

Date February 19, 2021

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Feb. 19, 2021



This week, in honor of Black History Month, let's take a moment to remember three women who made a lasting impact on our state and nation. These trailblazing women are members of the Florida Women's Hall of Fame—a signature project of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women—which is housed under my office.

During Black History Month, we should all reflect on the experiences and successes of Black Americans whose contributions not only shaped our great state for the better, but also our nation.

The remarkable impacts of the lives of some of Florida's hall-of-fame women should continue to be honored and celebrated.

On special display in our state capitol, you will find plaques celebrating the inspiring lives of women like Zora Neale Hurston, Mary McLeod Bethune and Mildred Wilborn Gildersleeve.

Known for her classic novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, [Zora Neale Hurston's](#) work depicted life in the Black south and secured her place as one of the most influential writers of her time.

[Mary McLeod Bethune](#), for whom Bethune-Cookman University is named, pioneered a space for Black excellence in education when educational resources were limited.

And [Mildred Wilborn Gildersleeve](#), one of the most distinguished medical practitioners in Palm

Beach County, helped set the stage for African American women to grow and thrive within the medical field.

These courageous women stood and fought for equality and justice, served as role models and paved the way for countless others to follow in their footsteps.

I am so incredibly proud to highlight these leaders and honor their legacy. They certainly changed the course of history and improved the lives of others. This Black History Month, may their example inspire us all to seek and be part of a better tomorrow—building a Stronger, Safer Florida.



In The News

Florida Attorney General warns of several COVID-19 vaccine scams, FOX 13 Tampa Bay

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Need a COVID vaccine? Watch out for appointment scams, Florida attorney general warns, Miami Herald

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COVID-19 vaccine scams you should avoid, WPTV West Palm Beach

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Ashley Moody urges Joe Biden to reinstate ICE operation targeting sex offenders, Florida Politics

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Florida Attorney General calls on Biden Administration to reinstate Operation Talon, aimed at ending sex trafficking, WCTV Tallahassee

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Attorney General recognizes Punta Gorda Police Department's Veteran Crisis Team, NBC 2 Fort Myers

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody and Statewide Prosecutors Secure 30-Year Prison Sentence for Cult Leader Guilty of Murder



Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a 30-year prison sentence for Anna Young, a 79-year-old cult leader, who pleaded guilty to the late 1980s murder of a toddler. Young confined the toddler in a closet, without food or water, until later found dead by other cult members.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "It is unfathomable to comprehend the horrors that this woman has caused. Thankfully, at 79 years old, she will most likely die in prison and never again be able to harm, torture or kill another human being. I am grateful for the hard work from my Statewide Prosecutors in securing a strong prison sentence for this downright vile criminal."

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Attorney General Moody Urges Biden Administration to Reverse Decision to End Federal Operation Targeting Convicted Sex Offenders in US Illegally

Attorney General Ashley Moody

NEWS ALERT



Attorney General

Ashley Moody, along with attorneys general from 17 other states, is urging President Joseph R. Biden to reverse the decision to end a federal enforcement action targeting convicted sex offenders in the country illegally. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Operation Talon is a nationwide operation that focuses on removing illegally present convicted sex offenders from the United States.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The reversal of a federal enforcement operation created to prevent the molestation, rape and sex trafficking of women, men and children is extremely concerning to me. As Attorney General, not a day goes by where I am not focused on how to end sex trafficking, especially the rape and torture of children—which, as a mother, disgusts me. It should also disgust President Biden, and that is why I am calling on his administration to immediately reinstate Operation Talon, to protect vulnerable populations from sexual abuse and help us end the disturbing epidemic of human trafficking in this country." [Read More](#)

CONSUMER ALERT: As Vaccines Outpace COVID-19 Infections, Be Wary of Vaccine-Related Scams



The total number of doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered in Florida is now outpacing the total number of Floridians who have been reported to have contracted the novel virus. As the state starts to turn the corner, Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to warn Floridians about COVID-19 vaccination scams. With the continuing rollout of vaccines and increasing number of Floridians seeking to secure appointments, scammers have devised multiple methods attempting to take advantage of the highly anticipated vaccination distribution.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Florida is turning the corner with vaccinations outpacing infections. This is great news, but it would be a mistake to let your guard down now—we need to remain vigilant, not only in preventing the spread of COVID-19, but also in protecting against scams that exploit the pandemic in an effort to steal your money or identity. By becoming familiar with emerging vaccine scams and how to avoid them, we can stop fraudsters and build a Stronger, Safer Florida.” [Read More](#)

BACK THE BLUE ALERT: Attorney General Moody Recognizes Punta Gorda Police Department’s New Veteran Crisis Assistance Team



Attorney General Ashley Moody recognized a new program instituted by the Punta Gorda Police Department—the Veteran Crisis Assistance Team. The purpose of VCAT is to help ensure that PGPD is able to effectively handle situations involving military veterans experiencing mental health crises, or who are in need of assistance. Attorney General Moody presented the inaugural members of this team, Detective Jose Delgado, Officer Russell Fiorino, Officer Amber Gray, Officer Brandon Meddaugh, Captain Norman Nahra and Officer Tom Vetri, Back the Blue Awards for the creation of the program and their extraordinary service rendered to local veterans.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “I am honored to present Back the Blue Awards to these police officers, who served in the military themselves, for continuing to give back to their community and going above and beyond to serve veterans. VCAT provides much-needed aid and assistance to veterans experiencing mental health crises. As veterans themselves, these law enforcement officers understand personally the sacrifice servicemembers make to protect Americans. I am so grateful to Officers Fiorino, Gray, Meddaugh and Vetri, Captain Nahra and Detective Delgado for their selfless efforts.” [Read More](#)

Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody helped bolster a human trafficking awareness campaign focused on bringing local, state and community leaders together in the fight to stop the horrific crime. The full campaign will be unveiled later this month.



Attorney General Moody presenting Back the Blue Awards to the Punta Gorda Police Department officers for their innovative new group—the Veteran Crisis Assistance Team.



From left to right: Attorney General Moody, Captain Norman Nahra, Officer Brandon Meddaugh, Officer Russell Fiorino, Officer Tom Vetri, Officer Amber Gray and Detective Jose Delgado Attorney General Moody surprising Capitol Police officers with miniature Bundt cakes in recognition of Random Act of Kindness Day. To watch the surprise, click [here](#).

