

**GOOD EVENING DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
FRIENDS...**

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME FOR THE EMERGE
AMERICAS 2015 OPENING CEREMONY!**

**I AM THRILLED TO BE HERE WITH YOU TONIGHT
NOT ONLY TO OFFICIALLY OPEN E-MERGE, BUT
ALSO TO WELCOME YOU TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!**

**I WANT TO BEGIN BY THANKING MR. MANNY
MEDINA AND HIS ENTIRE TEAM FOR THE WORK
THEY HAVE BEEN DOING AND CONTINUE TO DO TO
MERGE THE WORLDS OF TECHNOLOGY WITH
PUBLIC SECTOR POLICY MAKERS.**

**MANNY, WE ARE ALL PROUD AND GRATEFUL FOR
YOUR COMMITMENT TO PUTTING MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY ON THE CENTER OF THE TECH MAP.**

**YOU ARE ONE OF OUR OWN - A MIAMIAN - AND WE
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO OUR
COMMUNITY AND, FRANKLY, TO CREATING A
BETTER WORLD FOR OUR CHILDREN AND
GRANDCHILDREN TO LIVE IN.**

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SERVES AS THE GATHERING
PLACE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN LATIN AMERICA**

AND THE CARIBBEAN, BUT INCREASINGLY TO THE REST OF THE WORLD!

INDEED, WE ARE A GLOBAL CENTER FOR TRADE AND COMMERCE, TOURISM, AND BANKING.

MANY OR MOST OF YOU WHO TRAVELED HERE FLEW IN THROUGH MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. MIA, AS WE CALL IT, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR APPROXIMATELY 282,000 JOBS IN AND AROUND OUR COMMUNITY AND HAD A \$34 BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT HERE IN 2014.

PORTMIAMI IS THE CRUISE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD AND SUPPORTS 200,000 JOBS IN AND AROUND OUR COUNTY. OUR PORT WILL BE THE ONLY U.S. PORT SOUTH OF VIRGINIA THAT WILL BE ABLE TO WELCOME THE LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL BE PASSING THROUGH THE EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL.

AND WE ACCOMPLISHED ALL THIS BY USING THE MOST MODERN RESOURCES AVAILABLE, WHILE PARTNERING WITH THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE MIAMI-DADE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF

OUR CITIES AND URBAN AREAS RESTS ON OUR ABILITY TO CHANGE, ADAPT, TO INNOVATE...

THAT IS WHY WE ARE PROUD TO BE HOSTING OUR GOVERNMENT INNOVATION SUMMIT DURING EMERGE AMERICAS 2015.

LAST YEAR WAS A BIG SUCCESS AND THIS YEAR IS GOING TO BE EVEN BETTER.

EVEN THOUGH I'M 61 - AND AGE IS JUST A NUMBER ANYWAY, RIGHT? - I CONSIDER MYSELF A TECH MAYOR.

AND HAVING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH FELLOW ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO SPREAD THE PROMISE OF TECHNOLOGY THROUGHOUT OUR HEMISPHERE IS SOMETHING I TAKE A LOT OF PRIDE IN.

IN RECENT YEARS, WE HAVE WORKED DILIGENTLY TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY INTO A TECHNOLOGY HUB.

BY CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOBS AND INNOVATION THAT DID NOT EXIST IN OUR COMMUNITY BEFORE.

A BIG PART OF THAT WORK INCLUDES BRIDGING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS.

I'M PROUD TO REPORT THAT OUR WORK HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED.

LAST YEAR FOR EXAMPLE, MICROSOFT LAUNCHED THE FIRST EVER MICROSOFT INNOVATION CENTER IN THE UNITED STATES HERE IN MIAMI. IT CONTINUES TO ATTRACT AND DEVELOP START-UPS AND OTHER TECH BUSINESSES.

ALSO LAST YEAR, I WAS THE ONLY ELECTED OFFICIAL INVITED TO THE IBM THINK FORUM IN NEW YORK TO SPEAK ABOUT HOW WE ARE LEADING THE WAY IN LEVERAGING DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO ENGAGE OUR CITIZENS.

WE ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING ON THE CREATION OF APPS TO MAKE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE.

TO THAT END, WE ARE THE FIRST GOVERNMENT IN FLORIDA TO HAVE RECEIVED A CODE FOR AMERICA FELLOWSHIP. THE CODE FOR AMERICA FELLOWS HAVE ALREADY MADE SEVERAL VISITS TO COUNTY HALL AS PART OF THEIR MISSION TO MAKE OUR

GOVERNMENT SERVICES SIMPLER, MORE EFFECTIVE, AND EASIER TO USE.

AND THIS WEEK, WE WILL UNVEIL A NEW APP WHICH I KNOW IS CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. STAY TUNED FOR THAT ANNOUNCEMENT AND OTHERS THAT WILL BE MADE HERE AT E-MERGE.

IN CLOSING, HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WE ARE USING TECHNOLOGY IN ALL OUR FUNCTIONS TO DO THINGS SMARTER, BETTER, FASTER, AND CHEAPER.

BUT WE NEED TO KEEP DOING MORE.

I HAVE FAITH THAT MANY OF THE SOLUTIONS TO OUR CHALLENGES WILL COME FROM THE CREATIVITY OF ALL OF YOU ATTENDING EMERGE AMERICAS 2015.

WE ARE TRULY HONORED TO HOST YOU, AND IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOUR TIME TOGETHER HERE IS PRODUCTIVE IN TRYING TO MITIGATE OUR URBAN CHALLENGES, THROUGH THE INNOVATIVE POWER THAT COMES FROM TECHNOLOGY.

LET ME ONCE AGAIN THANK MANNY MEDINA FOR THIS VISIONARY IDEA. THANK YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR MAKING MIAMI-DADE THE CENTER OF THE TECH AND INNOVATION WORLD!

I CANNOT FORGET TO THANK NBC UNIVERSAL AND ALL THE SPONSORS WHO HELPED MAKE THIS EVENT POSSIBLE.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

