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CGAF presents scholarships to Miami's most talented art students

TO MIAMI'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

The Coconut Grove Arts Festival Board of Directors has selected and awarded 16 graduating seniors attending high school magnet programs in Miami-Dade County with a record \$56,000 in scholarship funding.

Marking 26 years of scholarship support for future generations of local artists, the awards were presented on May 14 by volunteer members of the Coconut Grove Arts and Historical Association, producers of the nonprofit Coconut Grove Arts Festival.

"Since 1964, the Coconut Grove Arts Festival has played a prominent role in promoting arts and culture in South Florida, but our work goes well beyond just hosting an internationally acclaimed show for three days each year over Presidents Day weekend," said Monty Trainer, president of the Coconut Grove Arts Festival (CGAF). "Behind the scenes, we also have a proud history of giving back to the community all year long through a range of arts educational and outreach programs, including our highly anticipated annual scholarships."

The ceremony and exhibition featuring the students' artwork was hosted by the Gallery @ CGAF at the Mayfair Complex.

"We are so pleased to present this group of truly amazing young artists with scholarships to further their art studies," he continued. "After all, that's the stated mission of the Coconut Grove Arts & Historical Association — to create a positive impact on our community by nurturing a future generation of artists."

Trainer also extended the board's appreciation to Fund 4 Design & Art Education, "for their continued commitment to the scholarship program and support in identifying these meritorious young people as Miami-Dade County's most talented art students."

2022 CGAF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

- Abel Reyes - Design & Architecture Senior High (DASH)
- Alize Perez - New World School of the Arts (NWSA)
- Ashley Mendoza - NWSA
- Camila Montero - DASH
- Clay Mussfeldt - NWSA
- Edwin Flores - DASH
- Ivana Struve - DASH



LEFT: OMAR GALVEZ, SENIOR AT THE DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE SENIOR HIGH, DISPLAYS ONE OF HIS WORKS.



RIGHT: NEW WORLD SCHOOL OF THE ARTS SENIOR KATHARINE DUNN IS PICTURED AT THE CGAF AWARDS CEREMONY AND EXHIBITION.

- Imani Dobbins-Purvis – NWSA
- Joanna Vidal - APMCA
- Katharine Dunn NWSA
- Madelynn Apolinar -DASH
- Michelle Martos - Miami Senior High School (MSHS)
- Omar Galvez - DASH
- Qadir Parris - NWSA
- Rania Brown - APMCA
- Jalia Williams - Arthur & Polly Mays Conservatory of the Arts (APMCA)

ABOUT THE COCONUT GROVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Spanning three days over Presidents Day weekend, the annual Coconut Grove Arts Festival is the region's premier art festival celebrating the fine arts with live performances and local flavors.

As one of the largest art festivals in the United States, an estimated 120,000 people gather each year along Coconut Grove's waterfront streets to view the works of nearly 400 internationally known and jury-selected artists across 15 visual categories.

Produced by the nonprofit, 501(c)(3), Coconut Grove Arts & Historical Association, festival proceeds fund the Annual Scholarship Program and other education and outreach programs such as the New & Emerging Artists Program and the High School Mentoring Series. Year-round arts initiatives also include special exhibitions at the Mayfair in the Grove, Visiting Artists Week, and a partnership with the New World School of the Arts.

For information, visit www.cgaf.com/.

Tri-Rail: One Down, two to go!

BY GRANT MILLER

Publisher



Last Friday, Tri-Rail's board hired a replacement for outgoing executive director Steven Abrams. Unlike Mr. Abrams, Diane Hernandez Del

Calvo and Teresa Moore, the new executive director, David Dech, has years of railroad experience with both freight and passenger systems and experience managing complex rail projects.

When standing for questions from the board, Dech stated that with a project like MiamiCentral, you must assume things will go wrong and you need to be ready with multiple contingency plans when they do.

Dech also stated that to address budget issues, he would first look internally to ensure that Tri-Rail was spending the taxpayer's dollars efficiently. His comments were in stark contrast to how the current "Leadership Team" — consisting of Abrams, Hernandez Del Calvo and Moore — runs Tri-Rail.

At every step of the way with the five

years and counting delayed service expansion to Downtown, Tri-Rail's "Leadership Team" was caught off guard with no solutions to both major and minor issues that have arisen.

The "Leadership Team" only seems too content to spend unnecessarily, such as hiring two additional attorneys for an agency that shouldn't even have an in-house counsel and delaying projects like road crossing work and train overhauls, resulting in increased costs and reduced reliability for the taxpayers and riders.

At May's board meeting, Hernandez Del Calvo, who runs the Finance Department, couldn't even tell the board how much money it would cost to run the new MiamiCentral service.

The board has taken the first step in replacing Abrams but, for Dech to be successful, the board needs to remove the cancer that is Hernandez Del Calvo and Moore.

If Tri-Rail's board doesn't step up and do the right thing, hopefully, Dech will quickly see through Hernandez Del Calvo and Moore and set these two aside where they can do no further harm. Then maybe others inside the agency or those who have left the agency can let him know where the skeletons are buried. I assume there will be quite a few of them for Dech to discover.

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Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce announces officers for FY 2022-23

BY MARITZA ARCEO

The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce (GMCC), the proud champion for the Greater Miami Business Community and a civic engine that fuels the advancement of The Magic City, recently announced its FY2022-23 Board of Directors officers.

The board is led by Roberto Muñoz, president, COO and founder of ELITE Family Office, as board chair; Amy Furness, co-managing shareholder for Carlton Fields Miami office as chair-elect; Hector J. Ponte, region bank president for Wells Fargo's South Florida region, as first vice chair, and Alex Rhodes, national managing partner at Grant Thornton, as treasurer. In addition, Rick Beasley, executive director of CareerSource South Florida, will serve as immediate past chair.

The officers within the executive committee lead the chamber's board of directors who are volunteer members representing businesses of all sizes from myriad industries, that oversee the chamber's work areas and at-large members. Muñoz's role as board chair in-

cludes assisting in membership development and strategy setting and advocating for important business issues supported by the chamber.

"We are excited to welcome this dynamic group of professionals whose background and extensive experience will definitely make a positive impact in our community," said Alfred Sanchez, president and CEO of GMCC. "As our economy continues to recover from these challenges times, we remain optimistic and look forward to our new board members business contributions in helping us achieve our goal."



ROBERTO MUÑOZ

For a complete list of the members of GMCC Board of Directors, visit www.miamichamber.com.

Founded in 1907 as the Miami Board of Trade, today's GMCC boasts representing more than 400,000 member company employees and is heralded for its legacy of leadership in economic development, and its unwavering commitment to improving the Miami-Dade community.

For more information, visit www.MiamiChamber.com.

Maria Bechily named chair of the board of ArtesMiami Inc.

TO MIAMI'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

Maria C. Bechily, a public relations leader and philanthropist, has been elected chair of the board of ArtesMiami Inc., a 501(c)3 organization that supports and promotes Hispanic artists and cultural organizations. Carlos Modia was elected vice chair and Manny Rodriguez was elected treasurer.

"Ms. Bechily brings a wealth of board service, philanthropic and public relations experience to our organization," said Aida Levitan, PhD, ArtesMiami founder and president. "We also anticipate that she will also attract greater support for ArtesMiami."

"I am honored to have been elected by the board to chair such a prestigious non-profit group as ArtesMiami," Bechily said. "The programs and artists that ArtesMiami supports are crucial to strengthening Miami's position as an international arts and cultural center. I hope to provide strategic leadership to our board so we can further develop the organization."

Bechily created one of the first public relations and marketing agencies to identify and reach Hispanic consumers in Chicago. Her list of clients included Peoples Energy; Anheuser-Busch Companies; Kraft Foundation; Terra Museum of American Art; Attorney General of Illinois, and *Hoy*, a Spanish-language publication of the *Chicago Tribune*.

In addition to her work behind the scenes reaching Chicago's Latinos, she also appeared in front of the camera hosting Spanish language television shows on WSNS-TV, Channel 44 (now Univision). Two of her shows received Emmy nominations.

Bechily has significant government and public policy experience having worked for a former U.S. Senator from Illinois. She also has served by mayoral and presidential appointment on numerous boards. Presently, she serves on the board of the Pérez Art Museum Miami. She is a life trustee of the Goodman Theatre where she is the founding chair of the board's education committee.

Bechily is a former member of the Ex-



MARIA C. BECHILY

ecutive Committee of the Chicago Community Trust and a founding co-chair of Nuestro Futuro, a donor advised endowment that promotes philanthropy among Latinos. She also is a life trustee of the Northwestern Memorial Foundation. During her tenure on the board, she co-chaired "Enhancing our Lives," a \$207 million capital campaign.

Bechily received her bachelor's degree in sociology from Loyola University of Chicago and a master's degree in public policy studies from the Harris School of Public Policy of the University of Chicago.

ArtesMiami Inc. began in 1995 to sponsor the Fair of Seville in Miami and later the Fair of Spain in Miami. Led by nationally renowned publicist and philanthropist Aida Levitan, PhD, the organization has donated more than \$2.7 million in in-kind services and cash to cultural organizations and artists, primarily in South Florida. Its latest program is the ArtesMiami Film Fund, which will donate thousands of dollars to documentary filmmakers.

For more information visit <http://artesmiami.org>. To donate to ArtesMiami or to be considered for membership and becoming a director, send email to alevitan@artesmiami.org.



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