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Sundial

Florida Insurers Cancel Policies, COVID's Impact On Colleges, And Inside U.S. Immigration Detention Centers

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CARL JUSTE / MIAMI HERALD STAFF

The damage from Hurricane Irma in 2017 was extensive, including in this area of Big Pine Key.

Thousands of homeowners will be losing their home insurance right before hurricane season. The pandemic's impact on college enrollment. Plus, a look inside immigration detention centers.

On this Tuesday, May 25, episode of Sundial:

Florida Insurers Cancel Policies

Preparing for this hurricane season just got tougher for thousands of homeowners as three large insurance companies are dropping tens of thousands of customers from their home insurance policies.

In these uncertain times, you can rely on WLRN to keep you current on local news and information. Your support is what keeps WLRN

“There’s three companies – all based in Florida. There’s Universal Insurance Company of North America, Southern Fidelity Insurance Company, and Gulfstream Property and Casualty Insurance Company. There’s more than 53,000 policies that have been canceled,” said Rene Rodriguez, a reporter with Miami Herald who covers business and local real estate.

This hurricane season will be a busy one, with forecasters predicting 17 named storms. It is worth noting that these home insurance policies may not cover flooding, which homes in South Florida are particularly vulnerable to.

“If every homeowner policy included flood policies, no one would have homeowners insurance,” Rodriguez said.

You can read more about his reporting on this issue [here](#).

Florida Insurers Cancel Policies

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COVID’s Impact On Colleges

Miami Dade College started the year with a drop in enrollment of 17%, but they’re hoping to make a full recovery to pre-pandemic enrollment this summer.

Sundial spoke with MDC president Madeline Pumariega about the

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pandemic will have on higher education.

“I’m an eternal optimist. At some level, I had hope that we would get through to the other side of this pandemic... I expected what I’ve seen. We are a resilient community and we are a resilient college,” Pumariega said.

Local Black students are also dropping out of Miami Dade College at an alarming rate, according to the [Miami Herald](#).

To address that issue, the college has recently launched a [Rising Black Scholars Program](#), which will provide Black students graduating from high school in 2021 with free tuition for up to two years of study.

But, some students are opting for technical schools, which are seen as a more affordable education option.

Colleges have also turned to more innovative ways to recruit new students and reach out to those who have left. Pumariega talked about the college reaching out to students over the phone, text and email. Miami-Dade Technical Colleges started a door-to-door campaign to get students to enroll.

“A lot of the time people don’t want to know how much you know. They want to know how much you care,” said Anthony “King” Blackman, the founder of Blackman Music Group. He is leading the door-to-door campaign.

He added that the reason Black students are dropping out of more traditional colleges is because 2-to-4-year degrees are costly and require a time commitment that is not realistic for low-income students and those who are also juggling family responsibilities.

COVID's Effects On Colleges

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Inside U.S. Immigration Detention Centers

Tens of thousands of immigrants are kept in detention facilities across the United States, awaiting their opportunity for asylum cases to be heard.

Just last week, the Biden administration [closed two ICE jails](#) following reports of poor medical treatment and violations of the civil rights of detainees.

Meanwhile, the fate of the Homestead detention center in South Florida remains in limbo, after [federal officials told the Miami Herald](#) that authorities planned to reopen the site.

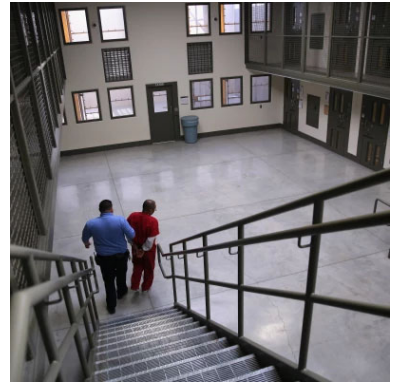
“It’s very much like you would think of a jail, a very low-security jail,” said Gina Polo, an immigration attorney with Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney in Miami. Polo visited an immigrant detention facility in Texas and worked first hand with those seeking asylum.

The experience of a mother held in immigrant detention in the U.S. is told in powerful detail in this month’s [Sundial Book Club](#) selection “Of Women and Salt.”

While the character is fictionalized, her story was created from author Gabriela Garcia’s own experience visiting detention facilities. Find that

Inside U.S. Immigration Detention Centers

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Suria Rimer

Suria is Sundial's fall 2020 high school intern and a production assistant.

[See stories by Suria Rimer](#)



Leslie Ovalle

Leslie Ovalle produces WLRN's daily magazine program, Sundial. She previously produced Morning Edition newscasts at WLRN and anchored the midday news. As a multimedia producer, she also works on visual and digital storytelling.

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