



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust

Investigative Report

Investigator: Karl Ross

Case: K16-033	Case Name: Alfred Santamaria	<u>Date Open:</u>	<u>Date Closed:</u>
Complainant(s): J.C. Planas	Subject(s): Alfredo "Alfred" Santamaria, Darling Rozo, et al.	Aug. 11, 2016	CASE CLOSED

Allegation(s):

Date: 12/4/18

Allegations of widespread financial reporting irregularities were leveled against the Santamaria for Miami-Dade County Mayor political campaign, including but not limited to possible illegal donations from foreign nationals, illegal expenditures on behalf of the campaign by a political committee, illegal proxy contributors, money laundering and misappropriation of funds.

As a result of the above, a joint investigation was initiated by the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office (SAO) and the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE) into the Santamaria campaign, its officers, employees and confederates.

The investigation was conducted jointly at the request of SAO after attorney J.C. Planas filed concurrent complaints with both agencies. COE has limited jurisdiction with respect to campaign finance matters, but assists other enforcement agencies upon request.

Relevant Ordinances:

Florida Statute 106.08 – titled *Contributions; limitations on* – states in applicable part that "... [N]o person or political committee may, in any election, make contributions in excess of the following amounts ... a candidate for countywide office or in any election conducted on less than a countywide basis; or a candidate for county court judge or circuit judge, \$1,000."

Florida Statute 106.011, relating to *Campaign Financing*, defines a political contribution as a "distribution of money or anything of value, including contributions in kind having an attributable monetary value in any form, made for the purpose of influencing the results of an election." The statute further requires that "independent expenditures" made by a political committee in the

furtherance of a campaign not be controlled by, coordinate with, or made upon consultation with any political campaign, its candidate or any agent of the campaign.

Florida Statute 106.19 – titled *Violations by candidates, persons connected with campaigns, and political committees* – states it is a violation of Chapter 106 for any candidate or agent of a political campaign to knowingly and willfully accept a contribution in excess of the proscribed limit, to make or authorize any such expenditure in excess of this limit, or to fail to report or falsely report any such contribution or expenditure made in excess of \$1,000.

Investigation:

Interviews

On August 11, 2016, attorney J.C. Planas was interviewed by this writer and Investigator Michael D'Ambrosia of the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office (SAO) public corruption task force, along with Tim Vandergeisen, chief of the SAO Public Corruption Unit.

During that meeting, Planas advised that he had filed a formal complaint against the Alfred Santamaria campaign with the Florida Elections Commission (FEC), but that he felt that criminal misconduct occurred as well as violations of campaign finance law. He alleged, among other things, that fundraisers had been held in Bogota, Colombia.

Notes from this meeting were kept by SAO Investigator D'Ambrosia.

On August 18, 2016, Nelson Hincapie, a Colombian national and Miami-Dade County employee, alleged he was aware of possible violations by the Santamaria political campaign. He further advised that he had filed a complaint with the FEC. He said he was advised by attorney Planas during this process, but that his complaint was a separate complaint. He indicated he felt Santamaria's platform was distasteful and xenophobic (anti-Cuban).

Notes from this meeting were kept by SAO Investigator D'Ambrosia.

On Sept. 7, 2016, this investigator met with a witness with information relevant to this investigation who wishes to remain anonymous. This witness advised that he had been engaged with the Carlos Gimenez for Miami-Dade Mayor campaign.

The witness advised he had observed numerous political signs and billboards for the Santamaria political campaign featuring the candidate and his punch number and the words "vote" or "vote for" that lacked a political disclaimer and/or were paid for by a Political Committee linked to the Santamaria political campaign in apparent violation of state law. He advised having seen billboards at the following locations: Ponce de Leon Ave. and SW 8th Street; Bird Road and SW 72nd Street; and off the Palmetto Expressway near Doral.

The witness also alleged that a deputy treasurer for the Santamaria political campaign, Darling Rozo, and others may have been involved in various transactions involving straw contributors to the campaign. It was alleged that a church and the New Leadership PC may have been used as part of the scheme.

The witness pointed out that according to state Division of Elections records, the PC's expenditures of \$200,542.64 exceeded its contributions of \$192,922.18 on Aug. 5, 2016 (an apparent violation on its face).

This interview was extensive and notes from this meeting are contained in the investigative file in this matter.

Fernando Gambirazio, property manager (American Airlines Arena)
Pritchard Sports & Entertainment Group
Sept. 23, 2016

Investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross met with Mr. Gambirazio at the American Airlines Arena, and advised him as to the purpose of the visit – to obtain information about the approximately 200 Miami Marlins baseball game tickets that were allegedly delivered by an employee of Pritchard to the Alfred Santamaria for mayor campaign on or about July 24.

Mr. Gambirazio said he had no personal knowledge about the tickets, but suggested speaking to Gerardo Lopez, regional manager of Pritchard, whom he said could be found at the Marlins Park office.

Mr. Gambirazio said other Pritchard employees who might have knowledge about the matter included Greg Mitchell, the property manager at Marlins Park, and Erica Campos, the office manager for the Marlins Park office.

Investigators departed for Marlins Park where they conducted interviews, first, with Ms. Campos, and then with her supervisor and regional manager, Mr. Lopez.

Ms. Campos advised that she received a block of tickets from the Marlins prior to the July 26 game against the Philadelphia Phillies, and that this block was smaller than the 500-700 the firm usually receives. She said the tickets are distributed among staff at Marlins Park and also the

American Airlines Arena. She said employees typically get 4 tickets a piece, but that since they were more limited this time around (462, according to the Marlins), she posted note for employees to request tickets. She said that many tickets were left over, and that her manager, Mr. Lopez, asked whether he could give them to Alfred Santamaria.

Ms. Campos said she was aware that Mr. Lopez and candidate Santamaria were friends, and that Campos' wife was a Colombian national. She said she gave the remaining stack of tickets to Campos for distribution to the Santamaria campaign about two days prior to the game. "He said, 'Give them to me and I'll take care of them,'" she said she recalled Lopez saying.

Ms. Campos said she was aware the Santamaria supporters were at the game because instead of cheering for the Marlins they were chanting Santamaria campaign slogans.

Ms. Campos then directed investigators to the office of Mr. Lopez, where he advised as follows: Mr. Lopez said he knows Alfred Santamaria through a church organization, and that Alfred Santamaria will visit other churches, as he did to Lopez's own church.

Mr. Lopez said he further knows Santamaria through his wife, who attended school with Santamaria some 20 years ago. He said he has attended several Santamaria for mayor political events, including a fundraiser at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables and a July gathering at a Brickell area restaurant. While there he said he told one of Santamaria's campaign workers that he could provide Marlins ticket to the campaign and that they could be distributed at an upcoming "rally" or caravan that was supposed to travel around the county. He said he could not recall the individual's name but thought he could be Santamaria's brother since they were roughly the same age. (Note: It is suspected this could be Gus Lainette, a chief fundraiser.)

Mr. Lopez said he eventually gave the tickets to a female campaign worker – or "captain" – but said that he could not recall her name either. He described her as an English-speaking white woman with brown hair. He said she was not heavy set or overweight.

Asked how many tickets were distributed, Mr. Lopez said he could not say for sure, but described it as a "stack" of tickets several inches thick. Ms. Campos, who was present during the interview, said she believed it was more than 100 tickets and fewer than 200 tickets.

Yamilka Barzaga Aleman
8075 NW 7th Street, Apt. 421
Miami, FL 33126
Oct. 4, 2016

During a sworn statement at Miami-Dade SAO, Ms. Barzaga appeared with attorney Anthony Gonzalez, who it was later revealed was representing the Alfred Santamaria political campaign in addition to Ms. Barzaga. Barzaga appeared pursuant to an SAO subpoena. She was advised of her rights and obligations pursuant to said subpoena by ASA Sandra Miller-Batiste.

Ms. Barzaga stated she worked as a server at Ocean's Ten/ South Beach, located at 960 Ocean Drive, and that she worked from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. She advised that she made a large cash deposit before going to work at the Miami Beach ATM on or about July 23, 2016.

She said that she recalled deposited approximately \$3,000 from cash tips she had accumulated over the past month or more. She said she gets paid through an automatic service charge on electronic transactions, and that she receives those in her paycheck. However, she said she also receives cash tips when customers pay their bills in cash. She said that during the slow season – which includes the summer months – she typically makes about \$100 a day in cash.

“I think it was a \$3,000 deposit that day. It was my money from my tips.”

Ms. Barzaga stated she makes all deposits to her Washington Mutual account ending in #2979, even though her mother’s name is also on the account. She said her mother’s name was added to the account in case of emergency and something happens to her. She said she typically deposits her pay checks by cell phone. She said she previously had a bank account with her ex-husband but said that account is no longer active.

Ms. Barzaga estimated she earns between \$4,000 and \$5,000 a month and said all of her income is derived from her job as a server. She said she currently has a balance of about \$2,000 in her checking account and about \$6,000 in a savings account. She advised she has two Discover Network credit cards, plus cards with Citi Bank and Bank of America. She estimated her present debt level on those cards as roughly \$10,000.

Ms. Barzaga said she also keeps about \$1,000 to \$2,000 in cash around her home, the source of which is her weekly cash tips of about \$500.

Ms. Barzaga stated that she reports all her income and reported about \$65,000 last year on her federal income tax return. She said that she was advised by her accountant – whose full name she could not recall, only his nickname “Pepe” – that since she was a single woman without any dependents that she should consider making charitable contributions to reduce her tax burden. She said that the accountant also suggested she could accomplish this by making contributions to political campaigns. During follow-up questioning, Barzaga retracted this statement, claiming instead that she got this idea from talking to co-workers, though she was unable to identify any by name. She also claimed she researched the matter on Google.

Ms. Barzaga stated she became interested in the Alfred Santamaria mayoral campaign after listening to a radio interview on a Spanish-language program she identified as “Good Morning America.” She said she found him appealing because he was a “young candidate” and had “fresh new ideas” about how to help the county to “move forward.” She said she felt he had good ideas to combat homelessness and drug addiction, among other things. She said she also had a friend at work, MILENY CRUZ, who was also supportive of Santamaria.

She said she has never met Santamaria but felt motivated to make monetary contributions to his campaign. She said that wrote out checks for \$1,000 each to the Santamaria for Mayor campaign and to New Leadership PC. She said she did this on her own and was unaware that the maximum legal limit for political contributions to the campaign was \$1,000.

She said she wrote the checks prior to visiting the campaign office in Doral off of NW 25th Street, adding that the office was near her home. She said she didn’t recall the names of anybody

she met at the office, except that she dealt with a tall man who was either Venezuelan or Colombian. She could not recall when exactly she visited the campaign office – whether it was before or after the date on the checks, 7/23/16 – except that it wasn't on that date.

Ms. Barzaga estimated her monthly expenses as about \$1,500 for rent, \$200 or less for utilities (she has no cable), a \$600 monthly payment for her car (an Acura), and \$300 to \$500 for payments on her \$10,000 in credit card debt, along with other ordinary expenses – totaling somewhere more than \$3,000 a month. She said her mother pays her car insurance. She further advised that her brother and his wife arrived from Cuba in July, and that they now share her apartment and help with the rent and other utilities.

Notes from sworn statements with the following witnesses were prepared by SAO Investigator Michael D'Ambrosia, and will be added to the file when available:

- Fabio Florez, campaign donor and volunteer
- Paola Barrios, campaign donor
- Marly Gomez, campaign donor and paid volunteer
- Eric Gomez, campaign donor
- Carlos Galvan Vergara, campaign donor

Maria del Carmen Lopez, campaign donor

Sworn statement at Miami SAO

Email: marialopespr@hotmail.com

Oct. 13, 2016

Ms. Lopez appeared at the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office to provide a sworn statement after having been served a subpoena at her home. She was accompanied by Anthony Gonzalez, attorney for the Alfred Santamaria political campaign, and she granted Gonzalez a conflict waiver after being advised by Assistant State Attorney Sandra Miller-Batiste that a potential conflict existed. She was advised of her rights under the witness subpoena, and stated she understood that she could be charged with perjury if she failed to be truthful.

Ms. Lopez advised that she is a native of Puerto Rico, and for the past 11 years has worked at Oriental Pensions, located at 1900 NW Corporate Blvd, Suite 400W, in Boca Raton, FL. She said she is a 401K plan administrator and many of her clients are in Puerto Rico.

She said she speaks both English and Spanish in her workplace but requested a Spanish-language interpreter for the statement. She said she was aware that she was going to be questioned about her role in the Alfred Santamaria political campaign. She said she contacted Darling Rozo after being served with a subpoena and the campaign put her in touch with Gonzalez. She provided Rozo's phone number as (786) 283-1722, adding that she met with Rozo at the MyPan Ministry, located at 8181 NW 36th Street in Doral to discuss the matter. Ms. Lopez stated that the ministry is run by Leonor Santamaria.

Ms. Lopez said she is a registered voter in Broward County, but did not vote in the most recent

election. She said she lives with her son, Jose Gonzalez, and husband, Manuel Cerna. With respect to her banking information, Lopez said she has a checking and savings account at Bank of America and no other accounts. She said he husband was added to her account after they were married earlier in the year (April 24). She said she filed an individual return with the IRS for 2015 since she was single at the time and reported \$66,000 in earnings. She said she has her check electronically deposited into her account and has no outside employment.

Ms. Lopez said the average combined balance in her accounts varies from between \$3,000 to \$5,000, with about \$1,000 to \$2,000 in savings and the rest in her checking account. She said her husband is a pool cleaner with Blue Coast and makes \$2,500 to \$3,000 monthly. She reported their combined household income of about \$6,000 per month. She said she owes about \$10,000 in credit card debt to Visa, Master Card, and Coals. She reported that she kept some cash around the house and presently had about \$500 cash at home. She said that she has not transferred money from savings to cover shortfalls recently and had no overdrafts.

Ms. Lopez advised that she knows Alfred Santamaria through the MyPan Ministry, where he is an instructor in the bible study class. She said Leonor Santamaria is also an instructor. She said she was familiar with the New Leadership Political Committee, describing it as "a movement." She said Darling Rozo works as an administrator at MyPan. She said that about 100 people belong to the ministry and that most classes are attended by at least 50 people. She said she knows Marly Gomez and Gloria Cintron through the ministry as well.

Ms. Lopez stated she was aware of the Marlins tickets being distributed to Santamaria for Mayor followers but said she did not attend the game. She said she learned about the game through Instagram and following social media. Lopez stated that Alfred Santamaria ran the New Leadership PC and that he was "the one who formed it" and chief "organizer."

Ms. Lopez advised that she did make a \$1,000 donation to the Alfred Santamaria campaign, as well as a \$3,000 donation to the New Leadership PC. She denied that anybody associated with either entity gave her money to reimburse her for these contributions. She said she made the contributions because she wanted to support Santamaria's political aspirations. Lopez claimed she had approximately \$8,000 in cash at her home, and that she deposited some of this cash into her bank account prior to making the political contributions cited above.

She claimed she kept the cash in the top drawer of her nightstand next to her bed, on the left side where she sleeps. She said her home does not have burglar bars or extra security. She said she feels her neighborhood is safe and is not aware of any break-ins or other crime.

Ms. Lopez claimed that between \$2,500 and \$3,000 of this cash came from the sale of her car earlier in the year (February or March), and that her brother, Jose Antonio Lopez, helped her find a buyer. She said she never met the buyer and that her brother gave her the cash, which she then kept at home along with the other cash totaling \$8,000. She said her brother lives somewhere in Opa-locka in the vicinity of NW 22nd Ave. and about NW 90th Street.

Asked about where she got the remainder of the money from, Lopez stated that she was confused about the amount and asked to speak privately with attorney Gonzalez. Upon returning to the conference room, Lopez advised that the balance of the \$8,000 was money she received from

her mother but stated that she would like her mother to be left alone and not involved in the investigation. She said her mother is retired and lives in Puerto Rico, the Cupey section of Rio Piedras in the Sagrado Corazon neighborhood.

Lopez provided her mother's address as being 1704 Santa Eduvigis Street, adding that she was renting her home for about \$600 a month and lives with another daughter, who sells "organic products." She said her mother – Maria del Carmen Maldonado – worked for a health insurance company, MAPHRE, and has been retired for a year and a half. She said that her mother gave her \$4,000 earlier this year; her mother's DOB is Oct. 28, 1946.

Ms. Lopez stated that following her wedding on April 24, her mother gave her \$2,000 in cash when visiting Florida, and that she later sent her a check for \$2,000. She said the cash was used to pay wedding expenses, and that the check was cashed and that the proceeds were used to help pay for the campaign contributions. She said she cashed the check at her bank. She said her mother has given her money on "many" occasions, and that her mother draws the funds from her retirement savings several times a year, including twice this year totaling \$4,000.

Ms. Lopez said her wedding expenses were roughly \$5,000 and that her mother gave her the cash sometime after the wedding, in late April or May of this year. She said she got married at a park near Las Olas Boulevard in Ft. Lauderdale, then had a reception at a banquet hall in Hialeah. She said she was nervous and could not recall the name of the banquet hall.

Gloria Cintron, campaign donor and paid worker, DOB 03/28/1959

Sworn statement at Miami SAO with attorney Anthony Gonzalez

Oct. 13, 2016

Ms. Cintron appeared at the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office to provide a sworn statement after having been served a subpoena at her home. She was accompanied by Anthony Gonzalez, attorney for the Alfred Santamaria political campaign, and she granted Gonzalez a conflict waiver after being advised by Assistant State Attorney Sandra Miller-Batiste that a potential conflict existed. She was advised of her rights under the witness subpoena, and stated she understood that she could be charged with perjury if she failed to be truthful.

Ms. Cintron advised she worked for the Alfred Santamaria for Mayor campaign from about October 2015 through January 2016, for a total of four months. She said she left to travel to Panama to help take care of her father, who was recovering from prostate surgery.

Ms. Cintron said that she was with her father for 20 days and that when she returned her job responsibilities with the campaign had been given to someone else and that she did not return to work there. She described herself as a housewife, noting that her husband worked for the U.S. Embassy in Colombia. She said she also did housekeeping until about 2012. She said she lives with her son, Julio Enrique Carranza, DOB 08/11/1979, and that he helps out financially.

Ms. Cintron said she was paid \$681 a week to perform a number of tasks for the campaign. She said these included making phone calls, marketing and promotion, fundraising. She mentioned that she had organized an event at Ajiacos restaurant in Doral. She said she was paid with checks

from the campaign but later said she was sometimes paid in cash. She said she was paid by the campaign treasurer but could not provide her name. She described the woman as a white, heavyset woman, but did not identify her by name – possibly Rozo.

Ms. Cintron said that she and her husband have their primary banking account with Chase, but that she has a personal account with Wells Fargo with a small balance, perhaps \$25.

She said that previously, when she worked as a housekeeper, she had an account with BB&T, but that she closed that. She later recalled she opened the Wells Fargo account earlier this year. She could not say what exactly the purpose of that account was or what activity might have taken place, though she later confirmed that a \$1,000 campaign contribution to the Alfred Santamaria campaign had been drawn on that account. She advised she knows Alfred Santamaria but did not attend the Marlins baseball game used as a campaign event.

Ms. Cintron said she would often save \$100 from each paycheck and withdraw it from her account, and that she kept this money at her home. She said she was saving the funds to help her father in Panama, but that once she had saved \$1,000 she decided to donate the money to the Santamaria campaign instead. She insisted the money was hers and that no one associated with the Santamaria campaign reimbursed her for the donation. She did say she got a refund check from the campaign for \$950 after making a \$1,000 contribution in the form of a money order. She said she was told the money order was not acceptable and the funds were returned, except for \$50. (Note: She did not state this, but the legal limit for cash contributions is \$50.) She said she later deposited the check from the campaign and made another contribution on a personal check (Wells Fargo account) for \$950 for a total of \$1,000.

Ms. Cintron was asked about a payment for approximately \$10,000 she received in connection with the Santamaria campaign, and advised that the campaign – not the New Leadership PC – paid her \$10,990 on or about February 21, 2016, and that she cashed the check. She said the proceeds were used to pay for a political event she organized at the Ajiaco restaurant. She said she did not recall who gave her the check and could not name anybody she allegedly paid with the proceeds – except to say she paid the restaurant for the rental and for food, security, marketing and other expenses and that she paid the staff, in cash, on behalf of the campaign. She said that cash receipts were given to the recipients of the funds, but said she had no idea where the ledger might be except to say the campaign must have it somewhere.

Ms. Cintron said Alfred Santamaria was present at the event but could not name any other attendees except for deputy treasurer Darling Rozo. She said she could not describe the nature of the event – i.e., whether it was a fundraiser or had some other purpose, except to say it was for the campaign. She said she received the check “from the people in charge.”

Ms. Cintron was asked to identify several photographs and did positively identify Alfred Santamaria and members of his family, along with Marly Gomez. She said she knew Gomez from the MyPan Ministry, located at 8181 NW 36th Street in Doral. (Note: Cintron was observed by investigators entering MyPan the following day at 12:40 p.m. Investigators also observed Jose Ramon Santamaria inside MyPan at approximately the same time.)

Maite De Sa Martins, manager

Parillada Familiar Da Silva
10720 NW 58th Street, Doral, FL
Oct. 14, 2016

Ms. De Sa Martins met with investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross, who responded to the above location in search of Ajiacos Restaurant. She advised she was the manager of Parillada Familiar Da Silva, and that Ajiacos closed sometime last September (2015).

She said that since that time, there has been only one political event at the location, and that was for Doral Mayor Luigi Boria. She said the business was so bad on that occasion that the restaurant has adopted a policy not to allow further political events. She was shown a picture of Alfred Santamaria and stated she did not recognize him as a customer.

De Sa Martins said the new management is unrelated to the previous management. She was asked whether the Ajiacos in West Hallandale was related to the previous Ajiacos at the Doral location and she said she did not know. A call was made to the Hallandale location at (954) 455-2722, and a restaurant employee said there was no known affiliation.

Gisell Rodriguez Bolanos, campaign donor
Alfred Santamaria for Mayor Campaign
Sworn statement at Miami-Dade SAO
Oct. 18, 2016

Ms. Rodriguez appeared for a sworn statement in the company of attorney Anthony Gonzalez of the Santamaria for Mayor Campaign. She advised that she waived any conflict of interest, and that she understood the penalty for perjury during the statement.

She stated she resides at 15661 SW 104th Ter. Apt. 3212, Miami, FL, 33196, together with her husband, Carlos Galvan. They have lived there for a year and a half, she said. She provided her personal identifiers, including DOB 06/23/1985 and SSN 730-07-9218. She stated she is a native of Bogota, Colombia, and has lived in the U.S. for 10 years and is a U.S. citizen. She stated she is a registered voter and did vote in the previous Miami-Dade election.

She said she works for Deluxe Freight, a Doral-Medley area import-export firm, and has been there two years. She provided a phone number, (305) 516-0156. She earns \$13 an hour. She previously worked for another import-export firm, Cargo Logistics in Miami, she said.

Ms. Rodriguez stated she has a checking and savings account at Bank of America, and that the savings account presently has a balance of \$7,500 while the checking account has a balance of \$400 to \$500. She said she is very good at saving and managing money. She has a Visa card with a balance of about \$3,500, and a MasterCard with a balance of about \$1,200. She advised she also keeps large sums of cash at home, sometimes as much as \$5,000 to \$6,000. She said that she presently has about \$500 at home, which she keeps for trips and emergencies.

She stated that she did make a \$1,000 political donation to the Alfred Santamaria campaign, and that she got the money from a cash hoard she keeps at home.

She said she made the donation in the form of a money order and gave it to Darling Ruiz at the campaign office, which she described as a small office near International Mall on about NW 106th Avenue and 29th or 30th Street. She said decided to give that amount because that was the amount she had available and because it was a round number. She said she did not know that \$1,000 happened to be the legal limit for a political campaign contribution.

Ms. Rodriguez said she took the \$1,000 cash from her home to Publix and had it converted into one or two money orders. She said she didn't simply write a check because she misplaced her check book, though she said she found it a few days later. She said that the two checks for \$500 presented to her by investigators may have been the instruments used to make the political contribution. She said the signature on the money order ending in No. 48 didn't look like her signature, though she felt the other signature on No. 49 was her signature.

She said that sometime after she made the \$1,000 contribution she was notified that she should go to the office and get a refund from Darling because the amount exceeded the legal limit for cash contributions of \$50. She said she met with Darling and received a check for \$950, which she then deposited in her checking account and used the funds to replace the original contribution by writing a check for \$950 for the political campaign. She advised that she was able to make such a generous donation because her husband pays most of the couple's monthly expenses, and that they have a combined income of about \$5,000 a month.

Ms. Rodriguez was shown photographs of a number of people associated with the campaign, and correctly identified Darling Ruiz, aka Rozo, among others. She also correctly identified members of the Santamaria family that she said she knew from family gatherings. She further identified Marly Gomez and said that she was her sister in law.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she was not coached about what questions to expect or how to answer questions, and that she was not directed to lie to investigators. She said she did not discuss the matter with her husband, even though he gave a statement prior to her.

Patricia Paez, campaign donor
Alfred Santamaria for Mayor Campaign
483 SW 103 Ave., Pembroke Pines, FL
Sworn statement at Miami-Dade SAO
Oct. 18, 2016

Ms. Paez appeared for a sworn statement in the company of attorney Anthony Gonzalez of the Alfred Santamaria for Mayor Campaign. She advised that she waived any conflict of interest, and that she understood the penalty for perjury during the statement. She said she was not coached about how to answer questions and that she was not instructed to lie.

She stated she was aware that she had been issued a subpoena because of an investigation into campaign donations. She stated she lives at the above address with Gustavo Lainette, a campaign associate and friend of the candidate. She said she and Lainette have two children and that they are not married. She stated that she is not a registered voter.

Ms. Paez advised that she works as an assistant teacher earning a little more than \$10 an hour at Hawks Bluff Elementary School in Davie. She said she is originally from Puerto de la Cruz, Venezuela. She said her reported income during 2015 was about \$15,000 and that she gets \$300 monthly in food stamps. She said she has two bank accounts at TD Bank that she opened at the Pembroke Pines branch office. She said she has no credit cards and a combined balance of less than \$250.

She said that she receives her pay from Broward County Schools as a direct deposit, but that Lainette also makes regular deposits into her account. She said she did not have any other source of income until recently, when she started selling bathing suits online. She said she receives between \$1,500 and \$2,000 in assistance from Lainette each month. She said she reports this income when she renews her application for food stamps every six months.

Ms. Paez stated she keeps a box of cash at her home in her bedroom, and volunteered that it presently has more than \$1,000 saved up in this fashion. She said, "I put it there and forget about it." She said she uses the money for travel and emergencies.

She stated that Lainette has known Alfred Santamaria "for years" and that Lainette knows a lot of people because "he does events" and owned a restaurant. She said she hates politics. She said she was not aware of a Santamaria campaign event at Marlins Park. She said she did not do any work for the Santamaria campaign, and only attended one campaign event – a fundraiser at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables. She said she did make a \$1,000 contribution to the campaign at the request of Lainette and that she used the home cash savings.

Asked to explain how she made the donation, she said: "First, I did give \$1,000 in cash because I didn't know the limit was \$50 ... I did it because Gus said, 'Just give it to the campaign.'" She said she did not argue with him over donating such a large amount. She said she took the money to Wells Fargo and filled out a deposit ticket for \$1,000 in cash.

She said she got the Santamaria account number from Lainette, but that Lainette was not there at the time she made the deposit. She said she was there with only her children. She said she later received a partial refund in the amount of \$950 from the campaign, and that she deposited those funds in her personal account, which she then used to write a check to the campaign for the same amount to complete the \$1,000 she said she intended to donate.

Ms. Paez said she hoped to get the money she donated back, but later stated that she was not expecting to be reimbursed by Lainette or anybody else associated with the campaign. She said she meant to imply she would replenish it with her own savings from her job as a teaching assistant. (She was not selling bathing suits at that time.) She said her take-home is about \$650 per pay period, and that she would set aside money she got from asking for cash back at points of purchase during her day-to-day business.

With respect to her expenses, Ms. Paez said she has a \$300 car payment on her Nissan Sentra, gives her mother \$60 a month for car insurance, plus pays \$133 a month for her daughter's dance classes at the Dance Theater in Davie. She said Lainette pays the \$1,800 monthly rent, electric bill, groceries and other household expenses. She said she has worked at Hawks Bluff since

November 2015, and prior to that she worked at Little Hands Learning Academy, where she also earned approximately \$10 an hour. She said she has health insurance through Broward County Schools. She said she and Lainette have been living together continuously since 2014 after breaking up prior to that time.

Ms. Paez advised she was not a member of the Santamaria's family church and was not familiar with the MyPan ministry. She said Lainette is self-employed.

Jacklyn Lanuza, administrator
Ocean's Ten, 960 Ocean Drive
Miami Beach, FL
Oct. 24, 2016

In a follow-up interview seeking clarification on subpoena return items concerning Yamilka Barzaga Aleman (Barzaga), Ms. Lanuza advised as follows:

Lanuza stated that all her tips (whether the check was paid with a credit card or in cash) were paid out in her weekly pay check. In other words, there were no cash proceeds that were divvied up by employees at the end of the night. That is why she seemed so worried that we would probably want to speak to her co-worker, Mileny Cruz – the one whose apartment we attempted to visit at 750 Jefferson Ave. and who also donated to New Leadership PC.

Based on the records, it appears Yamilka was truthful to the extent that she earned roughly \$64,000 in 2015. However, the four-page spread sheet provided by Ocean's Ten and the interview with Lanuza reveal that she received all her money from her employer in the form of a check. Again, there was no cash and hence no cash hoard.

The spreadsheet breaks down her earnings from Jan. 1, 2015, through Oct. 13, 2016. That's why the Grand Totals at the end of the spreadsheet are more than the \$64,248 shown in her W-2 form for 2015. Her earnings were comprised of a "Service Charge" (the server gets 9% of the 20% automatically charged each customer), and the "Tips In" are any tips in excess of the 20% standard service charge. Those amounts (for Tips In) roughly correlate with what Barzaga was trying to tell us she was receiving in cash, but as Lanuza explained: This was not paid out in cash but included in her weekly pay checks. In 2015, she did not receive any hourly wages, but all her income was in the form of services charges/ tips.

Marlon Tavera, account executive
Miami Advertising Agency Inc.
Nov. 18, 2016

Mr. Tavera was interviewed at his home by investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross. He advised that he did broker the purchase of three billboards with Clear Channel Outdoor for the Alfred Santamaria political campaign on or about July 2016. He said he got involved after receiving a call from Jairo Avellaneda, president of Marketing Global Brands Corp. (MGB) and that Avellaneda is a long-time customer. Tavera said Avellaneda told him he wanted "to donate a

billboard for the campaign of Alfred Santamaria.” He said that by such he understood Avellaneda was referring to the Santamaria for Miami-Dade County Mayor campaign. He said that Avellaneda explained to him that he wanted the donation to be in the form of an in-kind contribution and that Tavera should pay for the billboard(s) with funds MGB had already deposited on account.

Mr. Tavera advised that he subsequently received an email from Jesse Diaz, account manager at Clear Channel, advising him that the maximum allowable donation for a political campaign was \$1,000, unless the donation was made through a political action committee (PAC). He confirmed that an email to this effect dated June 24, 2016, was the email in question.

Mr. Tavera stated that after receiving this email, he called Alfred Santamaria on his cell phone, and shared his concern about exceeding the legal limit of \$1,000. He said that Santamaria assured him that it was okay, stating something to the effect of “I am a PAC or I have a PAC, so don’t worry about that. We don’t have a problem.” He said he contacted Santamaria at either one of two numbers he has for him, (786) 287-3876 or (786) 382-3135.

Mr. Tavera said he paid Clear Channel using a Miami Advertising Agency company check in the amount of \$17,100, but added the funds were provided by Avellenda/ MGB. He said he typically kept a 15 percent commission for such ad buys, meaning the total value of the in-kind donation would have been approximately \$20,000. He said he was not aware of anything that would have increased the value of the transaction to the reported \$30,000 (as reported to the Florida Division of Elections in the New Leadership PC contribution/ expenditures).

Note: The invoice(s) for the \$17,100 consist of payments in the amounts of \$7,000, \$4,000 and \$4,000 for the three billboards and another \$2,100 in production costs for the billboards. The “vinyls” for the ads were produced by a vendor in Chattanooga, TN, records show.

Mr. Tavera stated the same art work was used for all three billboards, and he allowed investigators to take a photo of the artwork used for the billboards, which stated: “#Santamaria for Mayor of Miami-Dade” and “Vote 126.” (Note that this version was later revised and that the “Vote 126” was removed from the billboards and the “#Santamaria for Mayor of Miami-Dade” remained along with a tag stating: “Early Voting Aug. 15 to 28” (see ad).

Mario Di Giovanni, junior consultant
Newlink Political Consultants LLC
1111 Brickell Ave., Suite 1350, Miami, FL
Dec. 7, 2016

Mr. Di Giovanni said the objective of the political consulting arrangement with New Leadership PC/ Alfred Santamaria was to promote Santamaria’s candidacy for Miami-Dade County mayor and not to work on any agenda unrelated to this objective.

He said he worked directly with Santamaria and members of his campaign staff to increase Santamaria’s visibility on social media, to help him develop a message that would resonate with voters through focus groups, and to prepare for fundraisers and other events.

Di Giovanni said typically he would receive photos and information from campaign events from members of Santamaria's staff, including Darling Rozo, Carlos Cabezas, Paola Barrios, and a woman named Alejandra (possibly Alejandra Arrango of Good Sound). He said he would identify a message and post the images and other content on social media.

Di Giovanni said he had a lot of interaction with Darling Rozo but said that Barrios oversaw campaign volunteers and recalled that Arrango was supposed to develop campaign videos, though he did not get a chance to see them. He said he was aware of at least one radio advertisement that her company provided for the campaign. He said another campaign worker, Tony Miyar, left the campaign for reasons unknown to him.

He said to the extent he was aware of New Leadership PC, it seemed to him that it involved the same people as those working for and supporting the Santamaria mayoral campaign. He said he was not involved in promoting a separate agenda exclusive to New Leadership.

Di Giovanni said he recalled meeting Jose Santamaria one time – during a focus group – and that the elder Santamaria said very little and provided no input. He indicated he did not know that Santamaria was in charge of New Leadership and took no direction from him.

He said he only met Alfred Santamaria on a handful of occasions but did exchange emails with him such as the one on May 24, 2016, relating to a fundraising presentation. He said he mainly dealt with “lower-level” campaign staffers. He said Alfred Santamaria had more face time with his boss at Newlink, Mauricio De Vengochea. (He has since left the firm.)

Di Giovanni said he attended Santamaria's kick-off event at the Biltmore Hotel at the invitation of a friend, but that this pre-dated his involvement with the campaign. He said he saw Santamaria as an attractive candidate to younger voters. He said that Santamaria's key demographic seemed to be self-identified “Christians” between 35 and 55 years old.

He said that even though Santamaria had never run for public office, he seemed to have ample political experience and knew what was required to run for elected office.

He reviewed an internal spreadsheet showing Newlink incurred approximately \$65,000 in expenses on behalf of the Santamaria political campaign and verified many of the items reflecting activity from focus groups, to Web design (The Brains Bunch), to social media, all intended to promote the candidacy of the Santamaria mayoral campaign.

Di Giovanni noted that sometime prior to the end of the campaign – about two months, he said – he was informed by his supervisor that he should suspend his efforts on behalf of the campaign. He said he did not ask for an explanation as to why this happened.

Gabriel Losada, clean-energy executive and donor to New Leadership PC
220 Cypress Road, Key Biscayne, FL
Jan. 12, 2017

SAO Investigator D'Ambrosia and COE Investigator Ross visited the home of Mr. Losada at about 10 a.m. and questioned him about his \$50,000 contribution to New Leadership PC in early

2016. He confirmed he made the donation through his company (D&P International), stating he wanted to help a fellow Colombian national who was seeking elected office. He said Santamaria told him he was starting a "political movement" that would support his campaign for mayor. He said that, like Santamaria, he is a native of Baranquilla, Colombia.

Mr. Losada said he met Santamaria through a childhood friend, Carlos Visbal, and that Santamaria visited his home on two or three occasions to discuss his political ambitions. He said he felt the money was going to be used to support Santamaria's bid for Miami-Dade County mayor. He said he does not know the intricacies of campaign finance laws.

Mr. Losada said his company is based in Colombia, but is seeking to establish a base of operations in the U.S. He said he presently has offices in Colombia, Panama, Miami and South Carolina. He said he authorized the payment of \$50,000 to Santamaria, and that his secretary issued the check or made an electronic funds transfer to a member of the Santamaria campaign team. Mr. Losada advised that he recently moved his Miami office to the Midtown area.

Mr. Losada stated that the funds he donated were his personal funds, from his company, and that he was not serving as an intermediary. He said he was not involved in any fund-raising activity outside of the U.S. for Santamaria or New Leadership PC.

Alberto Ibarra, CPA/ Pres. Alberto Ibarra P.A.

Alfred Santamaria Campaign Treasurer

New Leadership PC Treasurer

3750 NW 87th Ave., #520, Doral, FL

Feb. 1, 2017

Mr. Ibarra met with investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross, who responded to his office at about 9:45 a.m., and conducted a preliminary interview lasting until about 11 a.m.

Mr. Ibarra advised that he knew Alfred Santamaria prior to his decision to run for mayor, and that he served both the campaign and New Leadership PC as treasurer.

"When Alfred announced that he was running for mayor, I volunteered to be his treasurer. My idea was to keep him out of trouble ... to make it so that everything was transparent."

Mr. Ibarra acknowledged this was oftentimes a challenging endeavor, especially considering many of the same individuals operating the PAC were also involved with the campaign. He stressed that although he was an authorized signer on both accounts, he did not sign checks for either, noting that this was handled by other individuals close to Alfred Santamaria.

He said that Jose Ramon Santamaria, Alfred's father, served as chairman of the PAC and signed most of the checks, while Darling Rozo, whom he described as "the right-hand for Alfred Santamaria," served as deputy campaign treasurer and signed campaign checks. He noted that Rozo was also directly involved in the day-to-day affairs of the PAC.

He said that he usually received copies of invoices and other supporting records by email and

that an employee, Johana, handle the input duties for all contributions and expenditures.

He also cited his lack of experience with political campaigns as a source of confusion, stating: "This was my first rodeo ... I didn't know it was so complicated." He said he, Johana and Rozo attended a training session offered by the Miami-Dade Elections Department.

Mr. Ibarra said that the campaign opened its account with Wells Fargo, and that the PAC used Bank of America as its primary depository. He noted, however, that due to issues with fraud on the PAC account, the PAC opened a second account toward the end of the campaign.

With respect to any irregularities, Mr. Ibarra said he was not aware of any straw donor scheme to transfer funds from the PAC account to the Campaign. He did say, however, that he was concerned about large payments to Darling Rozo – i.e., \$15,000 approx. – shortly before the kick-off event at the Biltmore Hotel. He said he questioned members of the PAC but not Rozo about the purpose of such payments, but that he was told in that instance that it was for back pay owed Rozo for her services on behalf of the PAC and not related to the campaign. He said that he was forced to rely on their assurances and that a 1099 was issued to Rozo.

Mr. Ibarra also acknowledged that, among his other concerns, were events held to raise funds for the campaign during which cash contributions were accepted at the door. He said that he did not feel that it was appropriate because the amounts and the names of the donors could not be documented, and that he advised campaign organizers to stop this practice.

With respect to the pattern of cash contributions from suspected straw donors, he said: "The campaign got a lot of contributions in cash. I learned about this after the fact ... We had to return the money." He stated that Rozo kept the internal ledgers for the PAC.

Mr. Ibarra also noted the event at the Biltmore Hotel was very costly – costing "somewhere north of \$50,000" – and, upon questioning, acknowledged that funds from the PAC were used to help subsidize the event after it was pointed out the campaign only raised \$50,000 in total, and that it had not raised that amount prior to the Biltmore event in February 2016. He said that PAC funds were used to pay for certain professional services and entertainment.

Mr. Ibarra said that while he was not thoroughly versed in the complexities of campaign finance law, he did rely on legal advice from attorney Anthony Gonzalez. He said that Gonzalez was primarily a criminal law attorney, noting he represented Mike Pizzi.

He said he understood the purpose of the PAC was to support the Alfred Santamaria mayoral campaign. He said the PAC paid for, among other things, printing costs, T-shirts, the Biltmore event, along with payments to workers at this and other events. He said that, to the best of his knowledge, Alfred Santamaria authorized all such expenditures and that this often took place at what he called "the control tower meetings." He said these weekly gathering of the AS2016 campaign staff took place at the PAC offices and issues regarding the mayoral race were discussed, such as what the other candidates are doing, how to respond, what resources were available, GOTV (get out the vote). He said he did not regularly attend these meetings. He noted that Carlos Galvan, a close friend of Alfred Santamaria, was in charge of GOTV.

Mr. Ibarra stated that, with respect to the day-to-day affairs of the PAC and Campaign, "there were a lot of things that were co-mingled." He later said the funds were not co-mingled, but this was contradicted by his earlier statements they were used to pay for campaign items. He said he was not aware of any misappropriation of funds for personal use from either entity but stated that he did wonder about how Alfred Santamaria supported himself. He said that Galvan told him that Santamaria lived off his savings and financial support from his parents. He said that Santamaria and his family seemed to enjoy a lavish lifestyle. He said the parents lived in a very large home in the Kendall area, roughly 5,000 to 6,000 square feet in size. He said that most family members, including Alfred, drove luxury vehicles. He said that Alfred lived in the Brickell area prior to the campaign and his latest residence at Jade Condo.

He said that he met Alfred when he was working for former U.S. Rep. David Rivera, and that Alfred helped his son's school with some permitting issues. He said that he was not aware that Alfred earned only about \$27,000 in 2015, according to campaign filings. He said he was not aware of any issues involving credit card debts or other personal financial issues.

At the conclusion of the interview, Mr. Ibarra stated that he did not intentionally do anything improper but acknowledged he did not fully understand campaign finance rules concerning "independent expenditures" as they relate to PACs and political campaigns. He said that he would cooperate with the ongoing inquiry into presumed campaign finance violations.

Mr. Ibarra provided a sworn statement at the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office on April 5, 2017. The statement was tape-recorded, but the following was discussed:

- Mr. Ibarra affirmed under oath that the information he previously provided to investigators was truthful, to the best of his knowledge.
- Mr. Ibarra maintained his belief that the kick-off event at the Biltmore cost approximately \$50,000, comparing it to the expense of throwing a large wedding.
- Mr. Ibarra stated that Darling Rozo kept the books for NLPC and was the de facto treasurer for the campaign as well and that he relied on her for information.
- Mr. Ibarra stated that the Biltmore Hotel event was a marquee event for the campaign, stating: "It was the launching of the campaign. A lot of people were invited ... It set the tone for the campaign." He said that Alfred Santamaria was insistent that he wanted to hold his kick-off at the Biltmore, though the campaign had considered some less-expensive venues. "It was Alfred; he wanted to have it there. That was the event to let the world know he was going to be mayor of Miami-Dade County."
- Mr. Ibarra expressed there was concern about how to pay for the Biltmore event. He noted that there was money in the NLPC account, but that the campaign had not opened its official account and there were no contributions at the time. He said nearly all of the initial contributions came from members of MyPan, including one member (Gus Lainette) who had just lost his job and was worried about getting the \$1,000 in cash he deposited back. He said Lainette was one of several MyPan members whose initial contributions had to be returned because they were made in the form of cash or money order. He said these initial donations were the "seed money."
- Mr. Ibarra stated that he was aware that Leonor Linero/ Santamaria had used her personal

credit card to "hold" the reservation at the Biltmore, though he said he didn't know that the deposit had actually been charged to her personal account.

- Mr. Ibarra reiterated that he was surprised by the size of the payment to Rozo on Feb. 12 – over \$15,000 – and said he questioned Alfred Santamaria and Rozo because "I did have some suspicions." He said they told him the money was compensation to Rozo because she had worked so hard on the campaign and because she was in charge of organizing the Biltmore event. He said it "bothered" him because he, like many of the other campaign workers, were serving as volunteers.
- Mr. Ibarra said he was told the \$10,990 payment to Gloria Cintron was related to the Biltmore event. He said he did not know that she was closely associated with the MyPan ministry, and thought she was serving as an event planner. He said that Rozo and Alfred Santamaria showed him an invoice to this effect.
- Mr. Ibarra said that he and Rozo and Santamaria consulted attorney Anthony Gonzalez, and that Gonzalez advised them PAC funds could not be spent on the campaign kick-off at the Biltmore. He said that funds from the PAC were still spent on the event.
- He said the major expenses would have included alcohol, entertainment, food, invitations, telemarketing, and estimated a price tag of \$40,000 to \$50,000.
- He said he spoke to the director of the band, and was told the sound engineer was paid \$400, and that a couple of the musicians were also paid for their services. He said he was told that several of the musicians were friends, but that others had to be paid. He estimated that it would cost about \$300 per musician.
- Mr. Ibarra said he was aware of the Miami Marlins tickets being distributed in connection with a campaign road rally or "caravana." He said that Carlos Galvan – the GOTV director for the campaign – handed out a small number of tickets at a campaign meeting, but that Jose Ramon Santamaria suggested using the tickets to promote the upcoming road rally that started in Kendall and finished at Marlins Park.
- Mr. Ibarra was shown several photographs of individuals connected to the Santamaria campaign, and identified Gloria Cintron as a volunteer, but said he was not aware that she had any major responsibilities pertaining to the Biltmore event.
- He also recognized Marly Gomez and said he thought she was married to Carlos Galvan. He recognized the members of Santamaria's family and Rozo, as well.

Document/Audio/Video Review:

On Oct. 21, investigator Ross picked up subpoena return items at the administrative offices of Ocean's Ten restaurant and nightclub at 960 Ocean Drive from Jacklyn Lanuza and discussed the items. A follow-up call was made on Oct. 24 for additional clarification.

On Jan. 31, 2017, investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross went to the office of campaign treasurer Alberto Ibarra in Doral to attempt to interview him regarding the Santamaria campaign. He was not at work, according to an employee, who suggested we return the following day.

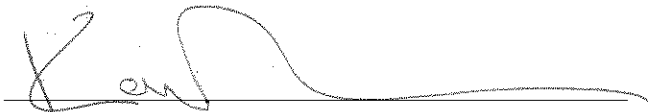
Investigators D'Ambrosia and Ross proceeded to the possible home of Kristina Lavina, a Santamaria campaign donor and suspected straw donor. An elderly resident at her home in western Miami-Dade County near FIU advised that she was out shopping with her mother. Investigators D'Ambrosia left a card and requested that she contact him.

Investigators then drove past the home of Darling Rozo to the south of FIU and observed that there were no cars in her driveway and that no one appeared to be home.

A draft arrest warrant was added to the file identifying other records obtained and reviewed in connection with this investigation, including but not limited to bank records for the Alfred Santamaria for Miami-Dade County Mayor Campaign, New Leadership PC, along with official campaign and electoral filings for each entity with the Miami-Dade Elections Department and Florida Division of Elections, along with records obtained pursuant to state subpoenas from numerous campaign vendors, as well as internal records provided by the Santamaria mayoral campaign and New Leadership PC and related parties.

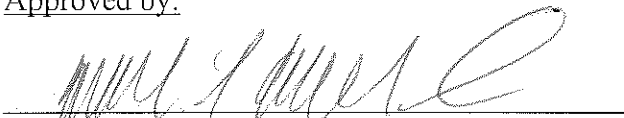
Conclusion(s):

After reviewing the findings contained in a draft arrest warrant for Alfred Santamaria and his assistant, Darling Rozo, the Miami-Dade State Attorneys' Office declined prosecution. COE was advised of this decision on August 13, 2018. Accordingly, this case will be closed by this agency as COE lacks jurisdiction over Chapter 106, Florida Statutes.

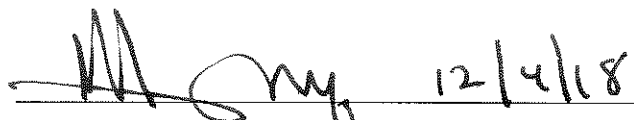


Karl Ross, COE Investigator

Approved by:



Michael Murawski, Advocate



Jose Arrojo, Executive Director