

SPORTS PAGE 1

French finale

Zverev wins his first Grand Slam in five-set victory over Cobolli



Real Estate Pro
Singer: Avoiding 'force-placed' insurance. **Local & State, Page 3**

Shooting rampage
Palestinian man kills one in Israel. **Nation & World, Page 8**

TWO-TIME WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE GOLD MEDAL FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

SOUTH FLORIDA SunSentinel

\$4.50 | MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2026 | SUNSENTINEL.COM

Big money is pouring into health systems

By **Cindy Krischer Goodman**
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

A flurry of big-money donations is strengthening South Florida's health systems, a trend that will significantly benefit everyone who needs medical care in the years ahead. The million-dollar-plus donations by local billionaire philanthropists, who are aging and may need medical treatment themselves, are aimed at improving cancer care,

funding research to prevent and treat diseases, fueling major hospital expansions, and adding specialized pediatric care. In recent years, big gifts have increased as the community of South Florida billionaire philanthropists has grown, either relocating to the area or sharing the fortunes they amassed through homegrown businesses. As money pours in, those suffering from a disease like Parkinson's or seeking experimental thera-

pies for Alzheimer's will find medical innovation in their backyard rather than having to travel outside the state. "What these extraordinary gifts reflect is a growing understanding that the health of a community is one of its most important long-term investments," said Loreen Chant, president and CEO of the Health Foundation of South Florida. See **MONEY** on Page A6



Dr. Herbert "Herbie" Wertheim announces a \$100 million gift to Baptist Health South Florida to establish the Herbert Wertheim Cancer Institute Transformational Impact Fund. **BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA/COURTESY**



Students rehearse in Shirley Callandret's show choir class at North Andrews Gardens Elementary School of the Arts in Fort Lauderdale.

Israel says Iran has broken ceasefire

Strikes threaten mediation efforts for deal to end war

By **Kareem Chehayeb, Sammy Magdy, Melanie Lidman and Cara Anna**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Iran launched missiles at Israel in the first such bombardment since a fragile ceasefire took effect in early April, raising the possibility of a return to heavy fighting and complicating mediation efforts to end the war. Iran's state broadcaster confirmed the launches, and Iran closed its western airspace to brace for a possible response. Tehran had warned of retaliation after Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs without warning earlier Sunday in defiance of Washington's request

See **IRAN** on Page A2

Fighting for the arts

A mission to preserve art and music classes in Broward schools

By **Scott Travis**
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

The arts thrive at North Andrews Elementary School of the Arts in Oakland Park, where students can experience theater, a band, an orchestra, a show choir and visual arts classes. But at Collins Elementary, a small school in Dania Beach, students don't attend any classes specifically focused on art or music. It's a disparity that has frustrated many parents and School Board members. About a quarter of elementary schools offer no music classes, while half lack art, district data shows. Twelve schools, including Collins, offer

neither. And it's a problem that could get worse as enrollments continue to decline, officials say. "Parents are furious," said Cynthia Dominique, an elementary school parent who chairs the District Advisory Council, a group that makes recommendations to the School Board. "Parents believe that those specials are just as important as reading, writing and math. They help to make a well-rounded child. They help to keep kids, you know, engaged and excited to go to school." Now, some School Board members say they want Superintendent Howard Hepburn to see if there's a way to assist these schools that could be considered arts deserts, including Collins, Coral Springs Elementary, Larkdale Elementary in Lauderdale and Dolphin Bay Elementary in



Strings teacher Felix Cuza assists fifth-grader Calvin Mittrache with his violin solo at North Andrews Gardens Elementary School of the Arts in Fort Lauderdale. **AMY BETH BENNETT/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL PHOTOS**

See **ARTS** on Page A2

Proposed fees alarm tourism leaders

By **David Lyons**
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

For the South Florida region's lodging industry, 2026 is likely to go down as a banner year for international visitors after World Cup soccer takes center stage in June and July at the Hard Rock Stadium, not long after Formula 1 racing drew thousands of upscale travelers to the venue and after an international travel conference last month drew an estimated 5,000 people from more than 50 nations. The visitors included more than 1,500 international and domestic buyers and media professionals. The result: \$2.6 billion in projected future travel business to the United States over the next three

See **TOURISM** on Page A6

Dive into higher earnings. Stay cool with your locked-in rate. **4.00% APY** **1st Bank** Pembroke Pines 954.392.4500 Deerfield 954.571.9789

Investing in South Florida, one donor's perspective

Ken Griffin is one of the most powerful and successful figures in modern finance. With an estimated net worth of over \$50 billion, he is the founder and driving force behind Citadel. In 2022, Griffin moved the investment firm and hedge fund's global headquarters from Chicago to Miami. As part of his civic engagement initiative, Griffin Catalyst, he has recently made substantial donations to improve healthcare in Miami-Dade. The South Florida Sun Sentinel interviewed Griffin Catalyst Director of Philanthropy Julia Quinn about Griffin's health philanthropy.



Citadel CEO Ken Griffin speaks during a news conference hosted by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. **ORLANDO VIA/APPIA VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE**

On Ken Griffin's vision: Ken has seen his role as being able to further accelerate scientific discovery, increase access to care, attract top talent in medicine to the region and create lasting benefits, not only for those of us currently living in South Florida, but for future generations as well.

On the type of investment that attracts Griffin Catalyst: Ken is drawn to opportunities that can strengthen

the region's healthcare ecosystem, from advancing research and attracting top medical talent to expanding access to care and investing in innovative programs and facilities. The common thread is helping ensure that South Florida residents can receive world-class, cutting-edge care close to home.

On Griffin's personal connection to the health investments: Everyone, unfortunately, has a personal

connection at this point to cancer or other degenerative diseases. These challenges touch nearly every family and loom large for so many people. At the same time, there is tremendous reason for optimism. There are areas where real progress and breakthroughs in the near term seem very possible. Ken would love to see South Florida and Miami institutions be at the forefront of the next wave of scientific discovery that will change lives.

On living and investing in South Florida: Ken's giving to South Florida medical institutions and healthcare providers began when he and the firm moved to South Florida. He had been involved in other philanthropic work locally before the move, but not in the health care space. So far, Ken's giving has been predominantly in Miami-Dade, but I don't know what the future will hold. We certainly want to see high-quality, accessible care across the entire South Florida region.

On future health investments: Ken is drawn to opportunities that can strengthen

TOURISM
from Page A1

The seven World Cup soccer tournament games scheduled for Hard Rock Stadium this month and next will generate between \$150 million and \$175 million in economic impact for Greater Fort Lauderdale, according to the Downtown Development Authority, with roughly 30% of an expected 700,000 plus visitors staying in Broward County.

Average daily hotel room rates typically range between \$145 and \$155 during June and July and are projected to double that figure during the World Cup matches, according to the DDA, citing figures supplied by the Visit Lauderdale tourism marketing agency.

Travel industry advocates led by the U.S. Travel Association are expressing concern that the federal government's decision to increase visa fees for international travelers will hurt the industry. The U.S. Travel Association is currently lobbying Congress to increase visa application fees for international travel environment already facing a strong dollar, war-driven hikes in fuel prices and inflation in general.

A new "visa integrity fee" of \$250 will be in the wings for months for non-immigrant visa applications. It was imposed last Oct. 1 for nationals from Brazil, China and Mexico among others. Visitors would get a refund if they leave the U.S. within five days of their visa's expiration.

'TONE DEAF'

It's like that are absolutely tone deaf in the environment we are in today," USTA CEO Geoffrey Freeman said at the South Florida Sun Sentinel.

The fee would lift the up-front cost of a U.S. tourist visa to \$435. Despite its passage by Congress, the Department of Homeland Security has yet to impose the fee and the association is lobbying lawmakers and enforcement agencies to stop the idea. The U.S. is also seeking to expand digital and social-media screening from visa-waiver program nations, including Great Britain, France, Germany and South Korea, to disclose five years of social media history as part of their travel authorization application.

The travel association is a national, nonprofit organization that advocates for travelers to increase travel to and within the United States. Its annual IPW international trade show took place at the Broward County Convention Center in month. Visit Lauderdale, the county's tourism marketing agency, served as the host, lining up everything from local hotels and transportation for visitors to events and promotions in travel to the area.

The idea was to connect global buyers and media with thousands of the most important travel market resorts, state and county tourism agencies, entertainment venues, airlines and rail lines. But the conference was smaller than previous events in other cities, Freeman said.

"We had a very good IPW," he said. "Our numbers were consistent with the trends, and the trends are a slight downturn in travel to the United States, and we felt that during IPW."

"That's why we're focused so diligently on addressing the downturn on inbound travel," he added. "It's one of the things that makes this \$250 visa fee so off-putting. The United States is already an expensive market."

Neither the fee nor the additional social media vetting has been implemented, according to Freeman, primarily because of the lobbying against them.

"The fee could have been implemented in October of last year," Freeman said. "We have been successful to date, and we continue to work every day to stop it."

CANADA IS A CONCERN

"I think the industry's hope was that as we got into 2025 and 2026 that we would see Canadians return," Freeman said. "While it varied across the country, some places may have seen some success — the fact is the Canadians didn't return. We were down 22% in 2025. Even as we got into 2026, we're still off of those numbers here in 2026. I think the Canadians are staying overseas because of the state, visit the Canada reported a rebound in visitors last year from the downturn caused by political and economic friction between the U.S. and Canadian governments."

"We're grateful for the 16 million Canadians that came last year. But there were still 4 million Canadians missing," Freeman said. "This is still our most important travel market both in terms of the volume of travelers and the money they spend. It is harming the industry significantly."

LATIN MARKET STRENGTH

Freeman said the one market he can point to that has shown strength in the U.S. is Latin America. But again, the proposed visa fee is money trouble, he asserted.

"Here we have the one market — Latin America — that has been doing well, and we're going to throw a fee on top of that," he said. "It's just bad business."

"For a family of four from Brazil, this is \$1,000 that they would have spent with the U.S. business, but instead they are giving it to the U.S. Government. It seems foolish," he said.

Rimer said proposed government fees and requirements implemented in October of last year, Freeman said. "We have been successful to date, and we continue to work every day to stop it."

MONEY
from Page A1

region is the best place in the country to live, work and raise a family," said Julia Quinn, Griffin Catalyst director of philanthropy. "Healthcare plays such an important role in quality of life in a region's ability to thrive and attract talent, businesses, and families."

DID COVID LAUNCH THE TREND?

Alexandra Villoch, chief executive officer of Baptist Health Foundation, noticed a significant increase in large philanthropic donations to Baptist Health medical facilities. The gift will also establish the Dr. Herbert Wertheim Center for Cancer Prevention, strengthening research infrastructure and expanding clinical trials.

"It's a transformational gift for cancer care. We're going to do extraordinary things with this gift," Baptist Health South Florida CEO Bo Boulanger said when the announcement was made.

Wertheim is the founder of Brain Power Incorporated, a Miami-based manufacturer of optical products. The billionaire businessman and Palm Beach resident has focused on education and healthcare in his philanthropic giving.

Wertheim's large donation comes on the heels of a \$50 million gift from Citadel CEO Ken Griffin to Baptist Health in 2024 to support research and patient care for Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Since relocating the investment firm's headquarters to Miami, Griffin has reshaped the South Florida healthcare landscape through various donations.

■ Nicklaus Children's Hospital (\$25 million, 2022) to support the development of a state-of-the-art pediatric surgical tower, expanding access to advanced surgical care for children and families across South Florida.

■ University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center (\$50 million, 2024) to support construction of a 12-story cancer research facility that will double Sylvester's research footprint and accelerate the development of new therapies and clinical trials.

■ Helen and Jacob Shaham are further proof of how local philanthropists are driving transformative change in medical care. The founders of The Palace Group of Senior Living Communities donated \$15 million to Nicklaus Children's Health System. The Cancer & Blood Disorders Institute at Nicklaus now bears their name.

"My father-in-law died from cancer. My daughter-in-law died from cancer two years ago. It's close to us. For the last 45 years, we did everything for

BROWARD AND PALM BEACH COUNTIES ATTRACT DONORS, TOO

South Florida health care received a \$5.2 million gift in May 2025 from the Henry E. Heller Jr. Foundation to support two new labs at its flagship hospital in Fort Lauderdale. The gift will help the hospital system build labs at Broward Health Medical Center focused on heart health, equipped with Siemens Artis Icano systems for cardiac catheterization and electrophysiology.

In Palm Beach County, billionaire Alan B. Miller, the founder of Universal Health Services (UHS), is associated with a massive corporate healthcare investment — a first new north county hospital since 1979. Miller has a home in the Admirals Cove community in Jupiter, near Palm Beach Gardens. The healthcare corporation that Miller built over the last 45 years has financed and will operate a \$430 million hospital in Palm Beach Gardens. The hospital opened on May 22 and was built with future growth in mind. Miller's son, Marc, is president and CEO of UHS, chose to name the hospital after his father as a tribute to his legacy.

"This hospital is a blessing for this community," Alan B. Miller, told the crowd at the hospital opening. "In the future, you will see that it is so essential to keeping people well and saving lives."

Just weeks ago, St. Mary's Medical Center Foundation in West Palm Beach changed its name to The Foundation for Palm Beach Health Network, expanding its fundraising efforts to support all hospitals within the Palm Beach Health Network.

Executive Director Feli Morton said she plans to target all donors in Palm Beach County to support a wider range of health initiatives.

"As more are moving here from different places, they bring with them donations make a difference and have an impact. What better way to do that than to support hospitals that they themselves use?" Morton said.

HOSPITALS AREN'T THE ONLY INSTITUTIONS DRAWING MASSIVE INVESTMENTS

South Florida medical schools are also attracting large donations that promise to elevate healthcare across the region.

With education, donors are no longer just putting money on lecture hall floors; they are treating medical school donations like venture capital — funding scholarship programs and expecting that their increasingly large fund yields regional public health upgrades or high-level clinical research breakthroughs.

Dr. Chad Perlyn, executive vice president and chief medical officer at Nova Southeastern University and dean of NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, said that as South Florida grows, donors recognize the area needs world-class health-

care and healthcare education to serve the population.

"We're seeing philanthropy support both major infrastructure projects and groundbreaking scientific initiatives that have the potential to move beyond our region," Perlyn said. "Investments like these help position South Florida as a destination for innovation, discovery, and advanced patient care."

For example, philanthropist David Husman, who lost his wife to ALS, and Cathy Husman Neurosciences Institute on the Davis campus. The gift brought Husman's total support for the university's neurosciences center to \$48 million.

In April, the Shahams continued their giving and made a \$10 million donation to FIU's College of Medicine — the largest in the school's history. The money will fund the construction of a seven-story, 94,000-square-foot Shahan Academic Medical Center on FIU's main campus, built in partnership with Baptist Health South Florida, the center will integrate medical education with outpatient clinics, diagnostic imaging and same-day ambulatory suites when it opens in 2028.

In Boca Raton, Florida Atlantic University received a \$28 million pledge from John and Ann Wood to support scholarship for students enrolled in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. It is the largest scholarship gift in FAU's history and the largest known scholarship gift to a university's medical school. The gift, in memory of their son, Robert A. Wood, will provide debt-free tuition for aspiring physicians.

"What we are creating here is a robust healthcare ecosystem," Villoch said. "Doctors talk to each other, and they want to be in an ecosystem where research is happening, where technology is improving healthcare — creating a stronger environment for medical growth, more investment, and that attracts the top physicians."

Chant at Health Foundation of South Florida notes that South Florida's continued population growth means that healthcare needs will continue to increase, making health philanthropy increasingly vital. "We need real medical care, building a stronger workforce, and improving outcomes."

"Philanthropic leaders are recognizing that investment in medical education, research, and community health initiatives can create lasting benefits that extend well

including the recruitment of retired physicians to assist Dr. Field Willingham and the expansion of research, care, and physician training.

"Ken is deeply committed to improving lives and quality of life in South Florida and to ensuring that the

our elderly residents now, for our youngest residents."

A February report by The Dr. Group says all health systems will come to rely more on big donations.

"In a volatile healthcare landscape," the report says, "philanthropy is no longer

Dr. Chad Perlyn, executive vice president and chief medical officer at Nova Southeastern University and dean of NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, said that as South Florida grows, donors recognize the area needs world-class health-

care and healthcare education to serve the population.

LIFT FOR LAUDERDALE

For Visit Lauderdale and Broward County, the conference represented an enormous advantage in the perennial battles against other destinations for international vacationers and their dollars.

"Most of these attendees

had never been here," said Stacy Ritter, Visit Lauderdale's president and CEO. "We had an opportunity to show off this

Visit Lauderdale ended up with requests for proposals to host conferences "we never would have been in running for," she added.

There were 2.29 million international travelers to Florida in the first quarter of this year, up 8.5% from the same period of 2025, according to figures recently released by Visit Florida.

"The international tourist represents the 'Montage or Lamborghini' type of traveler... they spend more, stay longer, and, in general, visit the U.S. to do more things," said Peter Ricci, director of the hospitality, tourism and management program at Florida Atlantic University's College of Business.

But travel industry advocates led by the U.S. Travel Association are expressing concern that the federal government's decision to increase visa fees for international travelers will hurt the industry. The U.S. Travel Association is currently lobbying Congress to increase visa application fees for international travel environment already facing a strong dollar, war-driven hikes in fuel prices and inflation in general.

A new "visa integrity fee" of \$250 will be in the wings for months for non-immigrant visa applications. It was imposed last Oct. 1 for nationals from Brazil, China and Mexico among others. Visitors would get a refund if they leave the U.S. within five days of their visa's expiration.

'TONE DEAF'

It's like that are absolutely tone deaf in the environment we are in today," USTA CEO Geoffrey Freeman said at the South Florida Sun Sentinel.

The fee would lift the up-front cost of a U.S. tourist visa to \$435. Despite its passage by Congress, the Department of Homeland Security has yet to impose the fee and the association is lobbying lawmakers and enforcement agencies to stop the idea. The U.S. is also seeking to expand digital and social-media screening from visa-waiver program nations, including Great Britain, France, Germany and South Korea, to disclose five years of social media history as part of their travel authorization application.

The travel association is a national, nonprofit organization that advocates for travelers to increase travel to and within the United States. Its annual IPW international trade show took place at the Broward County Convention Center in month. Visit Lauderdale, the county's tourism marketing agency, served as the host, lining up everything from local hotels and transportation for visitors to events and promotions in travel to the area.

The idea was to connect global buyers and media with thousands of the most important travel market resorts, state and county tourism agencies, entertainment venues, airlines and rail lines. But the conference was smaller than previous events in other cities, Freeman said.

"We had a very good IPW," he said. "Our numbers were consistent with the trends, and the trends are a slight downturn in travel to the United States, and we felt that during IPW."

"That's why we're focused so diligently on addressing the downturn on inbound travel," he added. "It's one of the things that makes this \$250 visa fee so off-putting. The United States is already an expensive market."

Neither the fee nor the additional social media vetting has been implemented, according to Freeman, primarily because of the lobbying against them.

"The fee could have been implemented in October of last year," Freeman said. "We have been successful to date, and we continue to work every day to stop it."

CANADA IS A CONCERN

"I think the industry's hope was that as we got into 2025 and 2026 that we would see Canadians return," Freeman said. "While it varied across the country, some places may have seen some success — the fact is the Canadians didn't return. We were down 22% in 2025. Even as we got into 2026, we're still off of those numbers here in 2026. I think the Canadians are staying overseas because of the state, visit the Canada reported a rebound in visitors last year from the downturn caused by political and economic friction between the U.S. and Canadian governments."

"We're grateful for the 16 million Canadians that came last year. But there were still 4 million Canadians missing," Freeman said. "This is still our most important travel market both in terms of the volume of travelers and the money they spend. It is harming the industry significantly."

LATIN MARKET STRENGTH

Freeman said the one market he can point to that has shown strength in the U.S. is Latin America. But again, the proposed visa fee is money trouble, he asserted.

"Here we have the one market — Latin America — that has been doing well, and we're going to throw a fee on top of that," he said. "It's just bad business."

"For a family of four from Brazil, this is \$1,000 that they would have spent with the U.S. business, but instead they are giving it to the U.S. Government. It seems foolish," he said.

Rimer said proposed government fees and requirements implemented in October of last year, Freeman said. "We have been successful to date, and we continue to work every day to stop it."

Big money is pouring into health systems

By **Cindy Krischer Goodman**
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

A flurry of big-money donations is strengthening South Florida's health systems, a trend that will significantly benefit everyone who needs medical care in the years ahead.

The million-dollar-plus donations by local billionaire philanthropists, who are aging and may need medical treatment themselves, are aimed at improving cancer care,

funding research to prevent and treat diseases, fueling major hospital expansions, and adding specialized pediatric care.

In recent years, big gifts have increased as the community of South Florida billionaire philanthropists has grown, either relocating to the area or sharing the fortunes they amassed through homegrown businesses. As money pours in, those suffering from a disease like Parkinson's or seeking experimental thera-

pies for Alzheimer's will find medical innovation in their backyard rather than having to travel outside the state.

"What these extraordinary gifts reflect is a growing understanding that the health of a community is one of its most important long-term investments," said Loreen Chant, president and CEO of the Health Foundation of South Florida.

See **MONEY** on Page A6



Dr. Herbert "Herbie" Wertheim announces a \$100 million gift to Baptist Health South Florida to establish the Herbert Wertheim Cancer Institute Transformational Impact Fund. **BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA/ COURTESY**

MONEY

from Page A1

Just weeks ago, top executives at Baptist Health South Florida announced the largest single philanthropic gift in the organization's 66-year history.

Dr. Herbert Wertheim made a \$100 million donation to establish the Herbert Wertheim Cancer Institute Transformational Impact Fund, a fund dedicated to advancing cancer care, research, prevention, education and innovation in Baptist Health medical facilities. The gift will also establish the Dr. Herbert Wertheim Center for Cancer Prevention, strengthening research infrastructure and expanding clinical trials.

"It's a transformational gift for cancer care. We're going to do extraordinary things with this gift," Baptist Health South Florida CEO Bo Boulanger said when the announcement was made.

Wertheim is the founder of Brain Power Incorporated, a Miami-based manufacturer of optical products. The billionaire businessman and Palm Beach resident has focused on education and healthcare in his philanthropic giving.

Wertheim's large donation comes on the heels of a \$50 million gift from Citadel CEO Ken Griffin to Baptist Health in 2024 to support research and patient care for Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Since relocating the investment firm's headquarters to Miami, Griffin has reshaped the South Florida healthcare landscape through various donations:

■ **Nicklaus Children's Hospital** (\$25 million, 2023) to support the development of a state-of-the-art pediatric surgical tower, expanding access to advanced surgical care for children and families across South Florida.

region is the best place in the country to live, work and raise a family," said Julia Quinn, Griffin Catalyst director of philanthropy. "Healthcare plays such an important role in quality of life and in a region's ability to thrive and attract talent, businesses, and families."

DID COVID LAUNCH THE TREND?

Alexandra Villoch, chief executive officer of Baptist Health Foundation, noticed right after the pandemic an increase in large philanthropic donations earmarked for healthcare. Baptist Health has been a significant beneficiary, channeling those funds into areas such as cancer care, physician recruitment, clinical trials and early-screening technologies.

"I think COVID brought home the fact that you need extraordinary good healthcare where you live," Villoch said. "Because you could be the wealthiest person in the middle of COVID, but you couldn't get on an airplane to go to New York."

Nationally, the aging population now encompasses more high-net-worth individuals and family foundations that are deploying capital at unprecedented scale to improve healthcare. In fact, health philanthropy represents 10% of total giving in the United States, according to Giving USA. The philanthropic gifts are part of a post-pandemic push toward community giving, in which donors want to see their money actively addressing localized health needs.

"Philanthropy is not the same thing as charity," Villoch said. "It's more about investing in the future. I think 99% of the philanthropy that we receive here in South Florida is coming from somebody who has either personally been touched by a disease or they have had a family member touched by

supplemental — it is a strategic lever shaping the future of care delivery."

BROWARD AND PALM BEACH COUNTIES ATTRACT DONORS, TOO

Broward Health received a \$5.2 million gift in May 2025 from the Henry E. Haller Jr. Foundation to support two new labs at its flagship hospital in Fort Lauderdale. The gift will help the hospital system build labs at Broward Health Medical Center focused on heart health, equipped with Siemens Artis Icono systems for cardiac catheterization and electrophysiology.

In Palm Beach County, billionaire Alan B. Miller, the founder of Universal Health Services (UHS), is associated with a massive corporate healthcare investment — the first new north county hospital since 1979. Miller has a home in the Admirals Cove community in Jupiter, near Palm Beach Gardens. The healthcare corporation that Miller built over the last 45 years has financed and will operate a \$430 million hospital in Palm Beach Gardens. The hospital opened on May 22 and was built with future growth in mind. Miller's son, Marc, president and CEO of UHS, chose to name the hospital after his father as a tribute to his legacy.

"This hospital is a blessing for this community," Alan B. Miller, 88, told the crowd at the hospital opening. "In the future, you will see that it is so essential to keeping people well and saving lives."

Just weeks ago, St. Mary's Medical Center Foundation in West Palm Beach changed its name to The Foundation for Palm Beach Health Network, expanding its fundraising efforts to support all six hospitals within the Palm Beach Health Network.

Executive Director Felicia Morton said she plans to target all donors in Palm Beach County to support a wider range of health initiatives.

care and healthcare education to serve the population.

"We're seeing philanthropy support both major infrastructure projects and groundbreaking scientific initiatives that have the potential to improve lives far beyond our region," Perlyn said. "Investments like these help position South Florida as a destination for innovation, discovery, and advanced patient care."

For example, philanthropist David Husman, who lost his wife, Cathy, to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) in 2023, gave Nova Southeastern University a \$20 million gift for ALS research and established NSU Health's David and Cathy Husman Neuroscience Institute on the Davie campus. The gift brought Husman's total support for the university's neuroscience efforts to \$41 million.

In April, the Shahams continued their giving and made an impact with a \$30 million donation to FIU's College of Medicine — the largest in the medical school's history. The money will fund the construction of a seven-story, 94,000-square-foot Shaham Academic Medical Center on FIU's main campus. Built in partnership with Baptist Health South Florida, the center will integrate medical education with outpatient clinics, diagnostic imaging and same-day surgical suites when it opens in 2028.

In Boca Raton, Florida Atlantic University received a \$28 million pledge from John and Ann Wood to support scholarships for students enrolled in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. It is the largest scholarship gift in FAU's history and the largest known scholarship gift to a Florida public university's medical school. The gift, in memory of their son, Robert A. Wood, will provide debt-free tuition for aspiring physicians.

"What we are creating

June 8, 2026

■ University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center (\$50 million, 2024) to support construction of a 12-story cancer research facility that will double Sylvester's research footprint and accelerate the development of new therapies and clinical trials.

■ Mount Sinai Medical Center (\$15 million, 2025) to support the Braman Comprehensive Cancer Center and expand access to advanced cancer care throughout South Florida.

■ Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida (\$3 million, 2026) to support a family campus that will nearly double lodging capacity for families whose children are receiving life-saving medical treatment.

■ University of Miami Health System (\$10 million, 2026) to support the Division of Digestive Health and Liver Diseases, including the recruitment of renowned physician-scientist Dr. Field Willingham and the expansion of research, care, and physician training.

"Ken is deeply committed to improving lives and quality of life in South Florida and to ensuring that the

a disease.

"But then you have someone like Dr. Werthheim, who really just wants to make an impact and does believe that his investment will drive really transformative change in how healthcare is delivered," Villoch said.

Helen and Jacob Shaham are further proof of how local philanthropists are driving transformative change in medical care. The founders of The Palace Group of Senior Living Communities donated \$15 million to Nicklaus Children's Health System. The Cancer & Blood Disorders Institute at Nicklaus now bears their name.

"My father-in-law died from cancer," Jacob Shaham said during a reception when the donation was announced. "My identical twin brother died from cancer two years ago. It's close to us. For the last 45 years, we did everything for our elderly residents; now, it's time to do something for our youngest residents."

A February report by The Orr Group says all health systems will come to rely more on big donations:

"In a volatile healthcare landscape," the report says, "philanthropy is no longer

"As more are moving here from different places, they want to see their donations make a difference and have an impact. What better way to do that than to support hospitals that they themselves use?" Morton said.

MONEY FOR MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Hospitals aren't the only institutions drawing massive investments; South Florida medical schools are also attracting large donations that promise to elevate healthcare across the region.

With education, donors are no longer just putting their names on lecture halls; they are treating medical school donations like venture capital — funding scholarship programs and expecting that their increasingly large funds yield regional public health upgrades or high-level clinical research breakthroughs.

Dr. Chad Perlyn, executive vice president and chief medical officer at Nova Southeastern University and dean of NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, said that as South Florida grows, donors recognize the area needs world-class health-

Audience: 73,844

here is a robust healthcare ecosystem," Villoch said. "Doctors talk to each other, and they want to be in an ecosystem where research is happening, where technology is improving healthcare ... creating a stronger environment begets more growth, more investment, and that attracts the top physicians."

Chant at Health Foundation of South Florida notes that South Florida's continued population growth means that healthcare needs will continue to increase, making health philanthropy increasingly vital to expanding access to care, building a stronger workforce, and improving outcomes.

"Philanthropic leaders are recognizing that investments in hospitals, medical education, research, and community health initiatives can create lasting benefits that extend well beyond individual patients and strengthen the future of the entire region," Chant said.

South Florida Sun Sentinel health reporter Cindy Goodman can be reached at cgoodman@sunsentinel.com.