# RAMAR

MIRAMARFL.GOV



### TRIUMPHS:



### **Airport West Incinerator Plan Axed After Two-Year Community Fight**

In a dramatic turn of events, the Miami-Dade County Commission has officially removed the Airport West site, directly adjacent to Miramar city limits, from consideration for a proposed waste-to-energy incinerator. The move marks a significant victory for Miramar, ending a two-year campaign to protect the city's residents from potential environmental and health risks.

#### **ROAD TO VICTORY**

The process began in mid-2023, after the county's former Doral incinerator was destroyed by fire. In the wake of that disaster, officials scrambled for alternatives for trash disposal, leading to months of controversy over potential sites including Doral, Medley, Sweetwater, 58th Street, and notably, Opa-locka West Airport, right on Miramar's border.

Miramar residents and city leadership spearheaded a relentless campaign, rallying community organizations, environmental groups, and regional allies to oppose the plans. Messaging focused on risks to air and water quality, proximity to nearly 250,000 residents, and historical pollution linked to past incinerators.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION AND SUPPORT

Over the two years, stakeholders voiced mounting concerns at townhall meetings, highlighting

- Cancer and respiratory risks tied to incinerator emissions near residential zones.
- · Environmental impacts on nearby ecosystems and water tables, including proximity to the Everglades and tribal lands.
- · Preference for greener solutions such as recycling and composting.

Local advocacy, led by Miramar's Mayor Wayne Messam and coordinated through neighborhood coalitions, ultimately gained momentum and support from county commissioners.

#### **TURNING POINT**

On July 16, 2025, the County Commission unanimously voted to advance the waste-to-energy project under strict conditions:

- The facility must be built at least half a mile from residential areas.
- Sites in Doral, Medley, Sweetwater, 58th Street, and Opa-locka West were formally excluded.
- A new policy mandates 40% diversion of county trash via recycling and composting before

Miramar city leaders and residents celebrated the outcome. Mayor Messam expressed gratitude to the commissioners for safeguarding Miramar's environment and health, stating, "Today's vote protects Airport West and our community from becoming a dumping ground."

#### WHAT'S NEXT

With Airport West off the table, two remaining private-property sites located west of Okeechobee Road remain under consideration. The county has given Mayor Daniella Levine Cava 90 days to recommend a final site, negotiate terms with waste management firms, and plan for enhanced composting and recycling infrastructure.

Miramar has pledge to remain vigilant in the process, while the city continues advocating for solutions that balance the county's waste needs with transparency, sustainability, and public health protections.

#### Together, let's honor the past, celebrate the present, and envision a future as bright as Miramar's!

#### CITY OF MIRAMAR OFFICIALS



















Follow us at: @cityofmiramar | 954-602-HELP (4357)

Q4 MIRAMARFL.GOV Page 2

# FROM THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE DR. ROY L. VIRGIN

The Unique Caribbean-American Heritage Month (CAHM) Award honors outstanding individuals of Caribbean descent and their allies who have made significant contributions to the cultural, social, and professional landscape of South Florida. Each year, a public call for nominations invites community members, organizations, and institutions to submit names of individuals who exemplify excellence in service, leadership, and cultural advocacy. Nominees are evaluated based on their impact in areas such as education, healthcare, the arts, business, engagement, and community development. A dedicated selection committee carefully reviews each nomination, ensuring that honorees reflect the rich diversity and values of the Caribbean-American experience.





This year, two of our own within the City of Miramar will be honored - Kassandra Carvalho-Lindsay, Chief of Staff in the Office of the City Manager and Safoy Braham, Executive Legislative Assistant in the Office of Commissioner Maxwell B. Chambers. The importance of the CAHM Award lies in its power to uplift voices that often go unrecognized. It affirms the vital role Caribbean-Americans play in shaping South Florida's identity and promotes intergenerational pride. By spotlighting these achievements, the award not only honors individual excellence but also inspires continued community engagement and cultural preservation.



### MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR WAYNE M. MESSAM

#### Hello Miramar!

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for all your continued engagement and community spirit. I am thrilled to announce our success in halting the proposed waste incinerator near our Miramar borders. This victory is a direct result of your engagement, advocacy, and participation. Thank you to every resident and our city administration, who contributed to ensuring a healthier, safer future for our city.

Our spring/summer calendar has been full. From the bonding moments at Mommy & Me, to the cultural vibrancy of our Haitian family at the Tabou Combo performance, and the leadership examples set by our Youth Advisory Council.

In early August, Miramar celebrated two profoundly meaningful observances merged into what we affectionately refer to as, Emancipendence:

- Jamaica's Emancipation Day, on August 1, honoring the abolition of slavery and the courage of those who secured freedom and;
- Jamaica's Independence Day, on August 6, commemorating the nation's emergence as a sovereign state in 1962
- We also celebrate Independence with our brothers and sisters from Trinidad and Tobago August 30.

Thank you, Miramar, for your steadfast involvement, thoughtful collaboration, and shared spirit of celebration.

Together, we are building a more vibrant, inclusive, and empowered community.

Klupne of Neuem

Contact: Mayor Wayne Messam at: 954-602-3151
Email: wmessam@miramarfl.gov

Website: MiramarFL.gov/WayneMessam





Soca Step





#### Tabou Combo in Concert



#### Mommy and Me













### Hello neighbors,

I hope you've had a wonderful summer—one filled with great memories, meaningful moments, and time well spent at many of the season's events. As we begin to turn the page toward a new chapter, I'd like to extend a warm welcome back to school. With the 2O25–2O26 school year just around the corner, I hope students of all ages feel inspired to start strong, stay focused, and give their best effort. There's no better time to begin than now!

Thank you to everyone who has been attending our **Constituent Tuesdays**, held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. It's been a pleasure connecting with community members and hearing your voices, concerns, and ideas. Your input plays a vital role in shaping the future of our city.

We're excited to announce that our next Constituent Tuesday will take place on August 26, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM at the Miramar Multi-Service Complex. Be sure to visit Eventbrite to register and secure your spot!

Let's continue working together to build a stronger, more vibrant Miramar. We take your feedback seriously and work hard to turn your requests into meaningful change. I look forward to seeing you there and continuing this important work—together.

In May, I launched and hosted **Creole Classes** in honor of Haitian American Heritage Month, with sessions held every Saturday. It was inspiring to witness our students' growth and the Miramar community's incredible support and unity throughout the month.

The Asian American and Pacific Islander Evening brought the community together for a night of vibrant cultural performances, traditional dance, live music, and authentic Asian cuisine. Guests experienced a showcase of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage through art, food, and entertainment in celebration of this special month.

The Juneteenth Dinner & Awards Presentation was an inspiring evening of culture, recognition, and community pride where I had the honor of recognizing outstanding local leaders. The night featured powerful remarks from keynote speaker, Dr. Eddie Glaude Jr. who was honored with the Key to the City!

The Community Resource Fair at Lakeshore Park was a great success, connecting residents with vital city programs and services. Attendees enjoyed refreshments, raffles, and giveaways while learning about hurricane preparedness, housing, senior services, and more.

I had the privilege of attending the **Global Africa Symposium**, where policymakers, business leaders, scholars, and cultural influencers came together to explore Africa's expanding influence in global affairs. What an inspiring and insightful experience!

A warm welcome to the new principal of **Everglades High School, Ms. Marie Duperval!** It was truly impactful to hear about her vision for the future of Everglades High School. We're excited to see all the great things to come—for the school as a whole and for each of our students individually.

The 5th Annual Taste of the Caribbean Islands hosted by Commissioner Carson Edwards was incredible! Families came out to enjoy a vibrant evening filled with Caribbean cuisine, live music, steelpan performances, cooking demonstrations, and cultural entertainment!

I am so grateful to receive the **Contributions & Commitment Award** from The Professionals LLC at the Family Day in the Park — Celebrating Kids with Autism. What a heartfelt celebration of children with autism and their incredible families.

The 4th of July Independence Day celebration was in full swing! It was a wonderful evening filled with delicious food, fun activities, and exhilarating fireworks.

I am honored to have been invited by **Bishop Ernest & First Lady McDonald** to be the keynote speaker at Emmanuel Apostolic Church in Miramar as they celebrated their amazing high school and college graduates. Remember, success is when opportunity meets preparation!

Honored to participate in the **Belize Diaspora Summit** 2.0 panel discussion, where I had the opportunity to connect with Former Mayor of Belize Darrell Bradley. We explored ideas around a national diaspora policy, building a healthier Belize, and reimagining education through 'classrooms without borders.' Truly inspired by the voices of youth leaders sharing the changes they hope to see for our future.

I attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference, which was held in Philadelphia — a dynamic gathering featuring discussions on federal policies impacting counties, workshops highlighting best practices, engaging general sessions, and mobile tours across our host county. A valuable experience in learning, collaboration, and leadership.

Be sure to tune into the **Commission Corner** on the City of Miramar YouTube page! I highlight key events and initiatives happening across our city.

In recent episodes, with the **Police and Fire Department,** we've covered crucial topics like the importance of speedbumps for community safety and how to stay prepared during hurricane season. Stay informed and connected!

Thank you to everyone who came out to congratulate the Miramar Business graduates — your support means so much! I'm incredibly proud of all the students for their hard work and dedication.

We had a great time touring the City of Miramar with the Community Access Center Summer Camp kids, visiting City Hall, Police Headquarters, the Water Waste Reclamation Facility, and the Fire Station. At each stop, the children learned about civic responsibilities, public safety, environmental services, and emergency responses.

Contact: Vice Mayor Yvette Colbourne at: 954-602-3143/3131

Email: ycolbourne@miramarfl.gov

Website: MiramarFL.gov/YvetteColbourne

Address: 2300 Civic Center Place, Miramar, FL 33025



Constituent Tuesday



Commissioner Corner



Miramar Business Academy Graduation



Juneteenth Family Day



Center Middle School Summer Camp Tour

Belize Diaspora Summit





Fourth of July Celebration



Taste of the Carribean



NAC<sub>o</sub>



Juneteenth Dinner



Community Access

Global African Symposium

Miramar Business Academy Graduation



Contributions Commitment Award



### MESSAGE FROM COMMISSIONER AVRIL K. CHERASARD



#### Fellow Miramar residents,

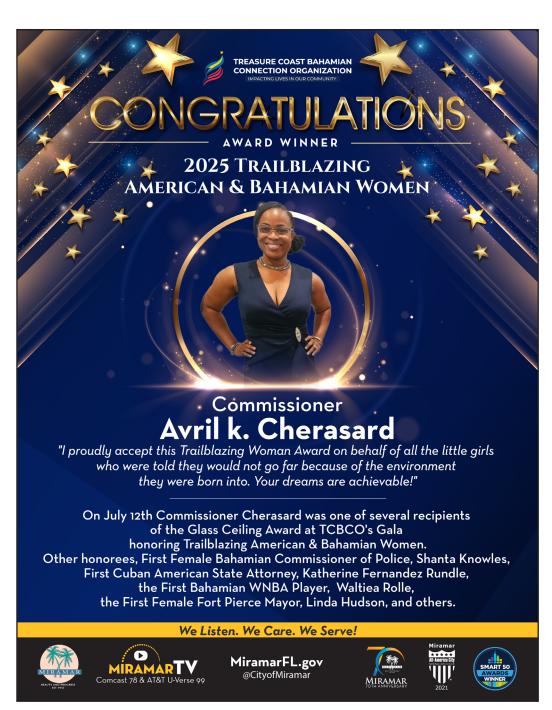
It has been an absolute honor to serve as your City of Miramar Commissioner for the past few months. From day one, I've made it a priority to lead with transparency, accountability, and heart—ensuring that residents are not only informed but actively involved in shaping our city's future. My approach has been hands-on and people-focused, keeping the needs of the community front and center in every discussion and decision.

Thus far, I've proudly contributed to key conversations around housing policies, citizen experience, safety, budget oversight, and city planning. I've initiated dialogue with our Code Compliance Department and pushed for clearer communication and stronger resident engagement with public facing departments. I've also helped plant fruit trees in public spaces, a small but symbolic step toward food security, sustainability, and our city's long-term Net Zero goals. As Miramar celebrated its 70th Anniversary, I reflected on how far we've come—and how far we're going together.

Throughout my time in office, I've remained intentional about showing up for every generation in Miramar. From school revitalization projects and hosting children's safety awareness events, to making sure our seniors are celebrated and supported, I believe a strong city serves all ages. Whether it's a youth/family initiative or a senior resource event, I'm proud to champion inclusive, intergenerational service.

As an entrepreneur myself, I made it a point to collaborate with our Economic Development and Housing department hosting recognition and informational events for the small businesses that fuel our city's growth. At the same time, I continue my own charitable efforts—meeting people where they are, helping families, mentoring youth, and remaining accessible to all who call Miramar home. These actions, large and small, are part of a greater purpose: building a city that reflects the strength, values, and potential of its people.

As we look ahead, I remain committed to being a voice for the residents of Miramar. I will continue to listen, serve, and advocate for a city where everyone belongs and every voice is heard. Thank you for allowing me the privilege to represent you—I look forward to what we'll accomplish, together.



Yours in Service, **Avril Cherasard City of Miramar Commissioner** 

Contact: Commissioner Avril K. Cherasard at: 954-602-3889

Email: acherasard@miramarfl.gov

Website: MiramarFL.gov/AvrilCherasard

Bahamian General Counsel Reception













Senior Center Birthday Party

Father's Day Beer & Cookout











Global Africa Symposium



Tree Planting in Celebration of City's 70th Anniversary

Cherasard Key to City of Barraterre



Kiwanis East Pines Miramar Adopt A Street



Miramar Means Business



Sunshine Elementary Beautification Day







**Commission Meeting** 



### MESSAGE FROM COMMISSIONER CARSON "EDDY" EDWARDS

#### Dear Residents of Miramar,

It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank you for the support and encouragement I have received since my appointment as your City Commissioner. Serving Miramar is more than a responsibility—it is a calling. A calling to ensure that every voice is heard, every resident feels valued, and together we build a community where unity and empowerment thrive. As part of this commitment, my office has introduced initiatives aimed at strengthening our connections and creating spaces for meaningful engagement.

#### Strengthening Community Connections

In May, we launched Community Conversations, an initiative designed to share information about city services while gathering your invaluable feedback. Residents, business owners, and city department leaders came together at the Multi-Service Complex for open dialogue—exchanging ideas, raising suggestions, and exploring ways to shape the future of Miramar. It was an inspiring step toward greater transparency and collaboration, allowing your voices to directly influence positive change.

#### Celebrating Our Heritage

We also took the opportunity during Community Conversations to honor four outstanding Haitian Americans whose dedication and contributions have enriched our city. Adding to the celebration, a local Haitian artist, Wooley Saint-Louis Jean, showcased his incredible talent—bringing culture and creativity to life.

In June, we proudly celebrated Caribbean-American Heritage Month, recognizing the vital contributions of Caribbean Americans to our city and nation. With Miramar's rich and diverse Caribbean community,

it was fitting to end the month with A Taste of the Caribbean Islands at Miramar Regional Park—an unforgettable evening of food, music, and cultural pride.

In July, we celebrated Healthy Conversations: Nourish & Flourish on at the Cultural Center Banquet Hall. This wellness-focused event provided practical tools for building healthy habits, mental health discussions, wellness demonstrations, meal prep guidance, giveaways, and more. Health and Wellness Advocate Damion Parsons, and licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Adawna Bell made presentations. It's was an opportunity to come together as a community and prioritize our well-being.

As your Commissioner, I remain dedicated to ensuring progress and positive change across every corner of Miramar. I welcome your ideas, concerns, and aspirations. You can always reach my office at 954-602-3830 or by email at CEdwards@MiramarFL. gov. Together, let's continue shaping the vibrant, inclusive city we are proud to call home.





Taste of the Caribbean Islands





Commission Corner







Community Conversations Highlights



#### **Community Involvement**







#### Hello Miramar Residents.

A few days ago, I had the opportunity to be interviewed by four Florida International University (FIU) South Campus students. With everything that's happening in the world right now when it comes on to immigration, I thought it would be appropriate to share the article below with you:

#### One Love, One Community: A Commissioner's Guide



Portrait of Grandparents Marcus and Gertrude that hangs above Maxwell's office desk.

When our team arrived at Miramar City Hall to interview Commissioner Maxwell B. Chambers, we expected a formal meeting. Instead, we experienced a warm, personal encounter that immediately revealed the heart behind his title. As he escorted us inside City Hall to his office, he paused frequently to greet residents with familiarity and offer help to community partners setting up for a speaking event. From the moment we noticed the portrait of his grandparents that hung proudly above his desk we knew this would be something far more memorable than a routine civic visit.

Commissioner Chambers is known as "The People's Commissioner," a title not adopted for branding, but earned through his daily actions. It reflects a life not defined by campaign slogans or political gestures, but by the tangible impact of service. From establishing emergency utility bill funds, to creating a culturally rich and inclusive city, his leadership is personal, grounded in a life that began far from South Florida in the hills of Clarendon, Jamaica.

Q4 Page 12 Q4 MIRAMARFL.GOV Page 13

#### The Grandson of Marcus and Gertrude

Born in the rural town of Longbow, Maxwell Chambers was raised by his maternal grandparents, Marcus and Gertrude. In the agrarian country of Jamaica, the family lived off a humble, yet sustainable farm, with animals and crops that fed them and their community. Their lives were marked by sacrifice, generosity, and tireless work. His grandfather could not read or write but he cultivated the farmland with pride and purpose. Marcus never hesitated to lend a hand, or even a mule or a donkey to a neighbor in need. His grandmother, Gertrude, walked to town every day to sell whatever goods she could from their farm, and returned to care for not only her ten children, but for anyone in the community who needed food, shelter, or love. They built a five-bedroom home in those very hills with only shared labor and communal survival. The tight-knit little community they built was remembered fondly by Max, "You know, you have neighbors, you have friends ... you don't have to exchange money, everybody helps each other... everybody survived."



Maxwell and his mother walking at the annual Fashion weekend event in Miramar

A key part of that survival was his mother, Bertella. Working two and sometimes three different jobs wherever she could find them, from the capital city, Kingston, to the Bahamas, and even the U.S., she provided for the family from afar. As a single mother, and the only adult in the family able to work outside the farm, she was responsible for financial support for the family. This meant long nights and weeks away, leaving her unable to raise Maxwell and his siblings herself. She often yearned for the day she could provide bedtime kisses and after-

school hugs to her children like other mothers. She dreamed of a future where their family could thrive together.

The reality of rural Jamaica offered limited opportunities. The family farm, while sustaining them, operated without modern conveniences; there was no running water, no electricity, no access to paved roads or nearby healthcare. Education options were minimal and access to stable jobs or upward mobility was virtually nonexistent. The capital, Kingston, was plagued by crime and working there was dangerous. Bertella made the difficult choice to migrate her family to the United States. "It was challenging leaving Jamaica at the time because it was a lot of violence, [going] from the country to Kingston, most people, they don't want to go," Max shared. The decision was not a rejection of their roots but a courageous step toward something more, towards growth, opportunity, and a future beyond survival.

Soon, the lengthy process to apply for immigration to the United States began for Maxwell's family. Without his mother, it was up to Maxwell to make the journey to the embassy in Kingston to gather all the required documentation. Every trip resulted in another missing document and another trip back home. Between newly required police records, original copies of birth certificates, and soon-to-expire documents, the family struggled to finish the migration process that they had started so long ago. In fact, the day they were supposed to show this documentation and pay the final fees, the money his mother had brought with them was stolen! Determined, Bertella was able to borrow the money needed and finally migrate with her children from Kingston to Miami.

Throughout this convoluted process that threatened to keep them in Jamaica, Maxwell confessed feeling like someone always appeared at just the right moment to help them find a way forward. Without the supportive community his family built—the police detective that expedited his police record because of his mother, or the friend that had ties in the Registrar Department—they might still be stuck in bureaucratic purgatory. A fate many other families are faced with daily. These small, timely acts of grace planted the seeds of "camaraderie, community, and openness," deep within Max, and when he immigrated to Florida, those values grew with him.

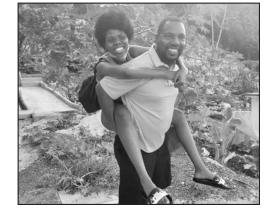
#### Community First

Upon arriving in the U.S., Maxwell worked multiple jobs to help his mother shoulder the financial burden of caring for him and his siblings. Skilled in cabinet making, he worked in different local businesses around Miami with Argentinians, Cubans, and Haitians and experienced first-hand the melting pot of cultures that made up

his new hometown. In this business, he met a group of Haitians who were also doing this manual labor, despite being white collar workers like teachers and business people back in their country. They're here doing [it] with pride and with grace." Max said, "And it's like, wow, I'm among greatness, you know?" Once again, Max was surrounded by a hardworking community that fueled his own drive and determination to achieve the success his mother dreamed of for him.

For Maxwell, this started with schooling. He was encouraged to pursue a high school diploma rather than a GED, which was still widely stigmatized.

Determined, he had his credits transferred from Jamaica and enrolled at American High School in Miami Lakes. He completed the courses needed to graduate, all while working and adjusting to life in a new country. Later, inspired by his passion for civic engagement and history, Maxwell remained



Maxwell and his youngest daughter in Jamaica

a lifelong learner, continually striving to understand how systems function and how to navigate them to serve others more effectively. His unconventional educational path shaped the belief that knowledge should be used to uplift a community.

Taking this perspective, Maxwell worked hard, fell in love, and built a family grounded in care, respect, and presence. Being a father wasn't just a role, it was a calling. From the moment his children were born, he committed himself to being the kind of father he had once wished for as a boy growing up in Jamaica. His children didn't have to wonder if he cared; they saw it, felt it, and lived it. But Maxwell's love didn't stop at his own front door.

At his children's schools, he became a familiar face volunteering in the lunchroom, helping with traffic duty, and greeting students by name. What started as showing up for his kids quickly became showing up for everyone's kids. He knew what it meant to long for a parent who couldn't be there, and he carried that memory with him into every small act of service. "Coming here and having this opportunity to give back and to work with students... it's very rewarding,". His family wasn't just his priority, they were his purpose and through his daily acts, Maxwell created a new legacy, one where the boy from Jamaica became the father who broke the cycle, the community leader who gave freely, and the man who healed not just through time but through love.

#### The People's Commissioner

With every teacher and school official he met, every PTA meeting he went to, and every Sunday service he attended, Maxwell began to regrow the kind of community he remembered, one rooted in the spirit of kinship and care his grandparents sowed into the hills of their village. His neighbors came to know him as someone they could count on. Over time, he also became increasingly involved in local campaigns, lending his time and energy wherever it was needed.

Civic involvement had always been part of his life. He had watched his grandparents hosting neighborhood police officers and local politicians back in Jamaica, but he had never considered running himself. That all changed one hot night on the streets of Miramar. As he knocked on door after door, canvassing for a local campaign, he began to hear his community's mandate: "Why aren't you running?" And, "Don't come back here until it's you on the ballot."

The first step he took to start his political career was to call his mother and tell her his plans. Much to his surprise, she was adamantly against it. She didn't want her son involved in the dirty world of politics. A few hours later she called him back to ask if this is what he really wanted and hearing the resolve in his voice, gave him her blessing. Maxwell remembered feeling like, "she had just poured some petrol in my engine," and he embarked on the journey that would ultimately fulfill the promise his mother saw in him so many years ago in Jamaica.

And so Maxwell became Commissioner Chambers of Miramar. He leads the way he lives, people first, community first, and humanity first. He doesn't have constituents; he has neighbors and friends. He set out to help them the way his grandparents had taught him so many years ago, and he began with the basics: water and light. To Commissioner Chambers, water is not just a utility, it's human dignity in its most physical form. It's the difference between being forgotten and being cared for. He reflected on how upsetting it was to see people still going without water in a place where it flowed so freely. "Coming from a village where we carried buckets of water from a well back up to the house on our heads. To see the water flowing with just a turn of a valve and still there are families going without for days at a time, it was very hard to stomach... You have the grid. Why not use it?"

For Maxwell, this is not a technical question, it's a moral one. If the infrastructure exists and the water can flow, then withholding it becomes an act of neglect. This is why his proudest achievement is creating the framework to have a struggling resident's water back on in a little as 30 minutes. The initiative, which he aptly named Community First +1, simply



Commissioner Chambers at the debut of the LoveDrop program.

adds one dollar to everyone's utility bill to create an emergency utility fund. The water component of the bill is called LoveDrop because at the end of the day, that's what leading is all about for Commissioner Chambers: love.



Commissioner Chambers speaking at a community event in Miramar

When we asked him what kept him grounded, he didn't talk about power or policy. He talked about his grandparents, his mother, the village that shaped and protected him, the Haitian community that embraced him and taught him what humility and hard work look like. He spoke about love. The foundation of Commissioner Chambers' worldview is not just about rural life; it's about a lived philosophy of mutual aid, dignity through labor, and survival through community. The culture he was raised in didn't wait for institutions to care for them; they built networks of care among themselves. "Regardless of where you're from, and who your parents are, where you started, at the end of the day, it's where you're going, it's where you reach...I literally had to, for lack of a better word, bring my own chair when I got elected here. I had to bring my own chair to sit at the table. And that's why I say change the narrative. Do it your way. Don't be afraid to."

Maxwell B. Chambers, "The People's Commissioner," is a man who wears many different hats. He is a dedicated public servant, a proud son of Jamaica, a man of faith in a higher purpose, a joyful member of the Miramar community. Perhaps the one he wears most proudly is the one he was wearing the day we met him: a soft pink cap that reads, "Girl Dad" a gift from his daughter at his grandson's recent graduation. He told

us he hasn't taken it off since.

However, the one role that is inextricable from Mr. Chambers' personal identity is Grandson of Marcus and Gertrude. Because they are the people who gave him the blueprint on how to build a successful, happy life. They are the ones who taught him that a life without purpose and without service of others was no life at all. They taught him that no man or woman is worth more than their community. And they taught him that our community gives us more than a label; it gives us identity and a home.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Trinidad & Tobago Independence Celebration August 30, 2025
- Labor Day Celebration September 1, 2025
- The Autism Theater Project September 6, 2025
- Miramar International Fashion Show
   December 6 & 7, 2025
- New Year's Eve Celebration (Children & Adults)
   December 31, 2025

#### "I Am Always Here For You"



Credits: Taliah West | Isabella Verdecia | Diana Muñoz | Katherine Metauten

Contact: Commissioner Maxwell B. Chambers at: 954-602-3154/3157

Email: mbchambers@miramarfl.gov

Website: MiramarFL.gov/MaxwellChambers

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### PAWS ON PATROL:

# Meet Sailor, the Police Therapy Dog Making a Big Impact with a Gentle Touch

In a world where first responders often confront life's most difficult moments, one four-legged officer is offering a unique kind of support, one wag at a time. Sailor, a certified therapy dog with our local police department here in Miramar, is helping bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community through calm presence, emotional support, and unconditional love. Whether comforting a child in crisis, lifting the spirits of a senior citizen, or simply offering a soft head to pet during tough times, Sailor is more than just a K9, he's a source of comfort and connection.

Our team had a chance to chat with Sailor's handler, Officer Saban, with Sailor in tow of course, to learn more about this special dog's role, training, and the powerful impact he's having across the community.

- How did Sailor come to join the department, and what kind of training did he receive to become a therapy dog?
- A: K9 Sailor was donated to the department by K9's for Warriors who are in Jacksonville. He went through an extensive 4-month training prior to him coming to us. Our Victim's advocate applied for Sailor through our Peer-to-Peer program. Once Sailor arrived, I had two days of training with him. I had to learn his commands and learn how read him, when he needs a break or if a crowd is overwhelming him which could cause him to disengage in the encounter.
- What sets a therapy dog like Sailor apart from other types of police K9s?
- A: Sailor is trained to be calm and allow the community to engage with him so that he may provide them with some comfort and stress relief.
- What does a typical day look like for Sailor when he's on duty?
- A: Sailor responds to any critical incident where a victim or the family of a victim may need some comfort. We will respond to busy shopping plazas sand engage with the community and talk about mental health and different ways Sailor can help provide some stress relief to students take an exam
- **Q:** How has Sailor helped strengthen the bond between the police and the community?
- A: He helps break the ice when someone may not feel too comfortable approaching an officer to just ask a question. After meeting Sailor, they may feel a little more at ease and engage in conversation. People can see it's very easy to speak with an officer.
- Q: What kind of places does Sailor visit—schools, nursing homes, public events?
- A: Sailor goes to schools, hospitals, churches, community events, nursing homes and stadiums for sporting events.

- Q: Can you share a moment when Sailor made a real difference for someone?
- A: Sailor responded to a school where a student passed away. We responded to spend some time with friends, teammates, teachers, and other students. Seeing them smile when they saw Sailor and distract them from a rough time in their lives for a few moments was incredible to see
- How do children and trauma victims respond to Sailor's presence?
- A: They absolutely love having him around. They are very appreciative of his presence.
- What's the most rewarding part of working alongside a therapy dog?
- A: Getting to see the difference he makes in someone's day. Getting them to smile for a few moments and get their mind off whatever is bothering them.
- Q: What is Sailor like off duty? Does he live with you?
- A: Sailor loves to play and run around the yard. He does live with me.
- What do you personally enjoy most about being Sailor's handler?
- A: Seeing the smiles and joy he brings to people. People being grateful for him coming around.
- Do you think more police departments should incorporate therapy dogs?
- A: I do. They are great stress relievers and can help officers through a rough day.
- How do you keep him calm and focused in busy or emotional situations?
- A: He is trained to be calm and quiet. If I see that it starts to get overwhelming for him then I give him a break by taking him away from the situation. However, we do train weekly to help him adjust to different environments.

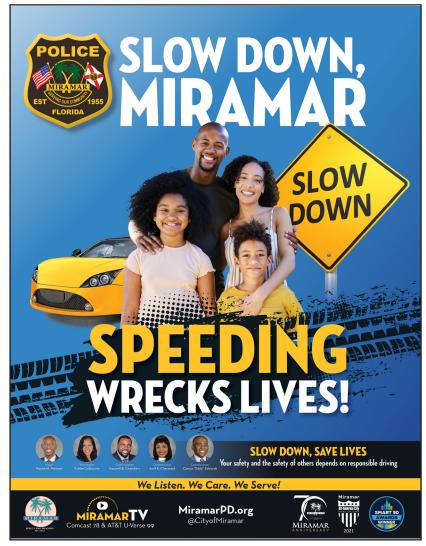
At that moment when empathy and connection matter more than ever, Sailor reminds us that sometimes the most powerful tool in public safety doesn't wear a badge but wags a tail and provides a head to rub.

General Information: 954-602-4000 Non-Emergency Line: 954-764-4357 | Emergencies: 911 | Miramar PD.org



### **PUBLIC SAFETY**











### **SOCIAL SERVICES**



# Center Program Highlights & Upcoming Events

Exciting Times at the Southcentral/Southeast Focal Point Senior Center!

The summer season is in full swing, and the Southcentral/Southeast Focal Point Senior Center is buzzing with energy and connection! From lively community gatherings and interactive wellness workshops to creative enrichment sessions and unforgettable international travel experiences, our recent programs have sparked joy, encouraged engagement, and strengthened community bonds. We're proud to continue offering vibrant opportunities that promote healthy aging and meaningful social interaction.



In addition, we're excited to launch Senior Center Month on September 8, 2025, with a special kickoff event celebrating the vibrant community we've built together. In honor of this month-long celebration, we will also host our 3rd Annual Senior Resource Fair on September 20, 2025. This year's theme, "Flip the Script on Aging," highlights our commitment to reshaping societal perspectives on aging by showcasing empowering programs, vital resources, and innovative approaches to senior well-being.







Turning your food scraps and organic waste into nutrient-rich soil for your plants and garden

#### You've likely heard about composting, but what is it and why does it matter?

Composting is the natural process of recycling organic materials like food scraps and yard waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment known as compost. Instead of tossing these items in the trash, composting allows them to break down naturally and return to the earth as healthy, fertile soil.

Why is composting important? It helps reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills where food and organic matter release methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. Composting at home helps lower your carbon footprint, enriches your soil, conserves water, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.

- Eggshells
- · Coffee grounds and paper coffee filters
- Yard trimmings (leaves, fresh or dried grass, flowers, potting soil, and houseplants)
- Paper products: napkins, paper towels, shredded paper bags, shredded newspaper, cardboard, and non-glossy junk mail

#### **AVOID COMPOSTING:**

- Meats
- Dairy
- Bones
- Fish
- Glossy paper and magazines (they are often chemically treated) These items can attract pests, slow decomposition, or introduce harmful substances into your compost.

#### **HOW TO GET STARTED**

Composting is simple and doesn't require much space. You can use a backyard compost bin or a small indoor container to collect your scraps. Mix "greens" (like food waste) with "browns" (like paper and dry leaves) and turn your pile regularly to help it break down faster. Want to learn more?

### o for

#### Join us at the Miramar Community Garden

#### October 18, 2025 | 11:30am-12:30pm

for a hands-on composting workshop. Scan the QR code to register and take the next step toward a greener, cleaner Miramar! Let's reduce waste, nourish our soil, and grow a more sustainable community one banana peel at a time.

MiramarCompost.eventbrite.com

### BUSINESS



## Community Connections

A MISSION ROOTED IN COMMUINITY



As the City of Miramar celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, the six-year partnership with EDGE, Inc. stands as a testament to the city's enduring commitment to inclusive growth and residentdriven progress. Originally conceived by city leadership to address grassroots needs, EDGE, Inc. has since evolved into a central partner in advancing Miramar's community-focused goals.

"Our goal has always been to ensure every resident—no matter their zip code-has the opportunity to thrive," said Deputy City Manager Kelvin L. Baker. "EDGE, Inc. serves as a vital bridge between local government and the community, enabling us to engage more meaningfully with the people we serve."

EDGE, Inc.'s mission is to strengthen community programs, expand access to social services, and improve neighborhood infrastructure and facilities-all while amplifying the voices of residents in decision-making processes. At its core, the organization is driven by the belief that resilient, thriving communities emerge through intentional collaboration between civic institutions and the people they represent.

"Our aim is to empower residents to take an active role in shaping the future of Miramar," said Italia Thurston, founding member and President of EDGE, Inc.'s Board of Directors. "We're not just implementing projects-we're investing in our community and its people."

Over the years, EDGE, Inc. has garnered support from both local and national funding partners, including SIEMENS, SPROUTS Healthy Communities Foundation, OUTFRONT Media, Martin GoldCoast, Memorial Healthcare System, Walmart Local Community Grants, ALDI, COSTCO, and Honey Shine. This diverse funding base has enabled EDGE, Inc. to deliver direct support and services to Miramar residents through city departments such as the Office of the City Clerk, Office of the Chief Operating Officer for Health and Education, the Department of Cultural Affairs, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, the Police Department, and the Miramar Community Garden."

These initiatives have included everything from wellness programming and cultural enrichment to environmental education and emergency food distribution-demonstrating the wide-ranging impact of this public-private partnership.

These initiatives have included everything from wellness programming and cultural enrichment to environmental education and emergency food distribution—demonstrating the wide-ranging impact of this public-private partnership.

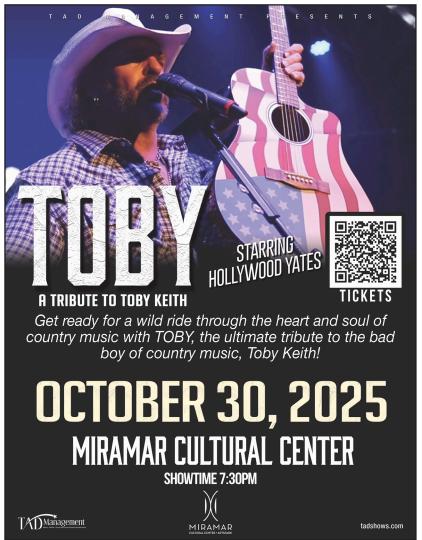
More than just a collaboration between city government and a nonprofit, the City of Miramar's partnership with EDGE, Inc. reflects a broader shift in governance: one that places community voices at the forefront of policymaking and program design. Together, the city and EDGE, Inc. are modeling what it looks like to build a more connected, informed, and empowered Miramar-neighborhood by neighborhood, resident by resident.

Community Connections will continue to spotlight the partnerships, projects, and people driving innovation and transformation in our city. Follow this series as we explore the stories shaping a brighter future for all who call Miramar home.

### CULTURE CORNER









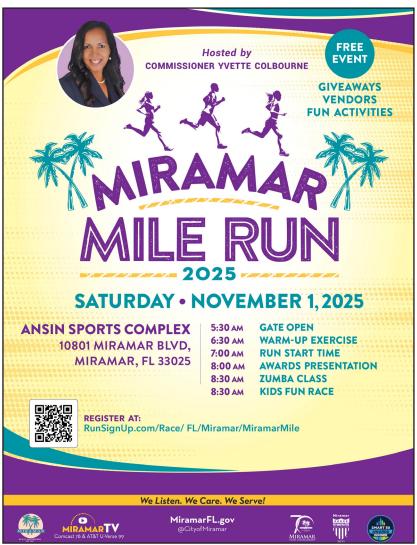
































### COMMUNITY & EVENTS









