

Governor Rick Scott's 2014 State of the State Address



Guest Biographies

Ruthie Santiago, Teacher, Spady Elementary School, Palm Beach



After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012, this Spady Elementary School teacher said her students saved her life by supporting her and making her stronger, even when she returned to the classroom while still receiving treatments.

Ruthie's students made sure she would sit when teaching and they also helped her with simple chores around the classroom. But most of all, Ruthie's students made her laugh and constantly showered her with love.

Ruthie Santiago is still teaching and just celebrated her second anniversary of being cancer free.

Mrs. Rona Tata- Principal of Spady Elementary School, Palm Beach



In 2006 Rona became the assistant principal at a S.D. Spady Elementary School. Just this year, she became the principal when the 8th principal in the school's 103 year history retired.

When speaking about teacher Ruthie Santiago, Rona said, "Ruthie's fight brought a strong community together even stronger. Ruthie will tell you that thanks to good doctors, her husband and two children, and her Spady family, she is celebrating her second anniversary cancer free.

"Stories like Ruthie's and others make me proud to be the principal of Spady Elementary."

Jorge Santiago, Employee of O'Reilly Auto Parts, Lakeland



Jorge Martir moved to Florida from Puerto Rico in 2007 with his parents and his sister. The economy in Puerto Rico was hurting, and he couldn't find a good-paying job.

That all changed one day when he drove by a building under construction in Lakeland, Florida. That building would become O'Reilly Auto Parts, which just opened a distribution center and announced plans to hire 400 new workers.

Jorge Martir has worked in quality assurance at O'Reilly Auto Parts since November. Jorge says his new job is a dream-come-true. But he has more dreams to follow. Jorge wants to keep working his way into higher positions at O'Reilly. In fact, he was just promoted to Supervisor in Training, and he starts working in his new position on March 9th.

Freda Voltare – Employee, AT&T Florida, Miami



Freda Voltare immigrated to Miami from Haiti when she was eight-years-old. She attended public school in Miami and went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in international business from Florida State University.

Freda worked a few jobs after she graduated, but in 2012, both she and her husband were out of work.

She finally found a job in the bilingual sales department at AT&T, which recently announced their expansion and plans to hire 350 new workers.

Freda is more than an employee at AT&T. She is also the mother of two young boys – two and four years old. She said she wants her children to understand what it means to work hard; and that in America, if you work hard, you can live your dreams.

Jimbo Fisher, Head Football Coach, Florida State University



Hard work was a family value in the Clarksburg, West Virginia home where Jimbo Fisher was raised; the oldest son of a coal miner and a teacher. Applying those lessons instilled at an early age served Fisher well both athletically and professionally and ultimately delivered him to Florida State University, where he was elevated to head football coach on January 5, 2010.

Florida State is Fisher's first head coaching position and he led them to a 10–4 record during his first season. His inaugural year marked FSU's first 10-win season since 2003 and first appearance in the ACC Championship Game since 2005. In the 2012 season, he led the Seminoles to 12-2 record and victory at the Orange Bowl, followed by a 14-0 record and BCS National Championship for the 2013 season.

Jimbo Fisher and his wife, Candi, announced on Aug. 5, 2011 the creation of a new national fund, the Kidz 1st Fund, to fuel the quest for a cure for Fanconi anemia, a very rare life-threatening disorder that afflicts their son, Ethan, as well as many other children.

Sean Gilder, Employee, iSirona, a NantHealth Company



The stories of opportunity in Florida stretch from east to west – from Key West to Panama City.

In fact, Sean Gilder was struggling to find work in Panama City when he was finishing his service in the U.S. Air Force. He told his wife and son that they should prepare to move wherever he could find work.

Sean couldn't find good job options in Panama City ...until he heard about a growing company called iSirona, a NantHealth Company. He walked into the company and met with iSirona's CEO on the same day. iSirona, a NantHealth Company, has now announced they will add another 300 jobs in the area.

Thanks to the opportunities offered by iSirona, a NantHealth Company, Sean is able to provide for his family right here in the Sunshine State.