

MADAM CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, FELLOW RESIDENTS...

I WANT TO TAKE THE TIME TO CONGRATULATE A MAN WHOSE DEVOTION TO LIBRARIES AND THE IMPORTANCE THEY HAVE TO OUR COMMUNITY HAS SPANNED OVER 43 YEARS OF SERVICE...

OUR LIBRARY DIRECTOR, MR. RAYMOND SANTIAGO.

RAYMOND WAS APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN 1998 AFTER SERVING AS AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SINCE 1990.

AS DIRECTOR, HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR A COUNTY DEPARTMENT WITH OVER 400 EMPLOYEES, AND 49 FACILITIES SERVING ALL OUR RESIDENTS.

THROUGHOUT HIS TENURE, RAYMOND LED OUR LIBRARIES THROUGH SEVERAL PHASES...

INCLUDING IN 2011 WHEN THE LIBRARY SYSTEM COMPLETED AN AGGRESSIVE CAPITAL EXPANSION PROGRAM THAT RESULTED IN THE OPENING OF 18 NEW FACILITIES.

RAYMOND HAS BEEN WIDELY RECOGNIZED FOR HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS, HAVING BEEN NAMED THE LIBRARY JOURNAL'S 2003 LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR...

AND THE 2005 RECIPIENT OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S CHARLIE ROBINSON AWARD, HONORING HIS EFFORTS AS A RISK TAKER AND CHANGE AGENT.

IN OCTOBER 2008, THE MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM WAS AWARDED THE NATIONAL MEDAL FOR LIBRARY SERVICE FROM THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES.

OTHER LIBRARIANS LOOK TO RAYMOND FOR HIS LEADERSHIP, AND HAVE NAMED HIM TO SEVERAL IMPORTANT POSITIONS WITHIN THE FIELD.

HE IS THE PAST CHAIR OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE URBAN LIBRARIES COUNCIL (ULC) AND HAS SERVED ON THE BOARD OF SEVERAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS...

INCLUDING THE SOUTHEAST FLORIDA LIBRARY INFORMATION NETWORK, THE UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES ADVISORY BOARD...

AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN LIBRARY NETWORK AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

IN 2008 HE WAS CHAIR OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

HE HAS SERVED AS AN ADJUNCT FACULTY MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA...

AND HE IS A FREQUENTLY INVITED SPEAKER, PRESENTER, AND PARTICIPANT IN NUMEROUS STATE, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND COMMITTEES.

BEYOND HIS DEEP KNOWLEDGE AND ALL THE WELL-DESERVED ACCOLADES...

RAYMOND IS A MAN WHOSE HEART IS IN SPREADING HIS LOVE FOR LIBRARIES TO EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY.

THROUGHOUT HIS TENURE, OUR LIBRARIES HAVE FACED CHALLENGES...

BUT RAYMOND HAS TAKEN THEM ON AND WITH HIS LEADERSHIP, MADE OUR LIBRARY SYSTEM BETTER THAN WHEN HE STARTED.

I WISH RAYMOND WELL IN HIS RETIREMENT, AND ON BEHALF OF ALL THE RESIDENTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY...

A BIG "THANK YOU" FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR OUR COMMUNITY.