

Innovation, leadership identify community's role models

BY YUDISLAIDY FERNANDEZ

Role models are leading the way for others in sectors such as healthcare, real estate development and law.

They set the example, make a difference and think innovatively, making others notice and want to be more like them.

Dr. **Manuel Anton**, chief operating officer of 473-bed acute care Mercy Hospital, is responsible for developing new clinical services and improving care and service for patients.

But that's not all.

He is responsible for the hospital's business development, strategic planning and marketing and running the day-to-day operations of the institution.

"Dr. Anton is an approachable community leader who is sincerely dedicated to serving our community," said Miami Commissioner Marc Sarnoff, who oversees the district that includes Mercy Hospital. "The respect he has garnered from his peers in the medical profession will soon be matched by the increasing respect he is earning from local business leaders."

As a physician, he has dedicated many years to caring for



Photo courtesy of City Year

Saif Ishoof helps unite diverse adults with public school children.

one patient at time, now that role has expanded and he cares for thousands every day.

Since taking the role of chief operating officer seven months ago, Dr. Anton said, he has been surrounding himself with a strong team that shares his vision.

"They are highly-capable, motivated people who understand what we are trying to do at the hospital and want to take that to the next level," he said.

Qualities that define a good role model, he says, are analyzing every decision, weighing the pros and cons, and making a decision that meets the objec-

tive.
"Give things some analysis," Dr. Anton said. "A little bit of thought can help people achieve better goals."

He also finds the time to lend a hand to the Mercy Foundation, and away from the hospital he serves in the Parent Advisory Council for Belen Jesuit Preparatory School.

Dr. Anton has been involved with the school – which his two sons attend – for more than five years, helping to organize activities and fundraise for scholarships.

"It's a great combination, a valuable public service and by the same token stay close to the

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Dr. Manuel Anton focuses on the personal, professional at Mercy.

family.”

Commissioner Sarnoff also sees the profile of an emerging leader in businessman **Ricky Arriola**, president and chief executive officer of Inktel Direct Corp.

“The man responsible for turning around the [Adrienne Arsht] Performing Arts Center, Ricky blends common sense leadership with a high level of enthusiasm to everything he becomes involved in,” said Mr. Sarnoff, a member of the center’s board of directors.

Mr. Arriola said he worked with others in the community to position the performing arts center to become a venue comparable to others in the world.

That same drive went into building his company with his family. Inktel Direct Corp. was established in 2000 and helps businesses outsource their marketing needs.

To others seeking to build a business, he recommends: set a mission, work hard toward the goal and be persistent. He says he always remembers a Winston Churchill quote about never quitting.

“You don’t quit in pursuit of a goal until you accomplish it and then you set new goals and repeat the formula.”

Another leader setting goals and fulfilling them is Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority **Alyce Robertson**.

After working for Miami-Dade County for 13 years, Ms. Robertson was appointed authority director temporarily – while its board of directors searched for a new leader.

But after seeing the hard work she was putting in and the transformation she was planning for downtown, they decided to keep her.

“She is doing a lot to revitalize downtown, making it more pedestrian friendly,” said Ola Aluko, City of Miami director of capital improvements. “She has great ideas. I can’t wait to see how she executes them.”

Mr. Aluko has had the opportunity to work with Ms. Robertson on streetscape and landscape improvements downtown and on a Brickell Avenue beautification project.

Under her leadership, the authority has renovated three vacant spaces downtown into pocket parks for area residents and the local workforce to enjoy.

Ms. Robertson’s sense of leadership began to develop during her service in county departments such as the Department of Environmental Resources Management, where she instituted the Adopt-a-Tree program.

“Trees have been my passion for a number of years,” she said. “Now, I get to expand it into other activities.”

Danet Linares, president of the Commercial Real Estate

Women Miami chapter, sees strong leadership in chapter member **Suzanne Amaducci-Adams**.

She has seen her grow in her career over the years, said Ms. Linares, executive vice president of Blanca Commercial Real Estate. “She shows great dedication and potential.”

Ms. Linares said she has been so impressed with Ms. Amaducci-Adams that she hand-picked her to be her successor as president of the commercial real estate group.

As the youngest equity partner at Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP, Ms. Amaducci-Adams heads the firm’s hospitality industry focused group.

“Finding practical solutions to problems, that is what we are paid to do,” she said. “To be a good lawyer, you have to be a good business person.”

Playing the roles of lawyer, mother and volunteer require a lot of her time, but she says keeping priorities straight helps her balance those responsibilities.

“There is no such thing as a balancing act,” she said, adding it’s all about juggling her charity work, job and family. “You have to make calls as to what is most important everyday.”

Another emerging role model in the community is **Saif Ishoof**, executive director of City Year, a non-profit organization that unites young adults from different backgrounds for a year of service in public schools.

“These diverse leaders serve in schools to improve student attendance, behavior, and course performance, helping students get on track and stay on track to graduate and succeed,” Miami Mayor Manny Diaz said.

Mr. Ishoof, an attorney, decided after learning about the work City Year was doing around the country to make a shift in his career plans and head the organization.

City Year – operating in 19 American cities – takes 17- to 24-year-old volunteers.

In the local chapter, volunteers administer a reading tutorial program in eight schools and also run after-school programs, he said.

The organization also works with middle schoolers in the Young Heroes Program, he said, in which children experience 15 Saturdays of voluntary service carrying out learning and service activities.

“We cannot have urban renewal in forgotten quarters without the presence of organizations doing work for underserved populations.”