GOOD MORNING EVERYONE AND THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE!

I BELIEVE TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT IS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO HAVE BROUGHT TOGETHER THESE COMMUNITY LEADERS STANDING ONSTAGE WITH ME. THEY HAVE EACH CONTRIBUTED TO THIS IMPORTANT INITIATIVE.

DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDINGALL HELPED US SECURE THIS VENUE WHICH IS NOT ONLY A PART OF HER DISTRICT, BUT ALSO IS IN AN AREA THAT IS THE INITIAL FOCUS OF THIS ROLLOUT.

DR. BENDROSS-MINDINGALL, THANK YOU FOR THE INTRODUCTION, THE WORK THAT YOU DID FOR TODAY'S EVENT, AND FOR YOUR ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF OUR CHILDREN AS A MEMBER OF THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD.

ALSO WITH US TODAY IS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSIONER AUDREY EDMONSON. HER CONSTITUENTS IN DISTRICT 3 HAVE BEEN VERY WELL REPRESENTED FOR THE PAST NINE YEARS. I'M HAPPY TO HAVE HER HERE TODAY AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HER.

CHAIRMAN-ELECT JEAN MONESTIME IS HERE WITH US. ON JANUARY 1ST, COMMISSIONER MONESTIME WILL BECOME THE FIRST HAITIAN-AMERICAN CHAIRMAN OF THE MIAMI-DADE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. THANK YOU FOR SHOWING YOUR SUPPORT FOR THIS PROGRAM THAT WILL GREATLY BENEFIT YOUR DISTRICT 2, MR. CHAIRMAN-ELECT.

FOR MAJOR INITIATIVES LIKE EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE, WE HAVE SEVERAL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY THAT SHOULD BE THANKED.

ALTHOUGH HE WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND TODAY DUE TO A COMMISSION COMMITTEE MEETING, MY DEPUTY MAYOR RUSSELL BENFORD DESERVES TO BE RECOGNIZED. HE WILL SERVE AS THE POINT PERSON FOR EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE FOR MY ADMINISTRATION. THANK YOU RUSSELL FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE AND WILL DO ON BEHALF OF OUR RESIDENTS.

ALTHOUGH HE ALSO WASN'T ABLE TO ATTEND, I WANT TO THANK OUR SUPERINTENDENT, MR. ALBERTO CARVALHO, FOR HIS SUPPORT.

RICK BEASLEY FROM CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA IS ON STAGE WITH ME. RICK HAS WORKED DAY AND NIGHT TO ORGANIZE EMPLOY MIAMI-

DADE AND GET IT OFF THE GROUND. RICK, THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP.

ALSO, PETER DYGA, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS, AND CARLOS CASTILLO, REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT OF ABC MIAMI-DADE ARE WITH US. THANK YOU FOR WORKING WITH RICK, CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA AND OF COURSE, LEROY JONES AND THE NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION. YOUR COMMITMENT TO THIS INITIATIVE HAS BEEN A GAME CHANGER.

SPEAKING OF LEROY -- HE HAS BEEN A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR HIS NEIGHBORS AND HAS WORKED TIRELESSLY TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY. THOUSANDS OF EMAILS HAVE BEEN SENT AND THOUSANDS OF FLYERS POSTED THROUGHOUT THE AREA -- ALL BECAUSE HE WANTS TO BE CERTAIN THAT INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS OUT TO ALL AREA RESIDENTS. THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE, LEROY.

ALSO HERE WITH US TODAY ARE PATRICIA LOTT FROM CITY OF MIAMI COMMISSIONER KEON HARDEMON'S OFFICE; JESUS VASQUEZ OF

FACCHINA CONSTRUCTION; JEFF GOUVEIA, JR. PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER FOR THE SOUTHEAST REGION FOR SUFFOLK CONSTRUCTION; DAN WHITEMAN, PRESIDENT OF COASTAL CONSTRUCTION; LYLE GRANDISON FOR CIRCLE OF BROTHERHOOD; AL JOHNSON FROM RESPECT FOR LIFE; HORACE ROBERTS FROM BELAFONTE TACOLCY CENTER; AND OBDULIO PIEDRA, CHAIR OF SOUTH FLORIDA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD.

THANK YOU DR. ANGELA THOMAS-DUPREE FOR ALLOWING US TO USE THE D.A. DORSEY EDUCATION CENTER TODAY.

FINALLY, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE PRESIDENT OF ONEUNITED BANK, TERRY WILLIAMS FOR COMMITTING TO SUPPORT EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE. YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT IS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO BE WITH US TODAY IN MIAMI.

I AM HAPPY TO SHARE WITH YOU THE START OF WHAT I BELIEVE WILL BE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT INITIATIVES IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

HISTORY - EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE.

WHEN I WAS FIRST ELECTED MAYOR, I KNEW THAT THERE WOULD BE SPECULATION ABOUT WHAT THAT MEANT FOR THE FUTURE OF FLORIDA'S LARGEST COUNTY.

WHICH AREAS OF MIAMI-DADE WOULD BENEFIT MOST FROM MY FIRST TERM IN OFFICE, SOME ASKED.

WHERE WILL MAYOR GIMENEZ FOCUS HIS EFFORTS AS THE "STRONG MAYOR" OF MIAMI-DADE?

HERE'S THE PROBLEM WITH THAT LINE OF THINKING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN -- IT IGNORES THE FACT THAT I WAS ELECTED MAYOR FOR ALL OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

I WORK FOR ALL OF YOU AND I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT OUR RESIDENTS HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES.

DESPITE OUR DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, FAITHS, AND NEIGHBORHOODS, THERE IS ONE COMMON FACTOR THAT UNITES US -- WE ARE ALL RESIDENTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, OR AS I LIKE TO SAY IT, WE ARE ALL MIAMIANS!

THE ISSUES THAT IMPACT OUR NEIGHBORHOODS MAY NOT ALWAYS BE THE SAME, BUT THEY SHOULD MATTER TO US ALL.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRIME IN LIBERTY CITY AND OVERTOWN SHOULDN'T ONLY BE A CONCERN FOR RESIDENTS OF THOSE AREAS. IT SHOULD ALSO CONCERN OUR RESIDENTS IN KENDALL AND MIAMI BEACH AND THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COUNTY.

POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS IN FLORIDA CITY AND HOMESTEAD SHOULD ALSO BE TROUBLING TO RESIDENTS IN DORAL AND MIAMI LAKES.
WE ARE ONE COMMUNITY. WE ARE ALL MIAMIANS.

TODAY'S TURN OUT AND YOUR PRESENCE HERE SHOWS THAT WE ARE ALL SERIOUS ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS THE

UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT THAT AFFECT PARTS OF OUR COUNTY.

AND THAT IS WHAT I COMMITTED TO DO MONTHS AGO WHEN I ORGANIZED MEETINGS WITH KEY MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY WHO CAN HELP IMPROVE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO AND AFTER SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH CONCERNED RESIDENTS FROM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY, SENIOR MEMBERS OF MY ADMINISTRATION AND I MET WITH PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS LIKE LEROY. OUR MISSION WAS SIMPLE: TO DETERMINE HOW CAN WE ALL WORK TOGETHER TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE MOST AFFECTED AREAS OF OUR COUNTY, ENSURE THAT OUR RESIDENTS HAVE THE SKILLS THAT WILL MAKE THEM EMPLOYABLE, AND MAKE CERTAIN THAT MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS ARE THE FIRST IN LINE TO BE HIRED.

THE FACT THAT MANY IN OUR COUNTY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT MAY SURPRISE FOLKS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE

STATE. AFTER ALL, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY LEADS FLORIDA IN JOB CREATION. BUT TOO MANY IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE NOT HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IN THAT PROSPERITY.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT WE CAN TRULY BE SATISFIED UNTIL EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD SHARES IN THE GAINS FROM THIS JOB GROWTH.

THAT'S WHY EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS SO IMPORTANT AND WHY IT IS MY TOP PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

I BELIEVE THE BEST WAY OUT OF POVERTY IS THROUGH A GOOD JOB. CONNECTING THE PRIVATE SECTOR WITH THE WORKERS THEY NEED AND WANT, AND ENSURING THAT TRAINING IS AVAILABLE FOR ALL WHO NEED IT, IS WHY THIS IS SO IMPORTANT.

ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN A BIT MORE ABOUT EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE. IT HAS THREE GOALS:

1. CONNECT EMPLOYERS WHO NEED WORKERS WITH THOSE WORKERS.

2. PROVIDE THE SKILLS TRAINING NECESSARY TO PREPARE OUR RESIDENTS TO ENTER THE WORKFORCE.

AND 3. ENSURE THAT MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS ARE FIRST IN LINE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR JOBS.

CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN COORDINATING THIS EFFORT, AND WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT OUR RESIDENTS CAN FIND JOBS, OR BE TRAINED FOR THE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM.

THIS COUNTYWIDE EFFORT HAS LAUNCHED WITH A FOCUS ON THE 33142 AND 33147 ZIP CODES.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN THESE AREAS, WHICH INCLUDES LIBERTY CITY, ARE ABOVE TWENTY PERCENT, COMPARED TO JUST 6.5 PERCENT COUNTYWIDE.

JOBLESSNESS IN THESE AREAS CAN'T JUST BE A PROBLEM FOR COMMISSIONERS EDMONSON AND MONESTIME, OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.
IT NEEDS TO BE AN ISSUE WE ALL - YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS - WORK ON TOGETHER.

BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER IN ONE ROOM FOR THOSE MEETINGS BACK A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO ALSO LED TO SECURING COMMITMENTS FROM THE ENTITIES REPRESENTED ON THIS STAGE AS WELL AS OTHERS HERE TODAY TO HIRE OUR LOCAL RESIDENTS.

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN BY DOWNTOWN MIAMI RECENTLY, THE CRANES ARE BACK. THERE IS ANOTHER BOOM IN CONSTRUCTION IN OUR COUNTY. MANY MORE PROJECTS ARE COMING ONLINE THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY. BUT THOSE JOBS THAT ARE EITHER HERE OR COMING SHOULD BE FOR OUR RESIDENTS.

THE WORKFORCES ON THOSE SITES SHOULD BE REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR COMMUNITY. THAT HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE BEFORE AND THAT IS SOMETHING EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE AIMS TO CHANGE.

EMPLOYERS ARE AWARE THAT THERE IS NO NEED TO LOOK OUTSIDE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FOR WORKERS. WE HAVE THEM RIGHT HERE. THEY ARE EAGER TO HIRE SKILLED WORKERS FROM MIAMI-

DADE, AND THIS EFFORT WE BELIEVE WILL GO A LONG WAY TO GROWING OUR SKILLED WORKFORCE.

ALL OF THIS - THE CONNECTING OF EMPLOYERS AND MIAMI-DADE-BASED WORKERS, AND MAKING THE TRAINING AVAILABLE - WILL BE PAID FOR USING EXISTING STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS.

THAT IS CORRECT. WORKING TOGETHER, WE WILL BE OFFERING CONSTRUCTION TRAINING AND WORK READINESS SKILLS COURSES AT NO COST TO ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN CAREERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

I WANT TO ALSO MAKE CLEAR THAT ALTHOUGH THE INITIAL FOCUS OF EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, SUBSEQUENT PHASES WILL AIM TO INCREASE TRAINING IN OTHER INDUSTRIES AS WELL AS FOR PERMANENT JOBS.

ONCE MANY OF THESE PROJECTS HAVE CONCLUDED, THERE WILL BE A NEED TO FILL PERMANENT POSITIONS.

EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE

TRAINING NECESSARY FOR THOSE OPPORTUNITIES, AND WORK IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY.

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IF ANY OF THIS SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, OR IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHY IT HASN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE - I UNDERSTAND. FOR TOO LONG, SOME AREAS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAVEN'T HAD THE SAME ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AS OTHERS HAVE.

BUT YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE.

AS A LIFELONG PUBLIC SERVANT, I'M WELL AWARE AND PROUD OF THE POSITIVE IMPACT GOVERNMENT CAN HAVE ON THE LIVES OF ITS RESIDENTS.

THAT IS WHY I RAN FOR MAYOR IN THE FIRST PLACE. TO SOLVE PROBLEMS BY BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE DONE WITH EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE - MADE IT EASIER FOR THE JOB CREATORS TO WORK WITH THE JOB SEEKERS, AND

ENSURE THAT OUR RESIDENTS ARE THE FIRST IN LINE FOR THOSE JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT I'M THE FATHER OF THREE AND A GRANDFATHER OF FIVE. I WANT FOR ALL OF THEM AS WELL AS ALL MIAMIANS TO LIVE IN OUR WORLD CLASS COMMUNITY AND TO BE PROUD THAT HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE HELP ONE ANOTHER. IN OUR COMMUNITY, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU COME FROM. YOU CAN SUCCEED AS LONG AS YOU'RE WILLING TO TRY!

I WANT TO THANK CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA, THE NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION, ASSOCIATED BUILDING CONTRACTORS AND EVERYONE COMMITTED TO ENSURE OUR LONG TERM SUCCESS AGAIN FOR THEIR COMMITMENTS TO MAKE THIS DAY AND INITIATIVE POSSIBLE!

THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO WORK TOGETHER!

AND THANK YOU ALL FOR JOINING US TODAY!

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!