

# Aventura news

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## North Dade Justice Center celebrates national LAW DAY

### *“Toward a More Perfect Union: The Constitution in Times of Change”*

BY ELAINE ADLER

It's been over 25 years that the Judges of the North Dade Justice Center (NDJC) have partnered with the Aventura Marketing Council/Chamber of Commerce (AMC) to hold their annual LAW DAY program, commemorated annually in May. There have been two Judges who have led the way on this important program year after year: Judge Linda Singer Stein and Judge Myriam Lehr. Each year, they coordinate their fellow NDJC Judges, the South Florida judiciary community as well as oversee the entire program to ensure the tradition of presenting an annual LAW DAY program to recognize our United States law and its role in society.

The keynote speaker this year was Judge Eric William Hendon, formerly on the North Dade Justice Center bench and now a member of the Third District Court of Appeal.

Joining Judge Stein and Judge Lehr as the 2022 LAW DAY Co-Chairs were Judge Ayana Harris, Judge Chiaka Ihekwa, Judge Natalie Moore and Judge Fred Seraphin. NDJC Judges welcomed other members of the judiciary, elected and appointed officials, Bar Association leaders and event sponsors during a beautiful brunch catered by Paul Kruss of Mo's Bagels. During the brunch, the Judges met with event sponsors, including the Aventura Marketing Council/Chamber of Commerce, Community-Police Relations Foundation, the law firm of Fenstersheib & Berkowitz and Valley National Bank. Nine Bar Associations also helped to sponsor LAW DAY, including the Caribbean Bar; Colombian American Bar; Cuban American Bar; Florida Assoc. of Women Lawyers ~ Dade County Branch; Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Assoc; Haitian Lawyers Assoc.; North Dade Bar; South Broward Bar and the Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Association.

The program opened with the presentation of colors by the Miami-Dade Police Department Honor Guard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by NDJC bailiffs. Gifted Young Star singer Cameron Wheeler sang the National Anthem and the program was



PICTURED ARE (L-R) JUDGE CHIKA IHEKWABA, JUDGE FRED SERAPHIN, JUDGE ERIC HENDON, JUDGE MYRIAM LEHR, JUDGE LINDA SINGER STEIN, JUDGE AYANA HARRIS AND JUDGE NATALIE MOORE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW GOLDSTEIN

underway. Miami-Dade Commissioner Sally Heyman, a longtime friend and supporter of law enforcement and the North Dade Justice Center, offered special remarks as did Sabrina Puglisi, President of the Miami-Dade Bar Association.

Special invitations to attend were sent to students from St. Thomas Law School who joined their university president, David Armstrong and leadership team for LAW DAY. Judge Lehr said, “Our event this year was extra special because we had in attendance first-year law students from St. Thomas University Law school who are the future of our legal system.” Judge Stein’s son, Max Stein, spoke about how he decided to go into law after watching his mother “hold court” on Zoom in their home during COVID. Judge Stein said, “I’m so proud of my son, Max, who made the decision to pursue a career in the law. He exemplifies the next generation of lawyers, and the future is bright!”

One of the longtime traditions of LAW DAY is the annual Student Essay Contest, sponsored by the North Dade Bar Association/South Broward Bar Association, with Russel Lazega and Esther Blynn overseeing it with the tremendous support of Lazega’s legal assistant, Sara Meilan.

The essay contest for middle school students focused on the topic of whether the right to carry a concealed weapon should be a collective right limited to well-regulated law enforcement agencies or a right of private individuals. Seventh-grader Arielle Joseph from Doctor’s Charter School was the winner and presented with a cash award of \$300. Second Place prize of \$150 went to Anastacia Miroshnichenko, 7th grade, from Aventura Waterways K-8 Center; Third Place prize of \$100 was won by Aporupa Papry, 7th grade, Norman S. Edelcup Sunny Isles Beach K-8; and Honorable Mentions of \$50 each were won by Rifaner

Previl, Grade 7, Andover Middle School; Sebastian Espinosa, 7th grade, Highland Oaks Middle; Avril Suarez, Grade 7, Doctor’s Charter School; and Seth Cohen,

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# Around Town

## FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus celebrates \$2 million in Golden Gift First Generation Scholarships

*Billy Joel honored for establishing Golden Gift Fund*

The 7th Annual Golden Gift First Generation Scholarship Celebration was recently held at the Roz and Cal Kovens Conference Center on FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus. Forty recipients who received this year's Golden Gift First Generation Scholarship were honored at a luncheon and ceremony surrounded by friends, family, members of the Vice Provost's Council, community dignitaries, donors to the Golden Gift First Generation Scholarship Fund and previous recipients and alumni. The event was an opportunity for the students to meet the generous donors of their scholarship and express their gratitude.

The Golden Gift First Generation Scholarship program was created at FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus by the Vice Provost's Council, a prestigious community relations board comprised of a diverse group of business and civic leaders who act as brand ambassadors and advocates for FIU, in general, and the Biscayne Bay Campus, specifically.

Part of the event was a tribute to Jonathan Evans, who was the Chair of the Vice Provost's Council when he passed away on February 14<sup>th</sup> of this year. The event concluded with a special recognition of Hon. Billy Joel who has been instrumental

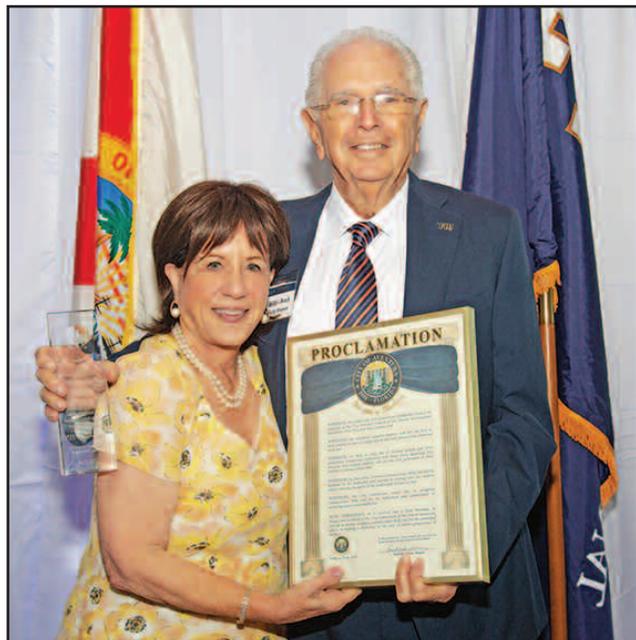


in establishing the Golden Gift Fund and raising \$2 million since its inception seven years ago.

Vice Provost Pablo Ortiz stated, "The Golden Gift Luncheon provided the recipients, donors, and community the opportunity to come together in a beautiful venue to witness the impact and success of the scholarship efforts. The students were able show their appreciation through heartfelt testimonials from their personal lives that touched everyone who was present. A great afternoon indeed!"

*For information on the Golden Gift First Generation Scholarships and the Vice Provost's Council, contact Annick De Bruyne at 305-919-4008.*

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## LAW DAY, from page 1



8th grade, Norman S. Edelcup Sunny Isles Beach K-8. Essay contest sponsors were Russ Lazega; Florida Advocates, a Private Law Firm; South Broward Bar Association and the Haitian Lawyers Association.

In keeping with the theme of the Constitution in times of change, Judge Hendon offered five different cases that spoke to the Constitution in times of change. Recognizing that the Constitution is a dynamic document that outlines a blueprint for government, but also delegates power, articulates right and offers mechanisms for change, it is neither perfect nor exhaustive.

Judge Hendon carefully reviewed five cases that brought home that point. As the American Bar Association says, "Legislation, court rulings, amendments, lawyers, and "We the People" have attempted to make the "more perfect Union" more real. That effort continues today, as contemporary leaders and everyday citizens raise their voices as loud as ever to fulfill the promise of the Constitution. Defining and refining those words of the Constitution might be our oldest national tradition, and how each of us works — together — toward a more perfect Union."

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# Don Soffer Aventura High School Foundation holds Britto unveiling celebration

The sun shined on Soffer High as the Don Soffer Aventura High School Foundation, led by its President Cindy Orlinsky, and Board Members Dr. Andrea Beck, Gimol Bentes, Diane Gleit, Brett Storch, and Dr. Whitney Walters, hosted the Britto Unveiling Celebration on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Driving down Northeast 213<sup>th</sup> Street, it was hard to miss the huge tent and large balloon structures to commemorate the giant mosaic installation by internationally renowned artist Romero Britto on the face of the school. Aventura Police were out in full force to help with directing traffic and parking, while Honor Society students from Aventura City of Excellence School (ACES) helped to greet community leaders, special guests, parents and students as they arrived at the event. Mimes worked their way around the crowd of more than 300 attendees, amusing everyone with fun stunts and encouraging donations for the students with the use of QR codes.

CBS4 Emmy-nominated journalist Karli Barnett kicked things off and hosted an amazing program including remarks from highly es-



*is applied to the high school with my name on it. I'm positive that Britto's unique art will inspire students' dreams with happiness and optimism. I'm grateful to the Foundation for bringing this opportunity to our Aventura community."*

Following the unveiling, attendees were invited to enjoy the reception with a silent auction, food trucks, games, a chance to purchase limited edition Britto x DSAHS merchandise, and the opportunity to celebrate art and learning with the Aventura community.

The Don Soffer Aventura High School Foundation is on a mission to connect and inspire the community to create nationwide partnerships to raise awareness and funds to provide financial support, ensuring educational excellence, secure unique growth opportunities and college preparedness for the students at DSAHS. To learn more about the Foundation, visit [www.dsahs-foundation.org](http://www.dsahs-foundation.org).

To make a donation, visit online at <https://bit.ly/3wodc8v>.



teemed individuals such as Don Soffer, Romero Britto, Aventura Vice Mayor Denise Landman, Commissioner Rachel Friedland, Foundation Chairwoman Cindy Orlinsky, Raul Fadel of Iberia Tiles, and Rabbi Jonathan Berkun.

The community heard from Soffer High Principal Dr. Geoff McKee, who expressed obvious pride in his students. All three Student Government Presidents, Alec Friedland (9<sup>th</sup> Grade), Ethan Bazak (10<sup>th</sup> Grade), and Sofia Edelberg (11<sup>th</sup> Grade), addressed the audience and shared important remarks on the impact the school has had in their education and personal growth. Attendees had a chance to experience a small representation of the talented students at Soffer High, including a solo performance of "A Change in Me" from Beauty and the Beast by 11<sup>th</sup> grader Mia Biton. Additionally, there was a gallery throughout the first floor of the school displaying visual art pieces from the students.

The program concluded with the debut of Britto's latest masterpiece, unveiled with the help of the Soffer family. Right before the cover came down, Don Soffer spoke fondly of Romero Britto and said, "I am so honored that his work



# Don Soffer Aventura High School Foundation holds Britto unveiling celebration



PHOTOS BY PRIZMA PHOTOS DARIO MALDONADO & MG LUIS ARTURO MORA

# Plan your summer escape to Acqualina



Now that school has ended and family vacations are underway, Acqualina Resort & Residences invites Florida residents to rediscover the beauty of the sunshine state with its Staycation Package. This Five Star, Five Diamond resort offers expansive outdoor grounds, world-class restaurants including Il Mulino New York and the new Ke-uH Japanese fusion restaurant, a luxurious spa and spacious rooms and suites all with balconies. Acqualina Resort is at the center of Sunny Isles Beach providing an exclusive experience and ultra-luxurious beach lifestyle.

Book the Staycation Package and enjoy 15% off the best available rate based on a minimum two-night stay. The package also includes complimentary valet parking, access to the Acquamarine children’s program for ages 5 to 12 and complimentary internet access.

While you’re busy exploring all the possibilities for an optimal family getaway, consider reserving a private poolside cabana at Acqualina to elevate your family experience. Open the Acqualina App and click on Ca-



bana and AcquaBed Bookings to scroll through images and get a birds-eye view of cabana locations at two gleaming ocean-front pools. The Recreational Pool is where your little ones will meet new friends and

you’ll be in the center of the action with pool games, activities and aqua fitness classes steps away from your shaded pavilion. The Beach Club pool with its gradual zero-entry is ideal for families with toddlers and

babies. Each Mediterranean-inspired cabana accommodates up to four guests on plush red lounge chairs and is reminiscent of an Italian Riviera retreat with poolside food and beverage service – including the Insta-worthy Acqualina Thai Coconut – mere moments away.

For more information or reservations, visit online at [www.acqualinaresort.com](http://www.acqualinaresort.com) or call +1-844-251-8490.



## Skyting’s vision: Help airport tower control with technology

There have been studies published that state that air traffic controllers’ demanding schedules can result in chronic fatigue and affect their ability to keep travelers safe. Recognizing this fact, Skyting is now working on creating technology that would automate a portion of the controllers’ responsibilities so they can focus just on keeping air travelers safe.

Partners Gyorgy Montvai and Zoltan Redey are currently working with advisors in the aviation and technology industries to accomplish their goal. Both Montvai and Redey are members of the Air Traffic Control Association based in Virginia and established by a group of air traffic controllers who are dedicated to the science and progress of air traffic control. [www.atca.org](http://www.atca.org). According to their website, “Established in Washington, D.C., in 1956 by a group of air traffic controllers, the Air Traffic Control Association has been from the outset dedicated to progress in the science of air traffic control and the preservation of a safe flight environment. It provides a forum in which those concerned can address the myriad



ZOLTAN REDEY



GYORGY MONTVAI

issues inherent to the development of viable air traffic control systems and aviation infrastructures, and the ever-increasing demands on the global navigable airspace environment. Those in the aviation community — the providers of air traffic control, system architects,

manufacturers, suppliers, system operators and users — join together in ATCA to share their collective experience, knowledge, and efforts in pursuit of common goals.”

Both Montvai and Redey’s expertise is in technology and automation, as they focus their efforts on how to automate a portion of the air traffic controllers’ responsibilities so the controllers can concentrate on the most important part of their job...maintaining safe take-offs and landings.

Skyting is currently seeking experts in the United States to join their team of technology and industry experts from Hungary, Britain, Sweden and the United States to enlarge their team and partner with them to help develop solutions, understanding that it will be a 2-3 year process to finalize the right team, technology and testing in various airports.

For information, contact Skyting’s U.S. Representative Michael Leitman at 954.554.0291 or visit online at [michaelleitman@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelleitman@yahoo.com)

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# FIU CAPS partners with Togetherall to give students more mental health support

BY MONICA SMITH

Just in time for Mental Health Awareness month, FIU Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) announced its partnership with Togetherall, a social media platform available to more than 2.5 million students worldwide.

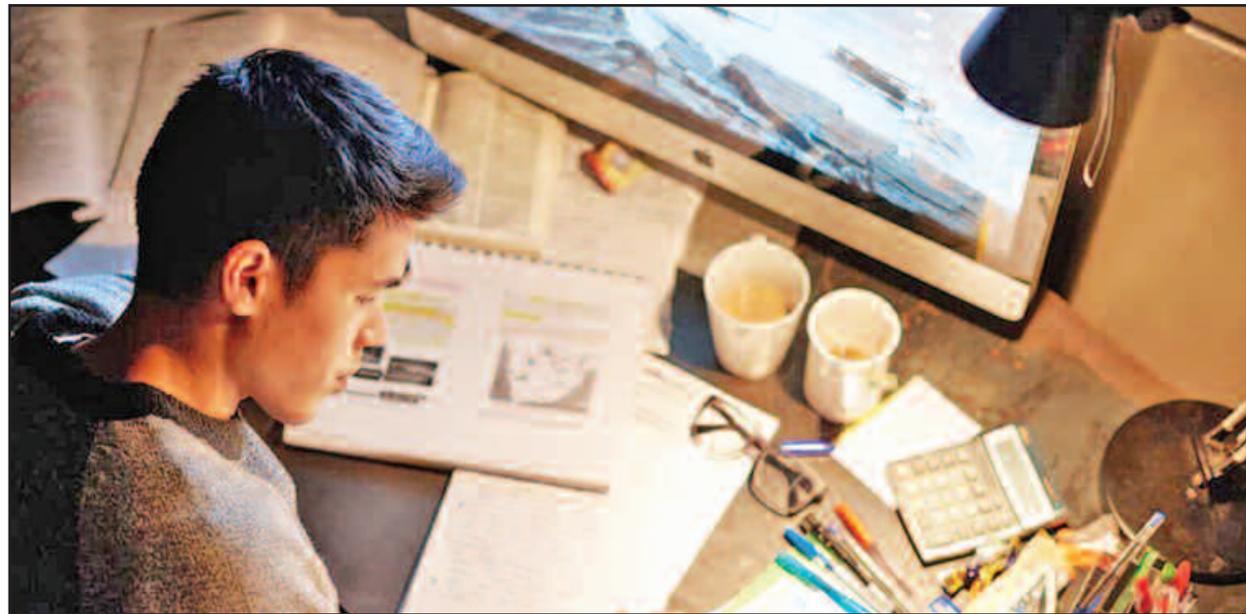
Described as “a safe, online community to share feelings anonymously and get support to improve mental health and well-being,” Togetherall’s platform is open to students with FIU credentials; users will find a community of people ready to support each other, 24/7, 365 days a year.

#### Anytime, anywhere

“Togetherall is a natural addition to the spectrum of services CAPS offers because it adds 24/7 mental health support for the entire university,” says Todd Lengnick, director of CAPS.

While all interactions are anonymous, licensed mental health practitioners help monitor the site to provide an extra layer of empowerment and inclusivity to students.

FIU mental health counseling through CAPS provides both online and face-to-face students with a variety of online workshops and tools to help students facilitate and enhance their personal learning, emotional well-being and academic skills development. The addition of Togetherall will increase connections for FIU students so they may receive anonymous support from



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other students who understand the obligations and stressors of student life.

#### Several functions available

“As soon as students sign up with their FIU email address, they can start connecting with their peers, right from their phones, anonymously and with the support of licensed clinicians. Even if it’s 2 a.m. on a Saturday, students can connect and get the help they need,” explains Lengnick.

Within the platform, students can use the journal function, which is completely pri-

vate, and they can take advantage of self-help courses as well as a “goal setting” function to help keep on track. Topics for discussion include addictions, sleep, anger, lifestyle, phobias, stress and managing OCD.

#### College students and mental health statistics

Recent reports indicate that college students are feeling an additional strain on their mental health in the wake of the pandemic. A full two-thirds of students feel the

effects of declining mental health on campuses nationwide. Even more alarming, a survey co-sponsored by Kaplan, *Inside Higher Ed* and College Pulse found that one in five students has struggled with suicidal ideation. “Loneliness” was the largest area of need compared to previous years.

According to Togetherall’s data, nearly 80 percent of those surveyed indicated that their main reason for joining was feelings of depression, and 70 percent cited feelings of anxiety.