

A-4  
5/10/2022

### **Mayor presents proclamation to department.**

Julian: Thanks Mayor and Commission. This week is all about the businesses that continue to grow our economy. Entrepreneurs that have trusted Coral Gables with their businesses. As such, we would like to honor some businesses in the community that represent who we are with a Certificate of Appreciation.

### **Julian H. Perez**

The Plaza: The largest development in the City since George Merrick developed the City. We honor them today not only for the Agave Group's beautiful and significant investment, but we applaud them for the type of businesses they are recruiting and attracting to the City. Businesses such as ACI Worldwide and the regional offices of PNC Bank are among the companies that now call The Plaza home. Joining us today is Mr. Carlos Beckmann, managing partner of Agave Holdings.

Stephanie's Crepes: A business that work very hard to overcome all of the economic and non-economic challenges associated with the pandemic to survive was Stephanie's Crepes – a fast casual restaurant – on Galiano. The owner attended every workshop the city organized, applied for grants and reinvented itself. It's paid off and we couldn't be prouder of the spirit of this small businesses which has persevered against all odds. Joining us today is the owner Ms. Stephanie Cheung.

### **Raimundo Rodulfo**

ERM Protect Cyber Security: Attracting tech and fintech businesses is the goal of major cities with an active Smart City Program. In the City of Coral Gables, we have more than 1,200 tech-related companies, but did you know there have been tech businesses in the city for almost 25 years? ERM Protect is a boutique cyber security firm focused on protecting businesses in 39 industries. They have clients all over the world. Coral Gables is among the businesses it protects. Joining us today is Ms. Silka Gonzalez, President and Founder of ERM.

### **Francesca Valdes / Zeida Sardina**

Ben & Giules: Opening a business in itself very difficult but imagine opening in the middle of the spread of Omicron. The retail and lifestyle store Ben & Giules opened on Miracle Mile during that exact time and they haven't looked back. The business is a pop-up tenant of the City. The goal was to show landlords the right retail uses for the street. At the end of the lease, we hope they will move to a permanent location in Coral Gables. Today we have Elena Stele, owner of Ben & Giules.

### **Belkys Perez**

Fridman Fels and Soto: Professional services make up our top industry, so we thought it was important to highlight a business in an industry that employees more than 30,000 people in Coral Gables. Fridman Fels and Soto is a law firm. They are former federal prosecutors who decided to go into business for themselves and despite spending most of their careers working out of Downtown Miami and Brickell, they opened their office of three in Coral Gables in 2019. Joining us today is one of the partners, Alex Soto.