

LOCAL

Oceanographers at UM discover better way to find trash in ocean 1A



NATION

Flynn denied to FBI discussing sanctions with ambassador 10A



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Miami Herald

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Labor pick is FIU law dean, former Miami U.S. attorney



R. Alexander Acosta would be the first Hispanic in Trump's Cabinet.

President Donald Trump tapped R. Alexander Acosta to lead the Labor Department after his first choice withdrew his nomination.

BY JAY WEAVER, PATRICIA MAZZEI AND NICHOLAS NEHMAS jweaver@miamiherald.com

When the Justice Department named R. Alexander Acosta the new U.S. attorney in South Florida in 2005, he was largely an unknown to federal prosecutors in Miami.

Many viewed him with suspicion because he had never tried any criminal cases, and some feared he would carry the torch of the arch-conservative bosses that President George W. Bush had picked to run the Justice

Department — John Ashcroft and his successor, Alberto Gonzales. Acosta, who grew up in Miami, had lost touch with his roots after attending Harvard University and pursuing a career in Washington. But the Republican gradually reconnected with South Florida, won over his skeptics, and gained the respect of leaders in the local legal and law enforcement establishment.

On Thursday, President Donald Trump nominated the 48-year-old Acosta, currently the dean of Florida International University's law school, to be his

labor secretary. The smarts and pragmatism Acosta displayed in his legal career, his friends and allies say, will likely help pave the way for his Senate confirmation. "He has had a tremendous career," Trump said. "He will be a tremendous secretary of labor."

Trump made the announcement from the White House East Room. Acosta could not be reached for comment Thursday, and his voice mail was full. Trump's initial choice to lead the Labor Department, fast-food executive Andrew Pender, failed to gain enough support in the Republican-led Senate and with-

SEE LABOR, 2A



BUSINESS

MEALPAL RAISES \$15 MILLION

The startup is jumping across the pond to London, its first international expansion, and it has raised \$15M. 8A



SPORTS

DOLPHINS CUT TWO VETERANS

Miami took significant steps to prepare for the opening of the league year by waiving Mario Williams and Earl Mitchell. 1B



WEEKEND

ART FESTIVAL EXTRAVAGANZA

This weekend brings two giant art fairs to South Florida: the Coconut Grove Arts Festival and Art Wynwood. 1G

WORLD

75 KILLED IN BOMB ATTACK

An Islamic State suicide bomber struck inside a famed shrine in southern Pakistan, killing at least 75 people. 12A

IMMIGRATION

Trump looms over 'sanctuary' showdown vote in Dade

BY NICHOLAS HANER AND PATRICIA MAZZEI nhaner@miamiherald.com

President Donald Trump's crackdown on communities offering "sanctuary" from immigration enforcement faces its first big test Friday when the Miami-Dade County Commission convenes to decide whether local jails should continue holding inmates sought by the feds for deportation.

After weeks of protests and demonstrations, the 15-member commission wades into a legislative battlefield over Mayor Carlos Gimenez's Trump-friendly detention policy, which must receive board approval to stand. At the same special meeting, set to begin at 10 a.m., competing resolutions call for backing Gimenez's authority, reinstating him, and condemning Trump's original threat of the loss of federal funds as an unconstitutional assault on local government.

Combined, the agenda offers a local venue for the national debate — and a chance for a heavily bike county largely populated by immigrants to weigh the consequences of cooperating with the Trump administration.

"Obviously, this is something that the country is wrangling with," said Commission Chairman Robin "Steve" Rowe, a Republican who backs Gimenez's detention policy. "It's serious stuff for people. We have to treat

SEE SANCTUARY, 2A



Ruling party candidate Lenin Moreno holds a rally in Quito, Ecuador, on Wednesday. He's the front-runner in Sunday's presidential race, but it's unclear if he can clinch it in the first round or will face an April 2 runoff.

Ecuador votes for a new president, but will 'Citizens Revolution' still hold power?

Campaigning for Ecuador's presidential race ended Thursday with polls suggesting that ruling party candidate Lenin Moreno is holding the lead. But can he clinch it in the first round?

BY JIM WEISS jimweiss@miamiherald.com

QUITO, ECUADOR

Lenin Moreno, the front-runner in Ecuador's presidential race, was trying to get through his stump speech on Wednesday when he was repeatedly drowned out by the chant of "Just one round! Just one round!"

The roar from the crowds was both political boast and desperate plea: If Moreno, the ruling-

party candidate, can win Sunday's vote by a wide enough margin, he can avoid a runoff. If he doesn't clinch it, he'll have to face a unified opposition in an April 2 vote. And even his most ardent fans worry he's not up for that fight.

"I look into the sky every night and pray that he'll win in the first round," said Eugenia Flores, a 65-year-old retiree. "If he doesn't win, they're all going to gang up on him."

Campaigning officially ends

Thursday, and Moreno and his two closest rivals, former banker Guillermo Lasso and former Congresswoman Cynthia Viteri, are holding their closing rallies in the port city of Guayaquil.

The race in Ecuador is being watched throughout the region. At stake is the legacy of President Rafael Correa and his "Citizens Revolution" — a decade-long national shakeup that led to new roads, schools and hospitals, even as critics say it put the country deep in debt, trampled civil liberties and free speech, and sowed corruption.

SEE ECUADOR, 4A

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## Local & State

### FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

## \$250M for teacher incentives? A bill is being crafted

BY KRISTEN M. CLARK  
Herald/Times Tallahassee Bureau

### TALLAHASSEE

How much Florida spends to recruit and keep quality teachers for its K-12 public schools could potentially quadruple next year — and maybe even reach as high as a quarter of a billion dollars — under tentative plans being crafted in private by Republican House and Senate leaders ahead of the 2017 session.

Gov. Rick Scott last month recommended \$88 million be spent in 2017-18 to fund a variety of teacher incentives aimed at replacing the controversial “Best & Brightest” bonuses that reward top teachers based on their high school SAT/ACT scores.

But one key senator revealed this week that legislative leaders want to propose vastly more money than Scott has, while keeping the best of “Best & Brightest” and expanding the incentives to benefit more teachers.

Their ballpark amount is \$200 million or more in potential, said Sen. David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs, the Senate’s pre-K-12 education budget chairman.

Simmons casually dropped the bombshell figure during his committee’s meeting Wednesday and elaborated on it Thursday, when senators discussed Scott’s budget recommendations and their own funding priorities.

Simmons said specifically that the Florida House — under Speaker Richard Corcoran’s leadership — was creating a plan to possibly spend \$200 million to \$250 million “to deal with” and expand “Best & Brightest.” Simmons said the Senate has its own draft in the works, too.

The State Board of Education and Scott don’t want the program, as it, renewed for a third year.

When asked by the Herald/Times on Wednesday, neither Corcoran nor Illinois Republican state Rep. Manny Diaz Jr., the House’s pre-K-12 education budget chairman, would confirm or dispute — the figure Simmons cited.

Diaz pointed to the pending budget process, but he acknowledged that the House and Senate are “looking at an expanded number” for “Best & Brightest.”

“We’re looking at expanding the options that qualify a teacher, and that would really require a larger number,” Diaz told the Herald/Times.

What exactly legislative leaders have in mind isn’t public, so it’s unknown what the additional dollars would go toward, whether it would be one-time or annual spending, how teachers might qualify or how the program would be paid for

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### PHILANTHROPY

## Made lots of money. Gave lots away. This power couple now getting something back

■ Jorge Pérez, of The Related Group, and Darlene Boytell-Pérez, an accomplished nurse practitioner and clinical researcher, have received Miami-Dade’s Tocqueville Award for Outstanding Philanthropy for their history of charitable giving.

BY ALEX HARRIS

aharris@miamiherald.com

Jorge Pérez spent most of his life focused on acquiring money. Now, he has turned his attention to giving it away.

Born in Buenos Aires to parents who fled Cuba, he worked his way up to become the “Condo King” of South Florida as founder, chairman and CEO of The Related Group.

When he was young and broke, Pérez said he gave more of his time and less of his money. Now that Forbes pegs his net worth at \$2.8 billion, the real estate developer has a hefty philanthropic port-

folio to match.

He and his wife, Darlene Boytell-Pérez, a nurse practitioner and clinical researcher, have a right brain-left brain philosophy of philanthropy.

Pérez is well known for the \$35 million cash-and-art donation that put his name on the bayfront Herzog & de Meuron-designed Pérez Art Museum Miami; he has since committed more than \$15 million more. But the couple’s \$250,000 donation for the Nursing Lab for FIU College of Nursing and Health Sciences (her alma mater) is the largest individual gift in the history of the program.

As Pérez puts it, “There’s



for everything from moon-  
sauce in the Arabian Sea to  
what happens between the  
air and sea during hurri-  
cances.

so many needs. It’s hard to say no.”

The diverse donations don’t surprise Harve Mogul, CEO of United Way of Miami-Dade, who has known Pérez for a quarter of a century.

“A good, safe community can’t just have good healthcare. You need good schools, good culture,” he said. “Jorge cares about everything.”

Mogul said the couple’s long history of charitable giving earned them the United Way of Miami-Dade’s Tocqueville Award for Outstanding Philanthropy, presented Thursday night at the Tocqueville Grand Reception.

“It’s not just about out-of-pocket money,” he said. “It’s their ability to put their expertise on the table.”

When Mogul’s signature project with United Way, the Center for Excellence in Early Education, was underway, he recalls how Pérez showed up and taught the project managers about building in sync with the community. When the center was built, Boy-

tell-Pérez stepped in and helped come up with programming.

To say the Pérez couple is heavily involved in the community is an understatement. Jorge chairs the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs Council, directs the Miami International Film Festival and is a member of the the University of Miami’s Board of Trustees. Darlene is an adjunct clinical preceptor for FIU’s Nurse Practitioner Graduate Program, serves on the boards of Gulliver Schools and The United Cerebral Palsy and is a founding ambassador of PAMM.

Jorge Pérez has also signed “the Giving Pledge,” a campaign founded by Bill Gates and Warren Buffett where signers agree to give away half of their wealth to charity.

“I’ve always thought that wealthy people have a moral obligation to give back to those communities that made it possible for them to amass wealth,” Pérez said. “We want to make Miami a better place for everybody.”

Geophysical Research Letters, Josefina Ocaso and Francisco Berro-Vera

figured out that objects don’t get pushed in a straight line by winds and

terms climate patterns. (Schools can even adopt one.) They have identified

olve all these other problems.”

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