the people I've worked alongside, but also a real awareness that a major life chapter is closing soon. I've spent most of my adult life serving in law enforcement, and it becomes part of my identity. As that transition gets closer, I'm focusing on preparation and perspective rather than anxiety. I want to make sure that when I step away, I'm stepping into something with purpose, not away from something out of fear.

HEAT: What inspired you to write your article, and did you anticipate it would resonate with so many readers?

Fuerstenberg: The inspiration came from watching fellow officers retire and struggle in ways that caught them off guard. I saw people who had given decades to this profession suddenly feel lost without the structure and identity that came with the badge. I wanted to start a conversation about that reality because we don't talk about it enough (...) I heard from officers across the country, including retirees who said it put words to what they were feeling.

HEAT: In your experience, what are the most common emotional challenges officers face after retirement?

Fuerstenberg: A big one is loss of purpose. For years, your job defines your sense of meaning. You wake up every day knowing exactly why you're doing what you do. When that's gone, it can leave a void. There's also a sense of invisibility; the world keeps spinning, the department moves on, and suddenly the person who once carried authority and responsibility feels like they don't matter anymore. There's also the social side. So much of your camaraderie and support system is built into the job, and that can fade quickly once you're out. It's a tough adjustment for many people.

HEAT: How are you personally preparing for the transition you know is coming?

Fuerstenberg: For me, preparation is both practical and emotional. I'm being proactive about finances and healthcare, but I'm also intentional about maintaining connections outside of law enforcement. I've been writing and finding new ways to contribute that give me

purpose beyond the uniform. The more I can build that foundation now, the smoother the transition will be when the day comes. I'm also keeping an open mind because retirement doesn't have to mean being done; it can mean something different.

HEAT: From what you've seen, how could departments better support officers emotionally and socially as they retire?

Fuerstenberg: Departments could do a much better job of treating retirement as part of the career lifecycle, not just an ending. We prepare officers for the academy, for promotions, and for critical incidents, but not for retirement. Departments could offer pre-retirement workshops focused on mental health, peer support groups, or mentorship programs that connect active and retired officers. Simple gestures like staying in touch, inviting retirees to events, or acknowledging their continued value to the profession can go a long way in easing that sense of disconnection.

HEAT: Are there hobbies or activities you're exploring now to help with the eventual transition away from law enforcement?

Fuerstenberg: Writing has become a huge outlet for me because it helps me process my experiences and share insights that might help others. I've also been getting more involved in community projects. Those things give me energy and purpose beyond the badge. On the personal side, I've been spending more time outdoors and making sure I don't lose sight of the things that bring balance such as family, fitness, and simply being present.

HEAT: What has been the most rewarding part of your career so far, and how do you hope to carry that forward into retirement?

Fuerstenberg: The most rewarding part has been helping people, whether that's protecting someone in crisis, mentoring a younger officer, or simply being there when someone needed support. The moments that stay with me aren't the big arrests or accolades; they're the quiet moments where I know I made a difference in someone's life. That's what I want to carry forward, finding ways to continue serving others, maybe in a different capacity, but with the same sense of purpose and compassion.



HEAT: What message would you like to share with both current law enforcement officers and those who have already retired?

Fuerstenberg: To current officers, start preparing now, not just financially but mentally and emotionally. Think about who you are outside of the uniform and what gives you purpose beyond the job. Build strong relationships, take care of your health, and never lose sight of the person you were before you pinned on the badge.

To retirees, remember that your experience and perspective still matter. The work you've done continues to impact others, even if you're no longer the one answering the call. Stay connected, stay active, and keep finding reasons to look forward. Retirement isn't the end of your story; it's the start of a new chapter written on your own terms.

Looking Ahead

For Sergeant Fuerstenberg, retirement isn't just a date on the calendar; it's a process that begins years before the last shift. He believes that preparing mentally and emotionally is just as vital as planning financially. The thoughtful discussion *The Silence After the Badge* generated revealed how many officers share similar fears, hopes, and questions about what comes next.

Through his writing and ongoing conversations, Fuerstenberg hopes to help fellow officers rediscover purpose beyond the radio calls and shift briefings. His message is simple yet powerful: the silence after the badge doesn't have to mean the end of your story — it can be the beginning of a new one.

THE QUIET MILLIONAIRE IN UNIFORM: HOW ORDINARY OFFICERS BUILD EXTRAORDINARY WEALTH



In nearly every department, there's that one officer, the one who never brags, rarely splurges, and quietly retires after 25 years with seven figures tucked away. No lottery winnings, no business empire, no inheritance. Just steady work, smart planning, and patience.

They're the "quiet millionaires in uniform" and they prove that wealth isn't about luck or rank. It's about behavior.

1. They Understand the Game: Income ≠ Wealth

Cops are used to seeing the big overtime earners, the ones with \$150K+ W-2s and new trucks in the parking lot. But income is just the scoreboard; wealth is what you keep after taxes, lifestyle, and waste.

The quiet millionaires track cash flow like they track cases. They know exactly where their money goes each month, keep debt under control, and automate saving before spending.

They use a simple formula:

Earn → Save → Invest → Spend (in that order).

It's not flashy, but it wins every time.

2. They Use Their Pension as a Foundation, Not a Crutch

Florida's FRS Pension is one of the best in the country → guaranteed lifetime income, optional DROP participation, and cost-of-living protection for some. But smart officers don't stop there.

They treat their pension like the "floor," not the ceiling. They supplement it with 457(b) Deferred Comp, Roth IRAs, and taxable brokerage accounts for flexibility. Why? Because a pension covers expenses, but freedom comes from options.

The quiet millionaires think 10–15 years ahead: "How do I make sure I can retire *on my terms* — not just when the contract says I can?"

3. They Don't Chase the Market, they Respect It

Cops are trained to manage risk, not eliminate it. Investing is the same. The quiet millionaires don't try to time the market or jump in and out of fads. They invest regularly, in good markets and bad, and let compounding do its job.

They understand that volatility isn't the enemy, emotion is.

When everyone panics, they stay calm. When everyone gets greedy, they stay patient. Over 20–30 years, those habits build serious wealth.

4. They Know the Power of Deferred Comp (and Actually Use It)

Ask any retired officer what they wish they'd done differently, and many will say: "I should've put more into deferred comp."

The quiet millionaires never miss that opportunity. They contribute early and often to their 457(b), knowing that each dollar lowers taxable income today and compounds tax-deferred until retirement.

And when they get closer to hanging up the badge, they explore catch-up contributions and even Roth conversions, creating tax flexibility in retirement. They see the 457(b) not as a "bonus account," but as a crucial part of their long-term strategy.

5. They Plan DROP Like a Mission, Not an Afterthought

DROP is one of the most misunderstood benefits in the FRS system for those that don't have it, and one of the most powerful. The quiet millionaires approach it with precision.

They calculate the optimal entry date, coordinate 457(b) contributions, max out AFC's, COLA's and plan how to invest or roll over their DROP payout to avoid unnecessary taxes or penalties.

They don't treat DROP as a lump-sum windfall. They treat it as a mission-critical phase in their retirement plan and they plan their exit like they planned their career.

6. They Build Tax Awareness Into Every Decision

Quiet millionaires know that taxes don't stop when you retire, they just change form. Pension income, DROP distributions, Social Security, investment gains all come with tax consequences.

That's why they work closely with advisors to balance Roth vs. traditional accounts, capital gains harvesting, and charitable gifting. They understand that small tax efficiencies, a few thousand dollars saved each year, add up to hundreds of thousands over time.

7. They Protect Their Family the Same Way They Protect the Public

Estate planning isn't just for the wealthy, it's for the wise. The quiet millionaires make sure their spouse, kids, or grandkids are protected.

They keep beneficiary designations updated on their pension, 457(b), and insurance. They establish revocable living trusts to avoid probate, and sometimes use Lady Bird deeds to keep real estate transfers simple and private.

They see estate planning as one last act of service: protecting their family from chaos.

8. They Live Like Every Dollar Has a Purpose

You'll never see the quiet millionaire posting luxury vacations or new toys online. Their version of wealth is control. They spend intentionally, not out of guilt, but out of gratitude.

They understand that every financial decision, from buying a house to picking a car, either pushes them toward or away from independence.

Their wealth isn't loud. It's the quiet confidence of knowing they don't owe anyone, can retire when they want, and can help their family when it matters most.

9. They Ask for Help Before They Need It

Even the most disciplined officer doesn't know every rule, especially with complex topics like DROP rollovers, SECURE 2.0 changes, or retirement tax brackets.

The quiet millionaires don't guess. They build a team — a CFP®, maybe an estate attorney to catch blind spots early. They understand that good advice doesn't cost money; it saves it.

10. They Play the Long Game

At its core, financial success is a long-term mindset. The quiet millionaires start early, stay consistent, and let

time do the heavy lifting.

They don't compare themselves to the guy with the new boat. They compare themselves to who they were five years ago, and where they want their family to be ten years from now.

The most financially successful officers aren't the loudest or the highest paid. They're the ones who treat their money like they treat their family and profession: with respect, consistency, and discipline.

They prove that wealth isn't about the size of your paycheck.

It's about the size of your plan.

Nicolás Valdés-Fauli is the founder and CEO of Thin Blue Line Financial (www.tblfinancial.com). Call 305-798-1842 or email nvf@tblfinancial.com. Nicolás has served the LEO community in South Florida for 20 years and is dedicated to helping his clients make sound decisions before and during retirement. He is an expert in all matters related to the FRS, deferred compensation and local municipal retirement plans. This material has been prepared for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide, and should not be relied upon, for tax, legal or accounting advice, nor is it intended to be a solicitation for business. Investment advisory services offered through Mai Street Financial Solutions LLC.

NEWS FROM THE POLICE OFFICERS ASSISTANCE TRUST

NO WORDS



There are no words you can say to a wife. No words to tell a mother and father. No words to say to a brother and sister. No words for an aunt and an uncle. No words for cousins and every other family member. No words for a friend and a colleague

and co-worker. There are simply no words that can take the grief away, when two extraordinary men are taken away so suddenly.

Both of these young men were so many things to so many people. They were just getting started on doing incredible things when their lives were tragically cut short.

Officer David Cajuso, of the Miami Beach Police Department, was a loving husband and a dad to three children. He was a family man a man of God, and a man of faith.

Deputy Devin Jaramillo, of the Miami-Dade

Sheriff's Office and Coral Gables Police Department was an accomplished athlete. He attended the University of Central Florida and graduated Magna Cum Laude, with a degree in Criminal Justice.

These two men died serving their community. They will forever be remembered as heroes. Their names will be etched in stone so that no one will ever forget the sacrifice they made.

UPCOMING POAT EVENT:

Twelfth Annual "Homerun for Heroes" Kickball Tournament will be held at **Kendall Indian Hammocks Park on February 6th thru 7th, 2026**. The park is located at **11395 SW 79th Street**. If interested in forming a team, contact **Major Thamy Gonzalez** at **305-216-6605** for team registration. Team registration fee is \$400, team t-shirts are included. **Warm wishes for the Holiday Season!**

TRANSITION TO MIAMI DADE SHERIFF'S OFFICE



TRANSITION TO MIAMI DADE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

As of January 1st of this year, the Miami Dade Police Department officially transitioned to the Miami Dade Sheriffs Office, led by Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz, who was elected as the Sheriff of Miami Dade County.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: JOINING THE DEPARTMENT

My own journey with the department began in 1969 when it was known as the Dade County Public Safety Department. At that time, my badge, like everyone else's, read "Deputy Sheriff Dade County Florida." I was simultaneously applying to Miami Beach, Dade County, and the New Jersey State Police. In early January, Miami Beach offered me a maintenance worker position, and the New Jersey State Police invited me for a final interview. Dade County also contacted me, and after much consideration, I made my decision. While working on a rooftop on Alton Road, removing a large Delta Airlines sign, I informed my supervisor that Dade County had hired me and left to begin my new role. I started working in the jail, then entered the academy under Sergeants Grant and Wendler.

ACADEMY EXPERIENCE AND REFLECTIONS

I share this story to illustrate how uncertain and challenging things were at the time—standing for roll call at 7:00 AM, not knowing if you would have a job by the end of the day. Our class, Class 50, earned the nickname "Fighting Tigers," and some members did not make it through the first week, let alone complete the entire academy experience. These memories serve to highlight the differences between then and now. Many of my friends and fellow retirees recognize the political pressures we faced, and we are grateful that the statute of limitations has long since passed. Every retiree reading this will understand these experiences.

COMMUNICATION FROM SHERIFF ROSIE AND DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Sheriff Rosie, as she prefers to be called, is fully committed to supporting the Miami Dade Sheriffs and all personnel. I spoke with her last week after she read comments posted on the RPOC website and the Miami Dade Police Department website. The Sheriff expressed her appreciation for RPOC members, acknowledging that we "paved the road for what the department is today."

She assured us that her office and staff are aware of concerns regarding insurance and the transition from Av Med to Aetna. To address these issues, her office created a dedicated webpage for retirees to access important information.

President Steadman Stahl and Executive Vice President David Greenwell of the PBA supported the RPOC in insurance talks with Miami Dade County. I as President of the RPOC, want to thank them and the entire staff of the PBA for their efforts and their support.

RESOURCES FOR RETIREES

The Miami Dade Sheriff's Office webpage was established specifically for retirees, offering a platform to share information and get answers to questions about retirement. While communication between RPOC members and Miami Dade County has sometimes been strained, this webpage aims to foster better connections and provide helpful resources.

OUTREACH FROM DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

I have also reached out to Chief Gina Beato-Domingues, Chief of Planning and Research. I provided her with the names and email addresses of our members, so you may have received an email from Chief Gina concerning current insurance information. Both the Sheriff and Chief Gina are strong allies of the RPOC.

UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send any updated email information to me at jfraley885@gmail.com. When you receive your renewal packet in January, ensure that your renewal form is up to date before submitting it. If you communicate with Chief Gina, confirm that she has your correct email address.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROGRAM PURPOSE

I understand that some of you may have concerns about sharing your information. I will do my best to protect your privacy. This program is designed for each and every one of you, and those who have interacted with county personnel will understand the importance of these efforts.

In closing, I had the opportunity to attend the Celebration of Life for retired RPOC member Frank Mussoline on October 18th in Port Saint Lucie. This was a deeply moving experience where many colleagues and family members shared his life through memories. RIP my friend.

Christmas and New Years Holiday, are fast approaching, enjoy these times of happiness and joy, Remember your friends and family. Keep our first responders safe and in your prayers.

Please note that the Otis Chambers Scholarship Fund will be receiving applications as of January 1st, 2026.



Join Dade County Federal Credit Union and experience the credit union difference!

As a member-owned, not-for-profit financial institution, we prioritize your financial well-being with personalized service and competitive rates. Become a part-owner and enjoy the benefits of a community-focused financial partner.

As a DCFCU Member you are entitled to these great financial services and more!

- Savings and Checking
- Auto-Buying Service
- Wealth Management*
- Visa® Platinum Credit Card
- Auto Loans
- Personal Loans
- First Mortgage Loans
- Home Equity (HELOC)



Join Today!

dcfcu.org/pba • 305.471.5080



Congrats to Retired Members

The South Florida PBA is proud to honor retired members who have put in long hours and outstanding service for their departments and communities. Join us in honoring these great members and exceptional public servants as they celebrate their retirement.



Alberto Martinez
Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office



Angeleatha Chestnut
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Fred Washington
Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office



Hiram Suarez
City of Miami PD



Jean Mezidor
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Kelly Veren
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Latonya Lane
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Leroy Crumbley
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Micheal Johnson
Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office



Nora Hall,
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Robert Eichler
Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office



Teciah Johnson
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation

The Law Office of

OLIVER & FOX

Florida Workers' Compensation Lawyers for First Responders

Oliver & Fox is dedicated to representing First Responders statewide. We specialize in all First Responder work related to injuries, from minor to catastrophic. Our goal is to obtain the best care, maximum benefit or settlement available and restore you to your profession as quickly as possible. If you are unable to return to your profession due to your injury, we also represent First Responders seeking Line of Duty Disability Pension Benefits.

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE LEGAL CONSULTATION
833-PBA-9400 (833-722-9400)
OliverFoxLaw.com



Specializing In

- Pension/In Line of Duty Disability
- Workers' Compensation
- Physical Injuries
- Heart Disease & Hypertension
- PTSD
- Repetitive Trauma
- Anxiety
- Depression

Preferred Practitioner of the South Florida PBA and Florida PBA



Jason L. Fox

Jason L. Fox, Esq.
Jason@OliverFoxLaw.com



Tonya A. Oliver

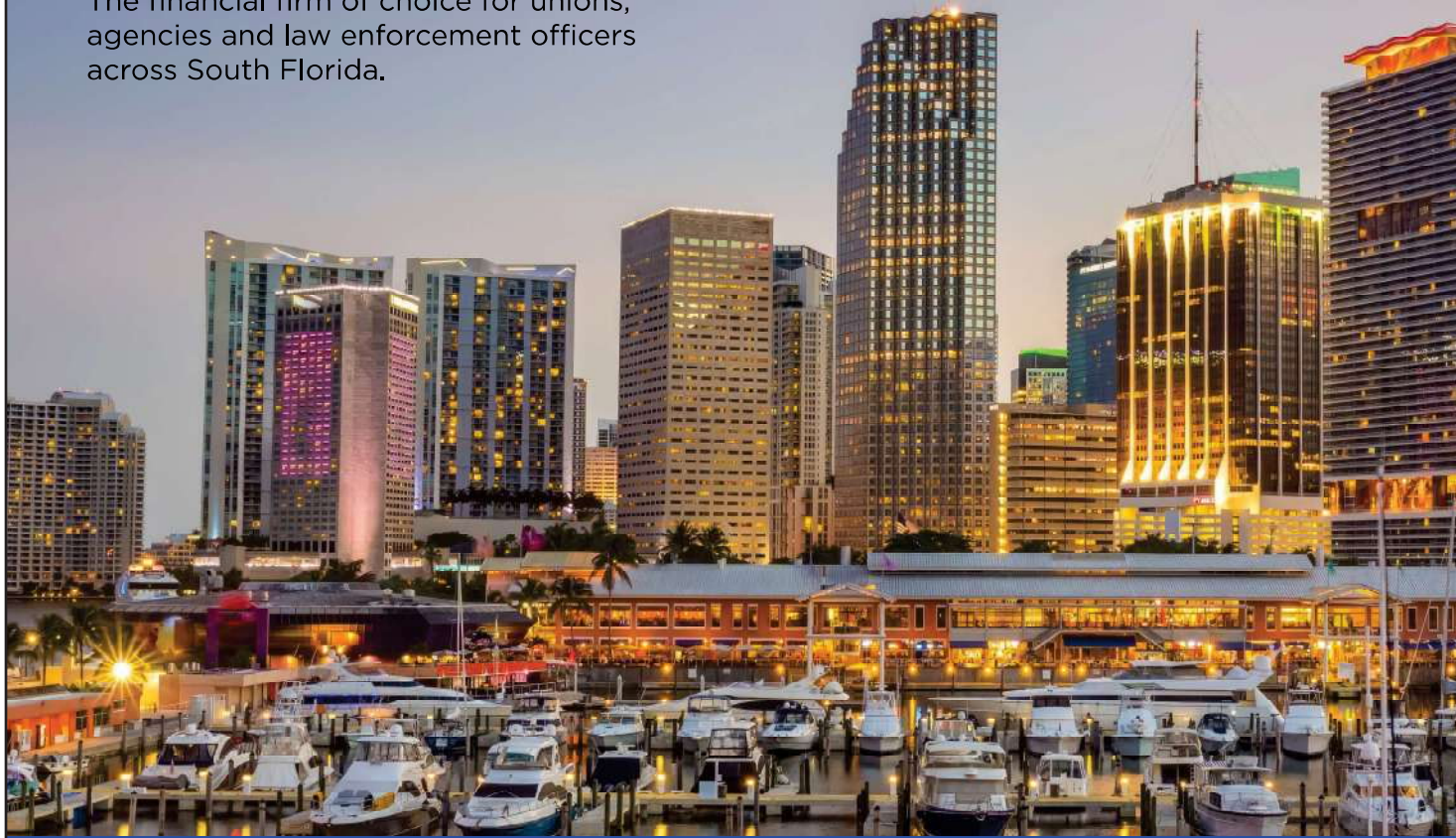
Tonya A. Oliver, Esq.
Tonya@OliverFoxLaw.com

13031 W Linebaugh Ave, Ste 102, Tampa, FL 33626

TRUSTED. VERIFIED.

Experts in managing retirement benefits for law enforcement

The financial firm of choice for unions, agencies and law enforcement officers across South Florida.



THIN BLUE LINE
— FINANCIAL —

Nicolas Valdes-Fauli,

CFP® Founder and CEO, Thin Blue Line Financial

 **(305) 798-1842**



Investment advisory services offered through Main Street Financial Solutions LLC. This material has been prepared for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide, and should not be relied upon for, tax, legal or accounting advice. For important disclosures about Main Street Financial Solutions, LLC, including our Part 3 Relationship Summary ("Form CRS"), please visit <https://adviserinfo.sec.gov/firm/summary/305834>.

Thin Blue Line Financial | 3105 NW 107th Ave Doral FL 33172
tblfinancial.com | (305) 798-1842 | nvf@tblfinancial.com

Investment advisory services offered through Main Street Financial Solutions, LLC, a federally registered investment advisor.