

Happy 50th birthday this year to these Miami-area businesses

April 30, 2017



John Nichols (on the right) and John Fullerton (on the left) in the early years of Nichols Brosch.

Among the businesses in the Miami area that are seeing a half-century this year are these:



Colson Hicks Eidson partners, from left: Roberto Martinez, Dean Colson, "Mike" Eidson.

Colson Hicks Eidson

This Coral Gables law firm handles local, national and international litigation and arbitration. Founded 50 years ago by the late Bill Colson and Bill Hicks, the firm has

added 13 partners throughout the years, including name partner Mike Eidson and son of founder Dean Colson. The firm handles some of the biggest product liability cases in the country, including airbag recall litigation and Chinese drywall and has won hundreds of multimillion dollar verdicts and settlements for its clients.



Today, the legacy of El Dorado furniture store founder Manuel Capó's lives on through his sons, who make up the company's Board of Directors. His grandchildren also help run the business.
CHARLES TRAINOR JR - ctrainor@miamiherald.com

El Dorado Furniture

This furniture retailer was founded by Manuel Capó who fled Cuba with two of his sons and worked at what they knew best: furniture. On June 27th, 1967, seven months after their arrival, the Capós — who had owned a furniture store established in the 1920s in Pinar del Rio — opened their store on Miami's Calle Ocho (Southwest Eighth Street), naming the store after the boat they sailed to freedom: El Dorado. Fifty years later, the company has expanded brand operations with 14 locations across Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Lee counties, as well as a comprehensive online store at www.eldoradofurniture.com. The business has become the largest Hispanic-

owned furniture retail enterprise in the United States and is ranked among the top 50 furniture retailers in the country. Revenues for 2016 exceeded an estimated \$4 million.

Gilda Industries

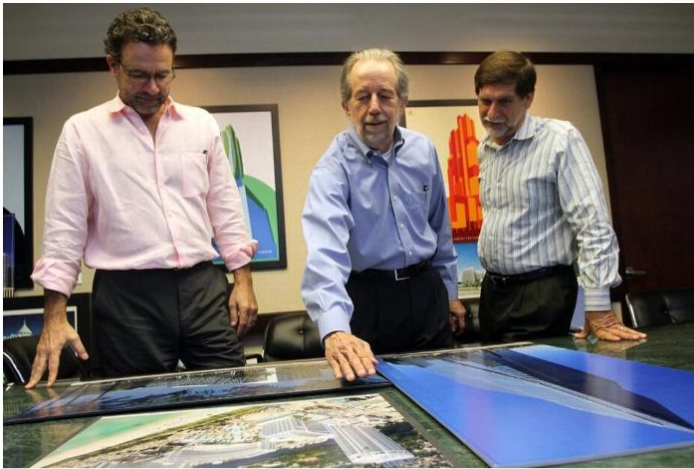
Located in Hialeah, Gilda Industries was founded by the Blazquez family and manufactures and distributes scooped crackers and snacks. Now managed by the family's second and third generation, Gilda has 67 full-time workers, a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, and more than a dozen delivery trucks.



Greenberg Traurig founding partners Mel Greenberg, Bob Traurig, Larry Hoffman.

Greenberg Traurig

The firm was founded in downtown Miami by three Jewish lawyers who wanted to replicate New York law firms. From the start, Greenberg Traurig has handled high-profile legal matters, and over the years, it has grown to become one of the top 20 largest law firms in the country with 2,000 attorneys in 38 offices in the United States, Latin America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.



From left: Don Wolfe, Bruce Brosch, Jim Wurst at architecture firm Nichols, Brosch, Wurst, Wolfe and Associates, Inc., in 2012.
ALLISON DIAZ - FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

Nichols, Brosch, Wurst, Wolfe and Associates

This Coral Gables-based architecture firm is best known for its design and restoration of many of Miami's big projects. Founded by John Nichols, the firm has been involved in more than \$5 billion in renovations and new construction for more than 300 hotels including the W Hotel in Miami Beach and the Diplomat Resort and Convention Center in Hollywood. It expanded its

services into the Latin American market in 2016, when it announced its strategic alliance with Alberto Reifer & Arquitectos, a boutique architecture firm based in San Jose, Costa Rica.



Executives for Perry Ellis rang the closing bell on Sept. 13, 2010 at the Nasdaq stock exchange. In Times Square, New York City, Perry Ellis International executives are flanked by fashion models. Center right is George Feldenkreis, the chairman and chief executive office of the Miami-based company. Center left (dark hair) is Oscar Feldenkreis, the company's vice chairman, president and chief operating officer.
Zef Nikolla - Nasdaq

Perry Ellis International

Perry Ellis in Doral is the successor to Supreme International that was founded by George Feldenkreis. Born in Havana, Cuba, to Russian immigrants, Feldenkreis moved to Miami in 1961 and started an apparel business that became known as Supreme International. Supreme International went public in 1993 and became Perry Ellis International (PEI) after acquiring the powerhouse brand in 1999, which has since grown into a multinational corporation with annual revenues of nearly \$1 billion. Feldenkreis remains involved as chairman.



Aaron Podhurst of Podhurst Orseck, center, at a party in February. (He's flanked by Brian Bilzin, left, and Tony Argitz.)
GISELLE SANTALUCCI

Podhurst Orseck

Aaron S. Podhurst left one of Miami's top firms to partner with Robert Orseck to found a law practice based on the philosophy of providing high-caliber representation in state and federal trial courts. The firm now has 14 lawyers and handles large scale aviation, class action and personal injury and appellate litigation. Its biggest successes include recovering close to \$1 billion on behalf of plaintiffs in a national insurance class action,

and recovering more than \$500 million on behalf of bank customers in overdraft fee litigation. As lead plaintiffs' attorney, the firm was instrumental in reaching a \$1 billion dollar settlement with the NFL for concussion-related injuries.



Williamson Cadillac

Williamson Automotive Group is the umbrella under which Williamson Cadillac — turning 50 this year — is positioned. Williamson Cadillac was originally the George Williamson Cadillac Company, founded by George with son Ed in the family business as a new-car salesman. Five years later, Ed became president of the company, and in 1976, he and his brother Tom purchased the dealership from their father and renamed it Williamson Cadillac Company. The dealership moved from its Dadeland location to about a mile south near Southwest 104th Street and U.S. 1 in 2001. Now wife Carol is treasurer, Ed is chairman and Ed's son, Trae, is president. Today Ed Williamson also is a partner in Vera Cadillac Buick GMC of Pembroke Pines. The Cadillac dealership has been No. 1 in the Southeast region (seven states) 15 years based on sales volume.



Colson Hicks: the founders Bill Colson and Bill Hicks. (Both deceased now.) 1967: Firm founded by Bill Colson and Bill Hicks as Colson Hicks. 1974: Lewis S. Mike Eidson joined the firm. 1981: Dean Colson (Bill Colson's son) joins the firm. 1981: Firm changes name to Colson Hicks Eidson. 1990: Joseph Matthews joined the firm. 1997: Roberto Martinez joined the firm. Other longstanding partners: Enid Mendoza: 25 years; Maureen Lefebvre: 20 years; Joseph J. Kalbac Jr.: 20 years; Julie Braman Kane: 24 years; Deborah J. Gander: 17 years; Ervin A. Gonzalez: 16 years; Curt Miner: 10 years. Patrick Montoya – 10 years Ronald W. Kleinman – 7 years

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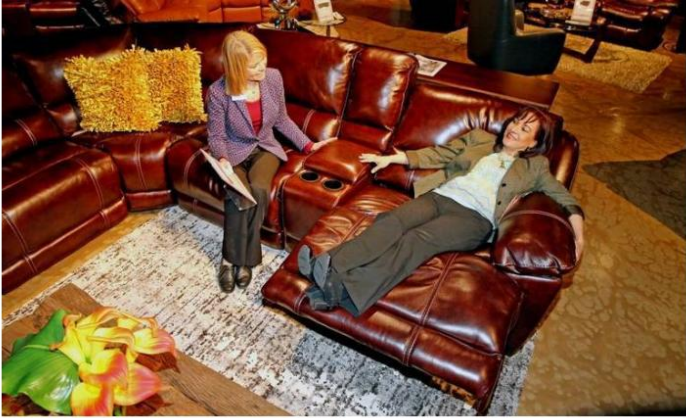
Luis Capó, president of El Dorado Furniture. **CHARLES TRAINOR JR** - ctrainor@miamiherald.com

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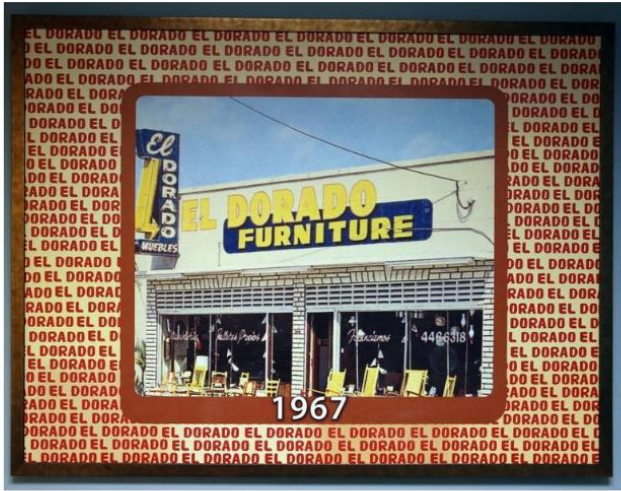


A mural of the original Southwest Eighth Street El Dorado Furniture store on the store's boulevard at the store. **CHARLES TRAINOR JR** - ctrainor@miamiherald.com

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Salesperson Nydia Cabanas talks with Dora Monsalve on one of the couches in the Leather Gallery at El Dorado on Southwest Eighth Street. **CHARLES TRAINOR JR** - ctrainor@miamiherald.com



A framed photograph of the original Southwest Eighth Street El Dorado Furniture store, April 28, 2017. **CHARLES TRAINOR JR** - ctrainor@miamiherald.com



At Gilda Industries in 1996: Antonio (who has since passed) and Juan Blazquez. **Donna E. Natale Planas** - Herald Staff



Larry Hoffman, Matt Gorson and Cesar Alvarez at Greenberg Traurig.

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Opening the new site of Williamson Cadillac.

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