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Ethics Commission presents clean-government seminars

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust applauds all efforts to educate elected officials, government employees, political candidates and interested citizens on the responsibilities of public service. But the Miami Herald March 21 editorial, When will they ever learn? neglected to note that this agency has been teaching “Ethics 101” since its inception.

Currently, we are training elected office holders in the county and in all Miami-Dade municipalities under recently enacted state and county laws. At least once a month, we hold classes for registered lobbyists and members of local government advisory boards.

Last year, this agency inaugurated a new in-depth online training program for almost 30,000 county employees and conducted a special 12-hour “ethics boot camp” for 250 regulatory employees in the city of Miami Beach. We will provide basic ethics training to employees of any municipality upon request.

We also conduct campaign-skills seminars several times a year for current and potential office-seekers, in conjunction with the Miami-Dade Elections Department.

Ethics training from within government is an essential component in fighting corruption, but not a cure-all. We need schools, civic and business organizations, the media and the voting public to support these efforts. We will partner with any group or agency willing to contribute its time and resources to the goal of clean government.

On May 16, the Ethics Commission, along with the St. Thomas University Center for Ethics, will hold a daylong Political Campaign Ethics Conference, covering topics touching almost all aspects of past and future elections.

Registration is now under way. To learn more about the Ethics Commission’s outreach programs or to participate in any of them, visit ethics.miamidade.gov

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