

By Senator Villalobos

38-02155B-10

20102422

Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing the students, faculty, staff, board of trustees, and alumni of Miami Dade College as they celebrate the College's 50 years as an outstanding institution of higher education.

WHEREAS, in 1960, Miami Dade College opened its doors as Dade County Junior College with a diverse student body totaling 1,428, and became the first integrated junior college in Florida, offering a tuition-free education for all high school graduates residing in the county, and

WHEREAS, enrollment at the original North Campus site quickly grew and, by 1967, the college became the largest institution of higher learning in the state of Florida with 23,341 students, prompting expansion to Kendall and downtown Miami, and

WHEREAS, by the mid-1970s, Miami Dade's guiding philosophy of "access with excellence" was clearly defined with the adoption of higher academic standards, the addition of a Medical Center Campus, and the opening of the Inter-American Outreach Center of 2,000 students in the heart of Little Havana, now one of the largest bilingual facilities of higher learning in the United States, and

WHEREAS, Miami Dade College became known as "Democracy's College" as it firmly established itself as the nation's most diverse educational institution, and

WHEREAS, in 1984, the New World School of the Arts was conceived and designed to train future performing and visual artists from high school through undergraduate studies, creating

38-02155B-10

20102422

30 the first seamless partnership between Miami-Dade County Public
31 Schools, Miami Dade College and, later, the University of
32 Florida, and

33 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College has long been the community's
34 cultural anchor, home of the Miami Book Fair International, the
35 Miami International Film Festival, the National Historic
36 Landmark Freedom Tower, the Cultura del Lobo Performance Arts
37 Series, a renowned art gallery system, and acclaimed campus
38 theaters, and

39 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College has continued to expand access
40 to students throughout the county, opening the Hialeah Center in
41 1981 which, today, boasts an enrollment of more than 12,000
42 students, and, in 1985, opening the Homestead Campus, which has
43 become a vibrant modern campus in the heart of the revitalized
44 Homestead community, and

45 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College's reputation for high
46 achievement has continued to receive national acclaim, including
47 recognition by the prestigious University of Texas Community
48 College Leadership Program as the "Best and Most Innovative"
49 community college in the nation, and

50 WHEREAS, in the 1990s, Miami Dade College, in a bold
51 response to the changing economy and workforce, restructured its
52 academic programs to meet the demands of emerging industries,
53 introducing more than 50 new degree and short-term certificate
54 training programs, developing multimedia classrooms and the
55 Virtual College, and receiving recognition from Yahoo's Internet
56 Life and the Smithsonian Institute for Innovation as one of the
57 best-wired colleges and universities nationwide, and

58 WHEREAS, in response to the need for a qualified workforce

38-02155B-10

20102422

59 in information technology and telecommunications, Miami Dade
60 College has, over the past 10 years, built and expanded the
61 Emerging Technologies Center of the Americas, a state-of-the-
62 art, 40,000-square-foot facility that houses 19 multimedia
63 classrooms and labs, specialized equipment, and simulation
64 stations, and a new science complex consisting of 90,000 square
65 feet of lab, classroom, meeting, greenhouse, and research space,
66 and

67 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College added an eighth campus in the
68 Doral area, the West Campus, and established the Honors College,
69 which offers gifted students a rich, academically challenging
70 curriculum and the opportunity to transfer to some of the most
71 prestigious colleges and universities in the nation through more
72 than 60 articulation agreements, and

73 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College is known as the "great
74 equalizer" in the community and as an incubator of the human
75 spirit, and continues to meet the workforce needs of the region,
76 especially in areas of critical shortage, including education,
77 nursing, public safety, film and digital production, and
78 electrical engineering, and

79 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College offers bachelor's degrees to
80 place-bound, nontraditional students who, otherwise, might not
81 realize their dream of a college education, and

82 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College has been recognized by the
83 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for helping
84 first-generation and disadvantaged students to attend college
85 and engage in service-learning, and by the *Chronicle for Higher*
86 *Education* as one of its "Great Colleges to Work For," and

87 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College received the first-annual

38-02155B-10

20102422

88 Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for teaching and learning from the
89 American Council on Education, was named one of the nation's top
90 25 "Best Neighbor Colleges and Universities" by the Survey of
91 Best College and University Civic Partnerships Project, and has
92 received many other national awards and recognitions, and

93 WHEREAS, the faculty at Miami Dade College continue to be
94 recognized for their outstanding commitment, dedication,
95 innovation, and excellence in teaching, as exemplified most
96 recently by the recognition of Sandra Schultz as the 2009
97 Florida Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the
98 Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and
99 Support of Education, and

100 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College has been deemed one of the most
101 efficient, effective, and well-managed institutions in the
102 nation by the Washington Economics Group, and

103 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College President Dr. Eduardo J. Padron
104 was named to *Time* magazine's list of "The 10 Best College
105 Presidents" in the nation in its November 2009 issue and was
106 honored by *Florida Trend* magazine in 2010 as "Floridian of the
107 Year" for his tireless advocacy of the vital role community
108 colleges play in revitalizing the economy, and

109 WHEREAS, Miami Dade College is the nation's largest
110 institution of higher education, having taught more than 1.7
111 million students, and is the top producer of college degrees in
112 the nation, NOW, THEREFORE,

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114 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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116 That the Senate recognizes Miami Dade College on the

38-02155B-10

20102422__

117 occasion of its 50th Anniversary and congratulates President
118 Eduardo J. Padron, Board of Trustees Chair Helen Aguirre Ferre,
119 and the members of the board, and the faculty, staff, students,
120 and alumni of the college on an outstanding half century of
121 service and leadership.