

MANNY, THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTRODUCTION...

AND THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE TO PUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ON THE TECH MAP!

DEAR FRIENDS, WELCOME AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME FOR THE EMERGE AMERICAS KICK OFF CELEBRATION!

THE FIRST EMERGE AMERICAS CONFERENCE THIS PAST MAY BECAME ONE OF THE PREMIERE TECH EVENTS FOR THIS HEMISPHERE, AND ALL OF YOU HAVE HELPED LEAD THE WAY TOWARD MAKING MIAMI A CENTER FOR TECH AND INNOVATION.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF MY ADMINISTRATION, GROWING THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS BEEN A KEY FOCUS.

TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES ARE JOB CREATORS AND BY CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR THEM IN OUR COUNTY, WE ARE SLOWLY REVERSING THE BRAIN DRAIN AND INSTEAD KEEPING MANY OF OUR YOUNGER RESIDENTS HERE RATHER THAN LOSING THEM TO OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

THINK OF HOW FAR WE'VE COME IN JUST A SHORT TIME!

EMERGE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS, ATTRACTING 6000 ATTENDEES AND 400 COMPANIES, PUTTING US ON THE CENTER OF THE TECH MAP...

AND 2015 WILL BE BIGGER!

IN CONJUNCTION WITH EMERGE, WE HELD THE MAYORAL INNOVATION SUMMIT, BRINGING MAYORS FROM CITIES AS DIVERSE AS MADRID, BARCELONA, BUENOS AIRES AND MEXICO CITY, TO SANTO DOMINGO AND KINGSTON TO TALK ABOUT HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP US ALL BECOME "SMARTER CITIES."

MICROSOFT OPENED ITS FIRST INNOVATION CENTER IN NORTH AMERICA HERE AT VENTURE HIVE, WHICH CONTINUES TO ATTRACT AND DEVELOP START-UPS AND OTHER TECH BUSINESSES.

AND THE INNOVATION GOING ON ALL OVER MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS ALSO HAPPENING IN OUR GOVERNMENT.

WE CANNOT ATTRACT INNOVATORS WITHOUT BEING INNOVATIVE OURSELVES.

THIS IS WHY MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS ON A PATH TOWARD OPEN DATA THAT IS THROWING OPEN THE DOORS TO COUNTY HALL IN UNPRECEDENTED WAYS.

EARLIER THIS MONTH I WAS IN NEW YORK FOR THE IBM THINK FORUM, I WAS THE ONLY ELECTED OFFICIAL THERE.

WE SPOKE ABOUT HOW WE ARE LEADING THE WAY IN LEVERAGING DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO ENGAGE OUR CITIZENS.

AND WE ARE WORKING TO CREATE APPS TO MAKE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE.

TO THAT END, I WAS ALSO IN SAN FRANCISCO AT THE CODE FOR AMERICA SUMMIT TO ANNOUNCE THAT MIAMI WILL BE WORKING WITH CODE FOR AMERICA FELLOWS IN THE COMING YEAR...

WE'RE THE FIRST GOVERNMENT IN FLORIDA THAT WILL HAVE CODE FOR AMERICA FELLOWS.

THIS WILL HELP US ORGANIZE A NETWORK OF PEOPLE DEDICATED TO MAKING GOVERNMENT SERVICES SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE, AND EASY TO USE.

ULTIMATELY, TECHNOLOGY IS CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOBS AND INNOVATION THAT DID NOT EXISTS IN OUR COMMUNITY...

AND IT'S BRIDGING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS.

TO KEEP THIS MOMENTUM GOING, WE NEED ALL OF YOU TO KEEP ENGAGING IN WAYS TO EXPAND OUR TECH CAPACITY.

LET ME ONCE AGAIN THANK MANNY MEDINA HIS VISION IN BRINGING THIS CONFERENCE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

THANKS TO THE TEAM AT EMERGE AMERICAS, ALL THE STAFF, ALL THE SPONSORS, TO EVERYONE WHO MAKES THIS CONFERENCE HAPPEN.

THANK YOU ALL AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE IN 2015!