

MAYOR OF THE YEAR – 2008 FLORIDA CITIES OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

JULIO ROBAINA CITY OF HIALEAH

Mayor Julio Robaina has a vision for the City of Hialeah, as well as the strength and the commitment to achieve it.

In 1997, Mayor Robaina was elected Councilman for the City of Hialeah for a four-year term. Subsequently, Mayor Robaina was unanimously elected President of the City Council by his peers in 2000. During his term as Councilman, Mayor Robaina was named Chairman of the City of Hialeah Charter Review Board and served as the City Council's Representative on the City of Hialeah Elected Officials Retirement Board. As a result of his deep commitment to the residents of the City of Hialeah, Mayor Robaina was re-elected without opposition in 2001 for another four-year term. After thirty years of residing in Hialeah, Julio Robaina was elected Mayor of the City of Hialeah with overwhelming support from the community in 2005.

Mayor Robaina's community-based focus stretches from a local to a regional scope in an effort to improve the lives of all Floridians. Moreover, his leadership continued to flourish in 2003 when Mayor Robaina was elected President of the Miami-Dade League of Cities and in 2004 as President of the Gold Coast League of Cities. His highest honor as a municipal leader was attained in 2005 when elected officials from over 400 municipalities across the state of Florida unanimously confirmed their support for his presidency of the Florida League of Cities. Through the Florida League of Cities, Mayor Robaina accomplished numerous achievements as a result of his involvement in several boards within the League. Mayor Robaina serves as Chair of the Florida Municipal Investment Trust, International Relations Committee and the Nominating Committee. Recently, Mayor Robaina had the honor of being appointed by the

current President of the Florida League of Cities, Mayor Frank Ortis, as the President's Appointee to the Florida Municipal Investment Trust.

In 2005, Mayor Robaina was appointed to the State of Florida Century Commission by Alan Bense, former Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, to review and establish a sustainable growth pattern for the State of Florida. Mayor Robaina is also a graduate of the Leadership Florida Class XXV.

During his first few months in office, Mayor Robaina fulfilled numerous goals. Mayor Robaina secured more than \$6 million in State funding, the highest ever appropriated in the State budget to the City of Hialeah. Mayor Robaina placed himself at the forefront of educational programming by establishing the Mayor's Education Advisory Board. Additionally, Mayor Robaina successfully led the effort, along with the Florida Legislature and the Florida Board of Education, to obtain the authority to grant Municipal School Charters. Also, Mayor Robaina initiated the Partnership to Advance School Success program (PASS), the after school tutoring program "Tutoring in the Parks" and "Reading Corners" at various Hialeah recreational facilities in order to instill academic values for life long educational success.

Mayor Robaina has been leading the South Florida movement of "Generation Engage", a local civic organization that recently hosted an interactive iChat video conference with Colin Powell, former Secretary of State, at a local college. Mayor Robaina took the opportunity to address participants on the significance of becoming more involved in the community. Furthermore, Mayor Robaina created the City of Hialeah Scholarship Fund for students who choose to continue their education in a post-secondary school.

Mayor Robaina is diligently integrating the community's elderly population by expanding existing adult and special populations programs, as well as amenities and building new facilities throughout Hialeah.

Mayor Robaina, as a member of the Board of Directors of Hands in Action (Manos en Accion, Inc.), an organization that focuses on helping to break the horrific cycle of child abuse, is diligently working and committed to assisting this community-based organization succeed in reaching their goals. Additionally, Mayor Robaina is an actively involved Executive Member of the Hialeah Hospital Governing Board.

His enthusiasm and support for the arts is also evident as Mayor Robaina implemented several new cultural initiatives. Mayor Robaina inaugurated the City's first "Art in Public Spaces" sculpture, "The Beat", and Mayor Robaina collaborated with Perez Celis, a renowned artist, to create a masterpiece painting on the façade of a four story building. Additionally, Mayor Robaina hosted "Art on Palm," an event that exposed thousands to culturally enriching art exhibits.

While revitalizing and encouraging new business development and growth potential in the area, Mayor Robaina is working closely with the Beacon Council, the Hialeah Chamber of Commerce and Hialeah-Dade Development, Inc. on various new projects, including the development of the new annexation area and the reconstruction of Hialeah's in-fill areas. Furthermore, Mayor Robaina is an acting Board Member of the Beacon Council, where he engages in discussions of economic development in order to attract new businesses to Hialeah.

On November 2, 2007, Mayor Robaina had the honor of being named "Public Official of the Year" by the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, recognized as one of the largest Hispanic Chambers in the State of Florida

Mayor Robaina's latest venture is the \$3 million dollar Hialeah Educational Academy Charter High School, which will open August 20, 2008. In addition to the core curriculum, the high school will offer vocational training to students interested in becoming police officers, paramedics or firefighters. Mayor Robaina hopes that the school will give students direction, lower the dropout rate and improve the community. The students will also receive hands-on training by working in the City's Fire and Police Stations.

As Mayor Julio Robaina heads into the future, he remains steadfast in his commitment to the residents of the City of Hialeah, and will continue to build on the foundation that his dedication has established over the first part of his term.