Two advocates for youth to be honored

By Bea L. Hines
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Two longtime defenders and advocates of the youth of Miami-Dade County will be honored Saturday at the second annual Spirit of Excellence Banquet and Awards Gala.

Judge Thomas Peterson and Georgia "Spit-fire" Jones-Ayers, will be honored at the gala at 7 p.m. at the African Heritage Cultural and Arts Center at 6161 NW 22nd Ave. in Liberty City.

The gala is presented by the center and an organized Board of Directors under the auspices of the Joint Alumni Coalition and the award was established to recognize and honor deserving, concerned, supportive individuals from the Miami-Dade County area, and also to help the Coalition meet its financial commitments and responsibilities to the students and the center.

As the founder of the Pre-Trial Program, Judge Peterson has been a catalyst at ensuring that at-risk students in the Miami-Dade County area received a level plateau when it comes to staying away from criminal activities and becoming assets to their communities.

With the assistance of Peterson, Jones-Ayers founded The Alternative Program, which is known throughout the state and the nation, because of the hundreds of young people she has saved from a life of crime and illiteracy.

Tickets to the event are $50 each. If you are not able to attend the event, you may make a donation to the cause. Make checks payable to: AHCAC and send them to Gigi Tinsley, Executive Director, 1500 NW 44th St. Miami, FL 33142-7929.

‘Outstanding Educator’

Congratulations to the Rev. Daniel Robert Kent, a Spanish literature teacher at Archbishop Curley Notre Dame 6 to 12 Prep School, who recently won the 15th Annual Cervantes Outstanding Educator Award. He will be presented with the award at a ceremony at the Hilton Miami Airport Hotel on Oct. 30. The event is hosted by Nova Southeastern University’s Fischler School of Education and Human Services and its Hispanic Advisory Board.

Kent was born in Greenwich, Connecticut and is has a bachelor of arts in philosophy and teaching minors in history and Spanish. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1963. Later, his love for the Spanish language inspired him to pursue a masters of arts in Spanish and advanced studies in Spanish Literature.

Although he has been a teacher at ACND Prep for eight years, ACND Principal Douglas Romanik said of Kent in a press release, "He has served the larger community at ACND for over
40 years and has inspired generations of students. He has been a great asset to our community both spiritually and intellectually faithfully guiding students with his wit and knowledge."

Said Kent: I strongly believe that the students I teach, especially ones from Hispanic backgrounds, can grow a better understanding of the roots of their diverse histories through learning the ins and outs of Spanish literature."

UM promotes civic engagement

The University of Miami’s Office of Civic and Community Engagement has launched its Urban and Environmental Sustainability Initiative, which will bring together a diverse mixture of policy experts, non-profit organizations, scientists, grassroots activists, urban planners, government agencies, community members, faculty and students to identify needs in order to develop strategies for solutions and help translate local activism in effective public policy.

Continuing through the 2012-2013 academic year the CCE will host several public programs and forums, one of which will be its annual Food Day on Wednesday. Food Day is sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest to promote a healthy, affordable, sustainable and just food system. Michael Shuman, director for Research and public Policy for the Business Alliance for Local Economies, will lead the kick-off with the keynote lecture for Food Day. His lecture is entitled, "Eat Local, Think Global: How to Scale Up the Local Food Revolution Through Local Investment."

Shuman is an economist, attorney, author and entrepreneur and is one of the nation’s leading experts on community economics and the advantages of small scall businesses in an era of globalization.

For more information on the location of the event and on the CCE, visit www.miami.edu/civic.

Choral concert

The Civic Chorale of Greater Miami, Miami Dade College, Kendall Campus, will present "A Bridge to Peace " at 4 p.m. Sunday at First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables, 536 Coral Way.

Conducted by Kenneth Boos, the chorale will present the Miami premiere of Karl Jenkins’ "The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace."

Tickets are $20 for adults, $15 for seniors and $10 for students with ID. Children under 12, veterans and those currently serving in the military are admitted free. Tickets are available online at www.civicchorale.info or at the door on the day of the concert.

Get spooked at the garden

The Miami Beach Botanical Garden will have a free Halloween Family Day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. The event will include pumpkin-carving activities, a costume contest, spooky snacks and other scary activities.

Jazz festival
The Miami Nice Jazz Festival debuts Friday with songstress Dee Dee Bridgewater, Kyle Eastwood, acclaimed bassist, Eddie Palmieri, Latin jazz and salsa favorite, Andre Ceccarelli, renowned French drummer, and Alex Ligertwood, former Santana lead singer. Jannick Top, Amaury Filliard and Julian Mazzariello will complete the opening night lineup.

The three-day jazz festival will be at downtown Miami’s Gusman Center for the Performing Arts 174 E. Flagler St. and will also showcase the talent of local jazz artists and ensembles, including The Florida International University big Band, featuring vocalists Sally Night and the South Florida Jazz Orchestra with Chuck Bergeron, featuring Nicole Henry. Local ensembles from The Frost School of Music at the University of Miami and FIU will perform during a pre-concert cocktail reception at 7 p.m. in the theater lobby each night, followed at 8 p.m. by the concert.

Tickets range from $30 to $75 and may be purchased online at www.maminicejazzfestival.com or by calling the local box office at 305-374-2444.

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