

Alper JCC initiates preschool program for hearing impaired

BY SHEILA STIEGLITZ

It has been almost eight years since the Florida Legislature mandated universal hearing screenings for newborns.

With early identification of hearing impairment, parents finally are given the opportunity to provide their children with the optimal conditions for acquiring language skills and achieving success in learning.

Research shows that children with a hearing loss, who receive intervention in the critical time between birth and 3 years of age, have significantly better language, speech, and social-emotional proficiency. Yet in Miami-Dade County programs that provide these services for this early childhood population are limited to auditory/oral methods only — until now.

The Dave and Mary Alper JCC on the Jay Morton-Levinthal Campus has been awarded a generous grant from United Way of Miami-Dade County to create a preschool inclusion program. The program is open to the community and targets children who are hearing and hearing impaired. The Hearing and Speech Center of Florida Inc. (HSCF), a joint partner, is helping to ensure the success of the program.

Debra Knox, director of HSCF, will be involved directly monitoring the development of the preschoolers' speech and language through weekly therapy sessions within the classroom, providing education and resources for parents, and creating professional staff training and consultations.

"We are really excited about the opportunity to offer a quality bi-lingual American Sign Language and English Hearing Impaired Inclusion program," Knox said. "Children are identified earlier with most types of disabilities so we need to meet their needs by providing earlier intervention to yield better results in the end. What makes this program so important is our ability to offer an early signing option to this group of children and their families."

The classroom will have 12 children, ages 24-36 months, approximately half of whom are typically developing and half with hearing impairment. For five full days per week these boys and girls will participate in daily activities, including enrichment and literacy readiness, and bilingual services in American Sign Language (ASL) and spoken English. The program also includes literacy activities, advocacy, networking and resource and referral services. With their newly acquired skills, parents who in the past could not communicate with or help their deaf children will now be able to affect his or her educational, behavioral, and social growth.

School begins Monday, Aug. 18. For information or to enroll your child, contact Dr. Janet Stone, director of the JCC's Glen Greenstein Early Childhood Development Center at 305-271-9000, ext. 299. The Alper JCC is located at 11155 SW 112 Ave. in Kendall. For all other JCC preschool programs and activities log on to <www.alperjcc.org>.

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How much is your business really worth?



Ed Gorin

BUSINESS BUZZ

is to look at two businesses with exactly the same sales and profits. The value of the two companies could be completely different depending on many things.

For example, one of those companies may not be paying the owner a decent salary, which would make the profits seem inflated. Or, perhaps, the opposite — the owner is taking all the profits out and leaving nothing for operations.

The question of business valuation becomes important when you want to buy or sell, of course, but also in other circumstances. For example: If your business partner died, how much cash would you need to buy out his spouse? You want to take a “key man” insurance policy on your partner’s life so enough cash will be available for the buyout, but how much insurance will you need?

Or you are contemplating your death sometime in the future and would like to leave your business to your children. First, what is the business worth, and second, how can you leave it to your heirs and minimize the tax impact?

Alexander likes to use the example of a junkyard to show how complex it can get.

“Is the value what you paid for all of those smashed up cars and appliances,

CPA Carol Alexander (right) is pictured at a Chamber South after-hours event with travel agent Louise Gross and Luis Alvarado of AXA Advisors.



or what you might get for selling individual parts? Or maybe the real value is the five acres of property, once all the junk is cleared away.”

If you are thinking about buying a business, here are some questions you should be asking:

- What’s the competition like for the particular type of business?
- Where does the business fit into the area? If you are looking at buying a successful small hardware store and you find out Home Depot is looking at land a few blocks away, consider if that will have a positive or negative impact on the price that you are willing to pay.
- Does the business success depend heavily on one or two key employees? Will they stay or go if you sell the business? Will they go into competition with the new owners?

Alexander said that anyone contemplating the sale of a business should begin thinking about it and planning many years in advance. This is particularly important for the very small professional practice or business.

“In business or professional practice

where you are the business — the marketing guru, CEO, CFO all in one — when it comes time to exit the business you have very little to sell other than your customer list and your contacts,” Alexander said. “It’s important that you begin years before you actually try to sell the business to involve others, so customers and clients get used to working with other people, and realize that it is a real business.”

If you have key employees who are essential to your business success, they are the ones most likely to want to buy the business when you step down. They may want to begin investing in the business long before you are ready to retire.

If you want to learn more about the subject, you can contact Alexander at 305-233-7760 or by email at <cialex@ciacpa.com>.

Ed Gorin is president of Gorin Communications, a marketing and public relations firm. Visit the business networking website at <www.miamibusinessgroups.com>. To reach Ed Gorin, send email to <bizbuzz@juno.com>.

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The Growth Coach helps small business owners to succeed

BY LEE STEPHENS

Heather Fraser has launched The Growth Coach, a coaching/mentoring firm dedicated to helping small businesses grow strategically and gain more focus.

As part of a nationally recognized, time-tested company, Fraser helps small business executives become more focused, effective and productive. She uses coaching and accountability strategies to help clients earn more, work less, and enjoy balanced lives.

Using a highly systematic process developed by The Growth Coach, Fraser enables executives to achieve immediate and tangible professional and personal growth. Fraser helps owners, managers and executives create a business plan, set realistic goals and develop strategies to bring their future forward. With her coaching, business owners escape the trap of being too busy working "in" their business to work "on" their business.

Fraser offers quarterly coaching and accountability workshops; monthly one-on-one sessions for individuals,

and special project assistance. Small businesses need someone in their corner, helping them think strategically and opportunistically.

Who can benefit?

- Those who need to work "on" their business instead of "in" their business;
- Those who need to think like an owner instead of employee;
- Those who feel like prisoners to their businesses, employees and customers;
- Those who crave more personal time and freedom;
- Those consumed by the day-to-day details and low-value tasks;
- Those who feel like they own a "job," not a business, and
- Those who work too hard and make too little.

Fraser has over 18 years of experience working with business owners, entrepreneurs and managers. A long-time resident of Cutler Bay, Fraser, a graduate of the University of Miami School of Business, has extensive experience in business planning, management and operations.

For more information, call 305-726-7895.

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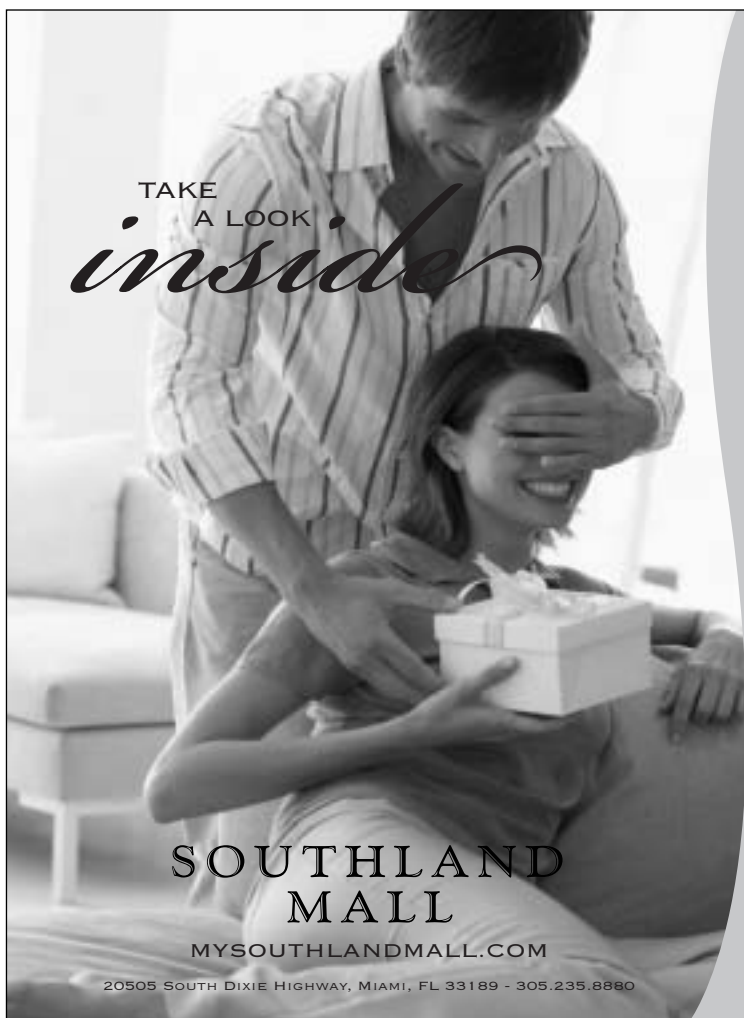
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ULTA

Kohl's bringing some 900 jobs to Miami-Ft. Lauderdale area

BY ELIZABETH DELUCA

Some 900 people are needed to fill the jobs that will be created when Kohl's Department Stores opens six stores in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area in October.

Kohl's has full- and part-time positions available. Miami-Dade locations opening include Hialeah, Homestead and Kendall in the Town and Country Center.

Job fairs are scheduled for interested applicants through Aug. 14. Applicants should visit online at <www.kohls-careers.com> or call 1-877-NEW-KOHL (877-639-5645) — a 24-hour job hotline — to obtain additional details, begin the application process and secure an interview slot.

Kohl's has some 130,000 associates nationwide and has been recognized by *BusinessWeek* for two consecutive years as one of the "Best Places to Launch a Career." Stores will hire associates for cash register operation, department service, customer service, early morning stocking, truck unloading, housekeeping and evening signage/pricing updates. New hires will receive competitive wages and medical insurance as well as 401(k), employee stock ownership and merchandise discounts.

This fall Kohl's celebrates the opening of its 1,000th store and 47 environmentally friendly stores, 45 of which will pursue LEED certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) from the U.S. Green Building Council.

In every store, Kohl's invites shoppers to experience a comfortable and convenient shopping environment. Kohl's stores are laid out to inspire customers who can outfit themselves, their families

and their homes for a great value with widely known exclusive brands such as Simply Vera Vera Wang, Abbey Dawn, Elle, Fila Sport and Food Network and national brands such as Levi's, Carter's and Cuisinart.

Kohl's also is committed to the communities it serves. Throughout the year, Kohl's sells special Kohl's Cares for Kids merchandise with 100 percent of net profits supporting children's health and education initiatives. Since the program's inception in 2000, Kohl's has raised more than \$102 million. Additionally, through Kohl's A-Team, associates are encouraged to volunteer for youth-focused nonprofit organizations and Kohl's matches their efforts with corporate grants. In 2007, associates donated more than 136,000 hours which resulted in more than \$3.2 million for the local organizations associates chose to support.

Job Fairs will take place Aug. 12 and 14, 12:15-7:30 p.m., and Aug. 13, 8:45 a.m.-4 p.m., at the following locations:

- Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, 7707 NW 103 St., Hialeah;

- Keys Gate Golf and Country Club, 2300 Palm Dr., Homestead, and

- Marriott-Miami Dadeland, 9090 S. Dadeland Blvd., Kendall.

Based in Menomonee Falls, WI, Kohl's is a family-focused, value-oriented specialty department store offering moderately priced, exclusive and national brand apparel, shoes, accessories, beauty and home products in an exciting shopping environment. By the end of November, Kohl's will operate 1,004 stores in 48 states. For a list of store locations and information, or for the added convenience of shopping online, visit <www.kohls.com>.



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Time to trim trees with experienced professional

Miami native and nature lover Bill Fowler owns and operates Prestigious Tree Service.



BY LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD

We are in hurricane season once again and residents are interested in getting their trees trimmed.

A word of warning for those who do decide to make that call to get their trees trimmed. Although a lot of people call themselves tree trimmers, not all can claim the title of certified arborist.

Bill Fowler, owner of Prestigious Tree Service, can. He has been a certified arborist for six years and also is certified as a utility arborist. Fowler has 25 years of experience in the tree trimming business.

He started his company because he always wanted to go out on his own.

"It took me five years to get everything together so I could start the business," he said. "First, I got the equipment. Last year, I got incorporated, licensed and insured."

During that planning period he continued to work for a tree trimming service.

"I worked for a very reputable tree service for 15 years," he said. "When I started there I thought I knew something about trimming trees and I found out I knew nothing."

Fowler said he started as a ground man and by the time he left, he was their top guy.

"Every year I would get awards for customer service, reliability and punctuality. I was their go-to guy."

Fowler trims trees all over Miami-Dade County and will even go into parts of Broward to work. He does consultations and free estimates. Consultations are when he is called out to talk about a tree. Sometimes it's because the tree looks

unhealthy, and sometimes it's because the tree is part of a property dispute. In cases like that, he will charge \$25 for the consultation. There is an additional charge if something has to be written up for legal purposes.

"If a consultation results in me writing a proposal to the customer, then the consultation fee is applied to the cost," he said.

His service includes not only trimming the trees, but cleaning up and stacking the debris.

"Hauling debris is put into the proposal," he said. "I can haul it and I can stack it."

For a fee, he will haul away debris left by other tree trimmers who didn't have the ability to haul it away.

"When I have customers I've stacked for, I'll tell them exactly how much they have," he said. "I tell them to be there when the county comes."

Another service that he provides is restoration on trees damaged by hurricanes or because they were hat racked, an unacceptable method of pruning.

How long Fowler spends on a job depends on the tree or trees on which he is working.

"I've spent all day on one tree and one hour on five trees," he said. "I have to see the trees and I need to know what the customer wants."

Prestigious Tree Service generally works five days a week, although Fowler will do certain jobs on a weekend if necessary. He loves his job because he loves nature and he loves the outdoors.

"You have to have a love for the tree, otherwise you can't do the job," he said.

For more information, call 786-402-3134.

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