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### **COE pays tribute to civics teacher**

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE) today presented its “2018 Ethical Governance Day Teacher Award” to a former social worker and career counselor turned middle school civics teacher. Rosa Alejandro is the Social Studies Department Chair and teaches Geography, U.S. History, Civics and Law Studies to sixth through eighth grade students at Norman S. Edelcup/Sunny Isles Beach K-8. Ms. Alejandro, who was named Rookie Teacher of the Year in 2009, has been in the classroom for only a decade. Now her students have become state finalists in “We The People” Mock Congressional Hearing in 2015, 2016, and 2017. They also reached the state finals in “Project Citizen” in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> for three consecutive years. Last year, Ms. Alejandro’s law students put together a new ordinance for their city to promote bike safety which was sponsored by one of their commissioners. It is now on its way to being enacted.

“I want my students to know they have a voice, that government does want to hear what they have to say,” the North Miami Beach resident told Ethics Commissioners. “Knowing that I’m doing something to empower my students is my greatest honor as a teacher,” she added. Ms. Alejandro is also active in other extra-curricular activities, including the Drama Club, National Junior Honor Society, Student Government Association, Builders Club and EESAC Committee. Prior to joining Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Ms. Alejandro served as a Career Advisor at Unidad of Miami Beach and as a Service Coordinator for special needs children at the University of Miami. She accepted the award today along with her husband and representatives of her school and the Miami-Dade Public Schools Social Sciences Department.

In other action today, the Ethics Commission found No Probable Cause that Opa-locka city officials violated the Miami-Dade County Citizens’ Bill of Rights by holding an emergency City Commission meeting without proper notice. Joseph Spiezio, a principal in Universal Waste, filed the complaint (**C 18-31-07**) against City Attorney Vincent Brown and former City Manager Newall Daughtrey for calling the meeting on July 20, 2018, because the city’s waste hauling contract was set to expire the next day. The investigation found that the City Clerk did provide electronic and physical notice of the meeting, including sending an email to the complainant, which he apparently deleted without reading. Since there was insufficient evidence that the emergency meeting was not publicly noticed, and because the COE has no jurisdiction over alleged violations of Florida statutes and/or the Opa-locka Charter, the complaint was dismissed.

A complaint (**C 18-44-10**) filed against David Templer, a candidate for North Miami Beach City Commission, for improperly using the city seal in his campaign literature was found Not Legally Sufficient. The Ethics Commission has no jurisdiction to enforce that provision of the North Miami Beach code.

A complaint (C 18-42-10) filed against North Miami Councilwoman Carol Keys that centered on a land use issue was dismissed as Not Legally Sufficient because the complainant was unable to allege specific actions by Keys that constituted an ethics violation.

*The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of education, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.*

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Ethical Governance Day Teacher Rosa Alejandro with COE Chairman Jeffrey Cutler.



From left: COE Ex. Dir. Jose Arrojo, Sunny Isles K-8 Asst. Principal Leticia Figueroa, husband Fernando and teacher Rosa Alejandro, COE Vice Chair Nelson Bellido, COE Chair Jeffrey Cutler, MDCPS Social Science administrators Jackie Viana and Bob Brazovsky.



From left: COE Vice Chair Nelson Bellido, Chairman Jeffrey Cutler, Awardee Rosa Alejandro and COE Commissioners Jan Jacobowitz and Lawrence Schwartz.