

**Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award Winner**

**Valerie Ward**, Principal of Scott Lake Elementary School, is the winner of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award. She received the \$10,000 prize, awarded by the Council for Educational Change, at the Annual Luncheon hosted by **Sue Miller** at her Star Island home. Sue Miller is a Council Board Member and Chair of the Educational Advancement Committee.



The statewide award recognizes outstanding Principal leadership. It is presented annually to a high-performing Florida Principal who has demonstrated the ability to raise student achievement; empower staff leadership; and form meaningful partnerships with businesses and community. The finalists and winner were chosen from statewide applicants who have participated in a Council program.

Participating in the event were Guest Speaker **Senator Dan Gelber**; **Representative Anitere Flores**, Chairman of the PreK – 12 Appropriations Committee; **Mayor Shirley Gibson** of Miami Gardens; Miami-Dade County Public Schools **Superintendent Alberto Carvalho**; and a host of dignitaries and celebrities.

**Principal Valerie Ward:**

- Moved Scott Lake Elementary School grade from a C to an A
- Moved Biscayne Garden Elementary School from a D to a B (2001 – 2002)
- Increased the percentage of students achieving learning gains in reading to 78%
- Increased the percentage of students achieving learning gains in math to 87%
- Identified teachers with leadership potential and placed them in leadership roles
- Attended the Council's Leadership Academy on a scholarship donated by the **Deborah Natansohn Foundation**
- Was recognized by the **Clinton Foundation's** Alliance for a Healthier Generation

The other finalists were **Gilberto Bonce**, Principal of South Miami Senior High and **Dr. Christi Chandler Buell**, Principal of Sulphur Springs in Tampa. Each was designated a Gold Medallion Winner and received a \$5,000 award.



The event was sponsored by **Baptist Health South Florida**, **Carnival Cruise Lines**, **Cobb Family Foundation**, **Edward W. Easton**, **Lennar Foundation**, **Richard and Susan Finkelstein**, and **Akerman Senterfitt**.

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**Last month we recognized and thanked our generous Council donors. This month we are proud to highlight “Mentorship” and those partners who have given such precious gifts-their time and talents-to schools throughout Florida. On behalf of all the students and educators whose lives you have touched... Thank You and Happy Holidays.**

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