

‘The Moment Was Right’: Miami-Dade College

President Dr. Eduardo Padrón On Retirement

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MIAMI (CBSMiami) — After an astonishing career, Miami Dade College President [Dr. Eduardo Padrón](#) is stepping down after nearly 50 years of doing what he loves.

“Miami Dade is so ingrained in myself, it is part of my fabric, it is the place I love so much, it is my home,” Dr. Padrón tells CBS4’s Marybel Rodriguez as they sit in the living room of his home.

Dr. Padrón is an iconic and leading figure for higher education and has taken Miami Dade College to a whole new level.

He says the moment to retire was right.



Miami Dade College President Dr. Eduardo Padron talks to CBS4'S Marybel Rodriguez about his retirement. (CBS4)

<https://miami.cbslocal.com/2019/07/22/miami-dade-college-president-dr-eduardo-padron-retiring/>

“Every chapter has a beginning and an end and my chapter has been longer than most I am aware of. So I think the moment was right, the college is in a very good position. The college reached a level of respect and recognition not only locally but nationally, it is at an all-time high. And I think it’s time for another person to come in and continue the work we started,” says Dr. Padrón.

This was a job he started in 1970 when joined the college as a professor and quickly rose through the faculty and administrative ranks. In 1995, he was named president. However, Dr. Padrón’s journey began in 1961 when he fled Cuba with his younger brother at 16 in search of freedom and a better life.

“I used all my savings from 3 and 4 jobs that I had because I came without parents, no money, nothing. I was sleeping 3 hours a day working all kinds of odd jobs and going to school,” recalls Dr. Padrón.

He attended Miami Dade College, which back then was Dade County Junior College, and later earned his Ph.D. from the University of Florida.

“To be able to go to college, get a Ph.D. in economics and have the opportunity to lead one of the best colleges in the nations that is only in America. It’s hard to express that and I never take that for granted,” says Dr. Padrón.

He was even honored by President Obama with the [Presidential Medal of Freedom](#) in 2016, the highest civilian honor.



President Barack Obama gives prestigious Medal of Freedom to Miami Dade College President Eduardo Padron during ceremony at the White House on November 22, 2016.

“The moment when the President was behind me putting the medal I thought of my mother and father, they are smiling and looking down at me. They had passed at that time but they are rejoicing today and to me that’s all worth it,” says Dr. Padrón.

A memorable moment for this icon of education, who under his leadership, MDC is recognized as one of the best colleges in the country and graduated more minorities than any other institution.



Miami Dade College President Dr. Eduardo Padron talks to CBS4'S Marybel Rodriguez about his retirement. (CBS4)

“What I have tried to do all my life is to open the door of opportunity very wide to all kinds of people that never thought they would have the opportunity to get a college education. That’s very rewarding and I feel that’s a great legacy to leave behind,” he says proudly.

After a nationwide search, Dr. Padrón’s successor will be announced on Wednesday.

Although he will be retiring, Dr. Padrón says there is still much work to do and he looks forward to continue serving the college and the community.