

from diplomas to associate degrees, to four-year bachelor's degrees. Students from the Digital Animation and Special Effects (DAVE) School, a sister film and game production college, were also among the graduates.

"Our graduates are now ready to contribute more fully to their families, their communities, and our country," said FTC President Dr. James Burkett. They have faced many challenges, juggling busy lives, young families, and work demands; but they have prevailed because they believed in themselves. I am extremely proud of them."

Tim Tebow, Triple-A Syracuse baseball player, two-time football national champion, first round NFL draft pick, and Heisman Trophy winner, delivered a salutation to the graduates in a video.

"Today marks a new beginning for you all," said Tebow. "Your education is an important foundation, and you are now ready to build big on it. Go at it wholeheartedly. Don't be afraid of taking risks or failing. Find something your passionate about. Be willing to sacrifice, that is the difference between winning and loosing."



This year's graduating class was unique, as FTC welcomed many students from Puerto Rico who were affected by Hurricane Maria in 2017. The influx of students prompted FTC to launch several programs taught completely in Spanish to facilitate their transition into the Florida job market.

"We have seen amazing results from implementing these programs. The process has had a significant impact on the lives of the students. That is testimony to the power of education and determination," said Dr. Burkett.

Among the graduates, 441 took the stage to receive their diploma in construction trade programs. These FTC graduates will provide a much-needed workforce for Central Florida, as well as the rest of the state, especially in fields such as electrical and welding.

"This year's class graduates at an opportune time as the country faces a great need for skilled workers. We strive to help fill gaps in the labor market with talented workers who are essential to helping our economy grow," emphasized Dr. James Burkett.

A second Florida Technical College graduation class of 430 students will celebrate their



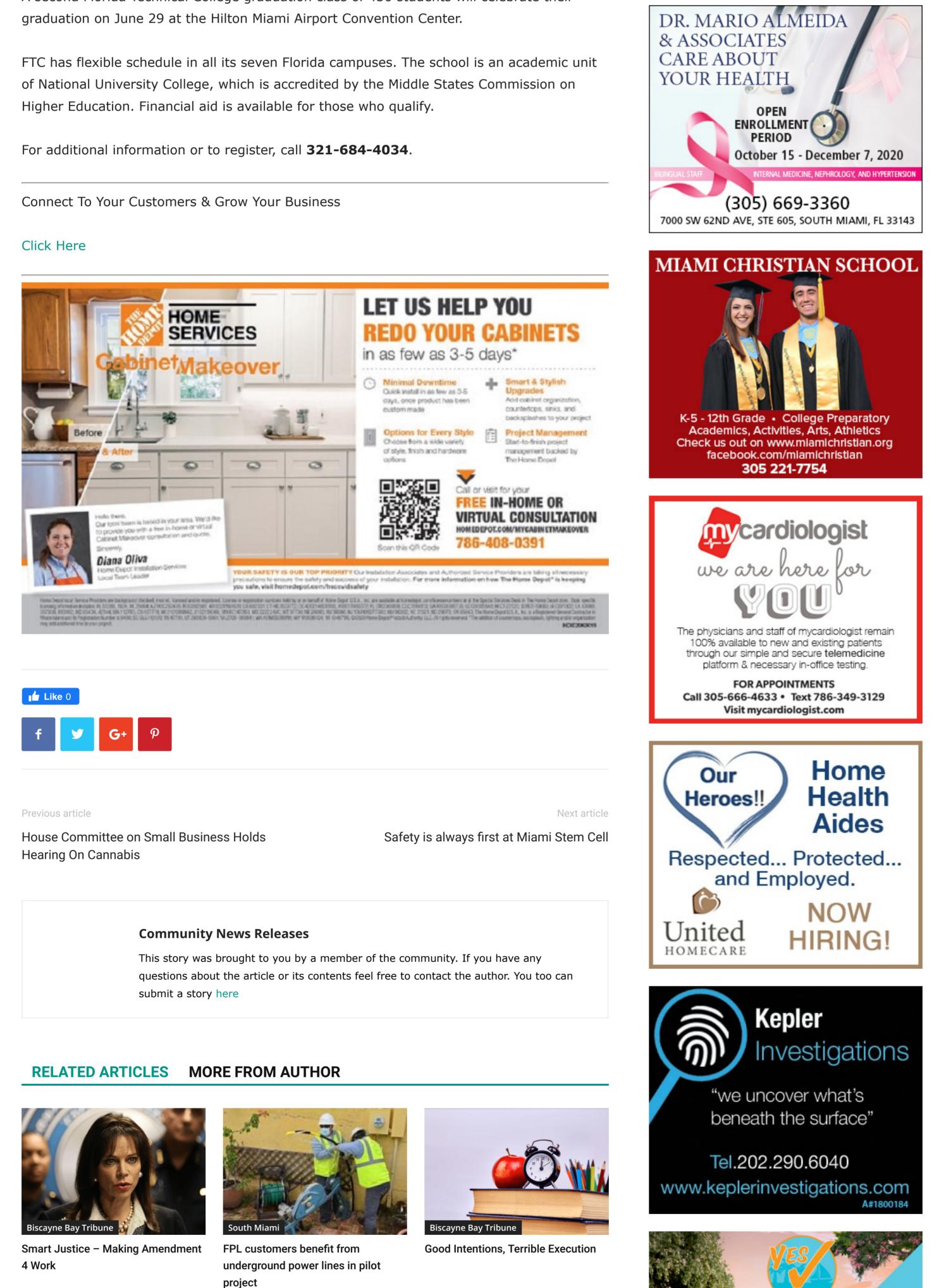


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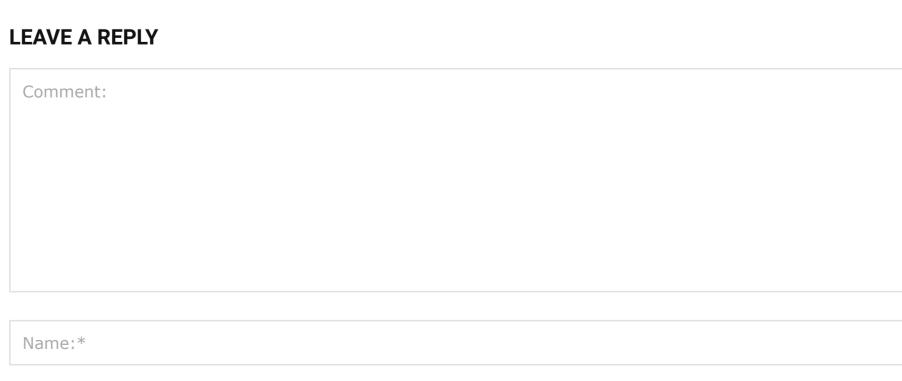




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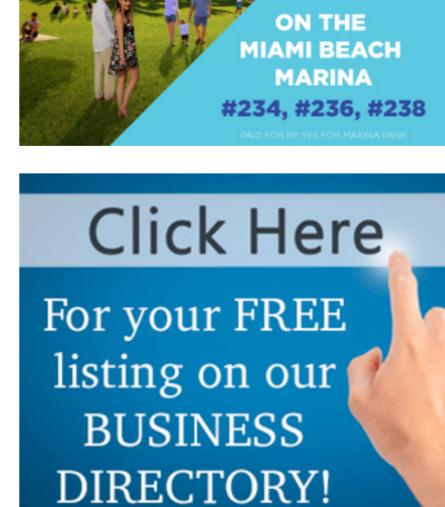
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