

# McKinlay Memo

FEBRUARY | 2017

Palm Beach County District Six

It is with much sadness that I report that longtime District 6 Senior Aide Johnnie Easton, has returned home to Mississippi. Johnnie, who had a long career with Palm Beach County including serving as aide to two past commissioners, and Commissioner McKinlay, has served as District 6 historian. Her love for the Glades, the Acreage, Loxahatchee Groves, Wellington, Royal Palm Beach, West Palm Beach and everything in between will be missed by her co-workers and constituents.

Johnnie will continue her quest for reform for mental health and substance abuse issues as a tribute to her daughter Tasha, who recently lost her battle with addiction.



Legislative Aide Joseph Sophie

On a much lighter note, I'd like to introduce our newest staff member, Joseph Sophie. Joseph is a lifelong resident of Palm Beach County with deep roots in District 6, having been raised and gone to school in Royal Palm Beach. He was a member of the first class to attend Royal Palm Beach High School when it opened in 1997.

Joseph brings extensive public service experience to the District 6 office, having worked for U.S. Senator Bill Nelson, the Village of Wellington's Communications Department, former State Representative Mark Pafford, and most recently Palm Beach County's Department of Legislative Affairs as Legislative Delegation Aide.

Joseph has earned master's degrees in Public Administration and Political Science from Florida Atlantic University. He and his wife, Allyssa, just welcomed their first child, Theo, this past New Year's Eve.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melissa McKinlay".



Commissioner Melissa McKinlay

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# IN THE COMMUNITY

Palm Beach County District Six

## Florida Opioid Crisis

In 2015, 2,586 Floridians died as a direct cause of opioid overdose. The final count for 2016 is not available yet, but at least 3,650 people are expected to have died of opioid overdoses.

Commissioner McKinlay spoke on behalf of local governments at a press conference in Tallahassee along with Attorney General Pam Bondi and Representative Kathleen Peters. The conference highlighted the crisis and 2017 proposed legislation.

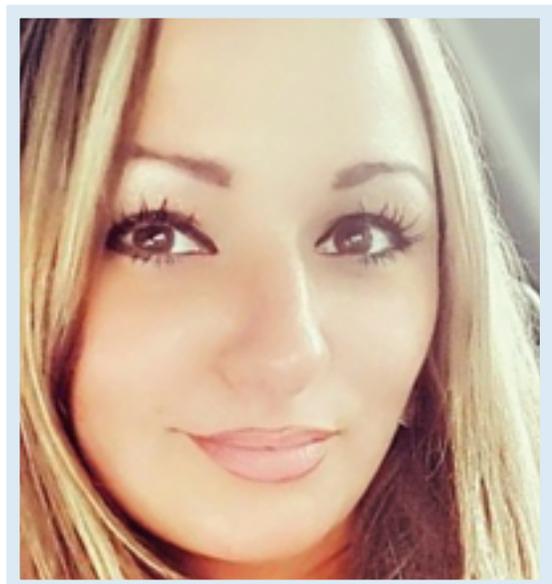
For more information on how this is affecting Palm Beach County, please check out The Palm Beach Post's coverage: <http://bit.ly/2bFxTBa>.



For this reason, Commissioner McKinlay requested that Governor Rick Scott declare a public health emergency for this overdose crisis.

[Click here for the letter](#)

### In Memoriam



Tasha McCraw | July 4, 1983 - November 8, 2016

**Opioid Addiction  
Community  
Conversation**

Wednesday, February 22  
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
PBC Main Library,  
3650 Summit Blvd,  
West Palm Beach

Connect with affected families and discuss strategies for addressing the opioid abuse epidemic in a casual atmosphere

Hosted by:  
Commissioner Melissa McKinlay  
Palm Beach County  
Commissioner Sharon Materio  
City of West Palm Beach

RSVP: [kburke@pbcgov.org](mailto:kburke@pbcgov.org)



## Human Trafficking Awareness Training

Sex trafficking is a form of modern day slavery, widespread throughout the United States. It is the third largest criminal enterprise in the world after identity theft and drug dealing. At the conclusion of Human Trafficking Prevention Month, Palm Beach County Vice Mayor Melissa McKinlay, in partnership with the Club Operators Against Sex Trafficking

(COAST) and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), held a free training session at the Palm Beach County Emergency Operations Center to help people recognize, report, and rescue potential victims. The timing coincided with Superbowl weekend, a time of the year with high trafficking incidents.

Trafficking victims can be of any age, race, gender, or nationality. Trafficking victims are often hidden in plain sight. If you notice suspicious activity in your community, call the Human Trafficking Resource Center, 888-373-7888 or text BEFREE (233-733).

[Download COAST Trafficking Poster](#)



*Human traffickers view Florida as one of the most attractive destinations and transit points for their victims, and Florida accounts for the third largest call volume to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Palm Beach County has adopted an ordinance requiring posting of informational signs at certain types of facilities to inform potential trafficking victims of the remedies and protections provided by federal and state law, and this county is sending a strong message to perpetrators that our county has zero tolerance for all forms of human trafficking.*



# IN THE COMMUNITY

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## Commissioner McKinlay Joins Glades-Area Officials in Tallahassee to Advocate for Protecting Communities South of Lake Okeechobee in Water Debate



Commissioner McKinlay joined by Belle Glade Mayor Steve Wilson and South Bay Mayor Joe Kyles, testified at Senate Appropriations Subcommittee workshops on the Environment and Natural Resources.



Where Lake O's water comes from and where it goes

"No matter where you stand in the debate on how to solve the Lake Okeechobee water crisis, we can all agree that the lives of individuals living in the Glades communities are important," said Commissioner McKinlay. "Ensuring the safety and prosperity of these communities is paramount."

## Community Outreach Event for Homeowners and Local Contractors in The Glades

The Glades community was invited to attend a meeting to learn about low interest rate loans that are available for various home improvement projects. Financing is available at below market rates and homeowners with poor and limited credit history are eligible to apply. Local contractors were also invited to attend the meeting to learn more about how these financing programs can help grow their local businesses.



Glades residents learned about low-interest rate home improvement loans through the Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF) and the Housing Rehabilitation Programs available through Palm Beach County's Department of Economic Sustainability.



For more information about SELF and its loan program, please call (772) 468-1818.



# IN THE COMMUNITY

Palm Beach County District Six

## The 2017 Great Charity Challenge

The Palm Beach International Equestrian Center was packed February 4th, as spectators cheered on teams in the Great Charity Challenge. The Bellissimo Family and Wellington Equestrian Partners celebrated the Great Charity Challenge surpassing the \$10 million milestone in grants to Palm Beach County charities in eight years. Charities are paired up with an equestrian team and each of the 35 charities is guaranteed \$15,000 and the winner receives a \$150,000 grant.

The winning Western Community Charities include:

- Wycliffe Charities Foundation, \$50,000
- Grandma’s Place, \$45,000
- Wellington Cares, \$32,500
- Light House Café Ministries, \$28,000
- The ARC of the Glades, \$22,500
- The Glades Initiative, \$21,000
- Rotary Club of Wellington, \$20,500
- Equestrian Aid Foundation, \$20,000
- Wellington PTO/PTA/PTSA, \$17,000
- Farmworker Coordinating Council, \$16,000.

## South Florida Fair



Thank you to all of the volunteers, staff and fairgoers who helped make the 2017 Fair one of the best ever. Straight from New Orleans’ Mardi Gras World, decor, props and floats welcomed fairgoers as they entered the main exposition center. Food, music and street performers made New Orleans a great theme that was topped off by a daily Mardi Gras Parade. Special congratulations to the 17 area high school students who were awarded a South Florida Fair scholarship.



*Vice Mayor Melissa McKinlay participated in the wild card special drawing which enabled five additional non-profits to compete in the Great Charity Challenge.*

