

SunSentinel PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

BY CINDY KENT

Community

The Mandel JCC of the Palm Beaches announced the appointment of **Jesse Rosen** to president and chief executive officer. He was chief operating officer of the Milwaukie JCC.

Jaime-Lee Brown, vice president of community services at Community Partners of South Florida, received the Unsung Hero Award from NeighborWorks America at the "Triumph! Celebrating Leadership & Community Resiliency" reception in New Orleans and was an invited guest speaker at the NeighborWorks America National Symposium, "Closing the Life Expectancy Gap: Connecting Health, Home and Community."

Carrie Browne was appointed director of philanthropy at Palm Health Foundation, Palm Beach County's community foundation for health. In her most recent position, Browne was executive director for Healthier Jupiter, a Palm Health Foundation initiative.

Culinary

Roberto Dubois is executive chef at Esotico Miami.

TooJay's Deli announced that **Stephen A. Levin** is its new director of catering and **AJ Peterson** is social media and local marketing manager.

Medical

Medical oncologist and clinical researcher **Yuliya Linhares, M.D.**, was

named Chief of the Lymphoma Service at Miami Cancer Institute at Baptist Health South Florida.

Hospitality

Driftwood Hospitality Management announced the executive team that will launch the new Canopy by Hilton West Palm Beach Downtown: **Chris Steele** will be general manager, **Jen Garrett** will manage the group sales and marketing efforts, and **Serge Saouma** will lead menu and drink development for the venue's two restaurants.

Hyatt Centric Las Olas Fort Lauderdale announced the appointment of **Eyal Goldberger** as the hotel's general manager and **Katherine Beja-McLennan** as director of sales and marketing.

Central Civil Construction announced that **Michael Velez** has been promoted to project manager. Previously, Velez served as an assistant project manager.

Construction

Johnson & Wales University North Miami Campus announced the appointment of **Emmanuel Cabrera Muñoz** as director of communications and media relations.

He was an adjunct faculty member at the JWU College of Hospitality & Management. The Early Learning Coalition of Broward County named **Beverley**

Law

Marshall Grant PLLC announced that **Gregory Mitchell** has joined the firm as a litigation attorney.

Anthony Brunson P.A. announced that **Tariro Gatsi**, CPA and formerly an audit manager at PriceWaterhouse Coopers, has joined the firm as a senior audit manager.

Berger Singerman announced that **Jordi Guso** was named as its new managing partner in Miami, effective Jan. 1, 2020, for a four-year term, by the firm's equity partners as part of a strategic succession and leadership transition plan.

Kelley Kronenberg, a diverse business law firm, announced that **Harsh Arora** has joined the firm's Fort Lauderdale office as a Partner.

Nelson Mullins Broad and Cassel announced that healthcare attorney **Heather S. Miller** has joined the firm as of counsel in Boca Raton, from the Cancer Treatment Centers of America, where she was associate general counsel.

Education

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Rosen



Steele



Garrett



Saouma



Goldberger



Beja-McLennan



Guso

Batson and Dr. Amoy Reid to the board of directors. Reid is the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs for Broward College.

Finance

Kati Erickson, donor relations officer at the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties since 2017, recently earned her Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy professional designation from the Richard D. Irwin Graduate School of The American College of Financial Services.

The CAP program provides the knowledge and tools needed by professionals in the nonprofit and financial services fields in order to help clients reach their charitable giving objectives and meet their estate planning and wealth management goals.

The curriculum addresses advanced design, implementation and management of charitable gift techniques and strategies, as well as philanthropic tools that include charitable trusts, private foundations, supporting organizations, donor-advised funds, pooled income funds and charitable gift annuities.

Candidates must complete a minimum of three courses in philanthropic studies and six hours of written examinations. Erickson joined the Community Foundation in 2014 as a development manager.

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Erickson

DISNEY

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\$600-a-night Grand Floridian Resort showed up at the wrong time for his FastPass at the Magic Kingdom. He yelled at the employee until she relented and allowed him to get on the ride anyway.

Instead of thanking her, he grabbed her by the shoulder and whirled her around to face him.

"I'm not your slave!" the man shouted again and again. "You don't tell me what to do!"

He later told authorities he felt like he was being herded "like a dog" and didn't like how he was spoken to.

The man was banned from Disney World. The case is still under investigation, so his identity was not released in a sheriff's report. No charges appear to have been filed at the state attorney's office.

Then, there's the oil scientist from Ohio who rammed a stroller into a worker repeatedly when he was asked to leave a Magic Kingdom viewing area in 2015. He was arrested but the state attorney dropped the charges after the employee declined to prosecute.

Or the mother of a Make-A-Wish child who shoved a worker who almost fell into the moving platform of the Peter Pan ride in 2012. The woman was angry Disney wouldn't stop the ride to get her child's medical equipment off.

A 64-year-old Canadian man said, "Get the [expletive] out of my way," and pushed a Disney worker last year because he was impatient about exiting after Splash Mountain broke down. He was arrested, but the state attorney's office later dropped criminal charges.

'Treat us with dignity'

The bad days "kind of haunt you," said Fontenot, who filed a sheriff's report in 2011 after a 57-year-old Miami Beach tourist head-butted him. The tourist was livid that his wife, who walked without any assistance, wasn't allowed to use the wheelchair line at the Magical Kingdom's Monorail station.

In his 14 years at working at Disney, it was the only time he has physically assaulted at work, although many times veered dangerously close, said Fontenot. He said it was his decision to not to press charges because he was satisfied that Disney had banned the tourist.

"I just want people to be civil. We're low-wage workers," said Fontenot, 39. "Treat us with dignity."

Outbursts typically happen on the popular rides, although not always. Visitors blow up, shoving and yelling at workers at a Donald Duck meet-and-greet or photo opportunity with the Disney princesses.

Last month, it happened on the children's Winnie the Pooh ride when a 36-year-old Frenchman scratched an employee, elbowed her in the stomach and then pushed her after the ride broke down, according to the reports.

Disney employees aren't alone on the front lines when a situation erupts, Disney says.

They have a two-way radio or a



RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/ORLANDO SENTINEL

Some Disney employees say they are easy targets for abuse from guests.



GARTH VAUGHAN/COURTESY

Orange County Sheriff's Office received battery complaints from two Disney employees at Splash Mountain in 2017 and 2018. Tourists were angry over height requirements for a child and waiting in line.

phone to call for help.

Disney employees also undergo safety training from day one on the job, as do their managers who are specially trained to help defuse the situations, according to Disney. The company did not provide details on the training for security reasons.

Disney security and deputy sheriffs also add an extra layer of protection.

And for workers who need mental health counseling, the company has a wellness assistance program that provides five free visits with a counselor.

Similar battery complaints have been filed at SeaWorld and Universal Orlando, too.

A man whose young daughter was too short to ride Journey to Atlantis pushed a SeaWorld employee in her stomach last year. The man didn't realize the worker was pregnant, the sheriff's report said.

A 23-year-old Parkland woman was arrested in 2015, although the battery charge was later dropped, when she yelled racial insults,

grabbed a Universal employee's arm twice and then tried to push past because she was told she couldn't sit in the best seat on the Incredible Hulk Coaster.

"She really wanted to ride in the front row of the rollercoaster and was not going to allow anyone to deny her," the Orlando police report said.

Staying cheerful is tough

The problem runs deeper than the theme parks and affects employees throughout the service industry at hotels, restaurants and call centers, one expert said.

"In an environment like that where often the customer is seen as always right — and let's face it, the customer is not always right — there's sometimes an expectation ... that their wish is your command," said David Ballard, a senior director at the American Psychological Association whose expertise is the workplace.

Disney calls employees "cast

members," as if they're playing a role in a show. Keeping the cheerful facade on takes a toll, Ballard said.

"It takes a lot of energy to hold that in," Ballard said. "Keeping that smile on your face, having that image the company wants you to convey — that's emotional labor."

Sexual attacks

Assaults of a sexual nature have been reported, too.

In the Haunted Mansion, another popular ride at the Magic Kingdom, a man stared at a worker as he walked past. Then, he grabbed her crotch.

The woman "was stunned," according to the 2015 report.

That's inappropriate, she told him, and she was going to get security. He asked for her name instead.

The woman went backstage and sat on the floor, crying uncontrollably. What had happened triggered memories of when she had

been raped as a child, the sheriff's office report said.

Her manager found her sobbing and called security.

By then, the man who grabbed her had disappeared.

At the same attraction in June, a different employee said a 73-year-old Venezuelan man grabbed her breast twice in the "stretch room," an area before visitors enter the ride.

She was so shocked, she said nothing.

Then, she told a coworker and her coordinator.

The man and his family denied it happened.

The man was asked to leave Magic Kingdom but Disney gave him three FastPasses to use at Animal Kingdom the next day, the report said.

'Take a breath'

Don't get Lauren Abdul wrong. She loves her job. She returned to Disney after working in the company's College Program and never left.

Five out of six times, her interactions with visitors bring her joy, which makes her love her job even more, she said.

But sometimes, it feels like the bad outweighs the good, Abdul said, as she recounted when a visitor hit her at the Tomorrowland Speedway or recently cussed her out over FastPasses at Seven Dwarfs Mine Train. Once, someone spit on her, she said. She hasn't filed a report with law enforcement.

"I have to literally take a breath," said Abdul, 24. "There have been times where I've been at work, and I've asked to get a bathroom break. I've had to just sit in the bathroom for five minutes because it adds up during the day."

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