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PULSE NIGHTCLUB

## 10 YEARS LATER



Local and federal law enforcement work at the residence of Omar Mateen in Fort Pierce. Omar Mateen opened fire June 12, 2016, at Pulse nightclub in a mass shooting that left 49 dead and 58 injured. JEREMIAH WILSON/TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS FILE

## Could Lakeland become a data center hotspot?

Sara-Megan Walsh  
Lakeland Ledger  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Data centers could become a major source of valuable tax revenue, according to a Lakeland developer who believes the city has the resources to meet the demands of such facilities without negatively impacting residents.

Franklin Cruz, CEO of True Investors Development, said he thinks Lakeland could become a prime location for developers searching to build data centers.

See **HOTSPOT**, Page 3A



Franklin Cruz, CEO of True Investors Development, has been approached about building data centers on land he owns in Polk County. ERNST PETERS/THE LEDGER

## Shooter's ties to Fort Pierce recalled

Will Greenlee Treasure Coast Newspapers | USA TODAY NETWORK

ST. LUCIE COUNTY — Ten years ago this month, a 29-year-old Fort Pierce man fatally shot dozens of people at a gay nightclub in Orlando before dying in a confrontation with law enforcement officers. ● Omar Mateen opened fire June 12, 2016, at Pulse nightclub in a mass shooting that left 49 dead and 58 injured. Of those who died, none were reported to have been living on the Treasure Coast at the time of the shooting. ● Mateen's actions brought significant attention to the Treasure Coast and St. Lucie County, where he grew up, worked and worshipped at the Islamic Center of Fort Pierce. ● An Orlando police dispatcher around 2:35 a.m. during the incident asked Mateen's name, and he said, "My name is I pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State," according to a release from the FBI.

He later identified as an Islamic soldier in conversations with crisis negotiators.

Mateen, killed after a standoff with law enforcement officials, was buried in the Muslim Cemetery of South Florida in Hialeah Gardens. Toxicology results were negative for alcohol and a variety of drugs, including amphetamines and opiates.

After the shootings, the Islamic Cen-

ter of Fort Pierce issued this statement on its Facebook page:

"We condemn this monstrous attack and offer our heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of all those killed or injured. The Muslim community of Fort Pierce joins our fellow Americans in repudiating anyone or any group that would claim to justify or excuse such an appalling act of violence." The former Pulse nightclub was de-

molished in March to make way for a formal memorial in Orlando. The memorial is scheduled to be completed in 2027.

### Omar Mateen brings national attention to Fort Pierce

On June 13, 2016 — a day after the shootings — Mateen's father, Seddique Mateen, spoke to a host of reporters in a home in Port St. Lucie.

"As a father, I don't want any father to go through what we are going through. I don't approve what he did," Seddique Mateen said. "What he did was completely (the) act of (a) terrorist."



Mateen

Seddique Mateen described the United States as his "house," saying the country "is the house that always (is) taking care of me, my family, all the people from my homeland." He said he came to the United States in the 1980s after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which he said is his homeland, and moved to Port St. Lucie from New York

See **PULSE**, Page 2A

## Trustees show full confidence in Kamoutsas

Gary White  
Lakeland Ledger  
USA TODAY NETWORK

WINTER HAVEN — Polk State College went all out to dispel any questions about whether Anastasios "Stasi" Kamoutsas is the right person to be the school's next president.

Members of the District Board of Trustees offered unrestrained praise for Kamoutsas before voting unanimously to appoint him as the college's sixth president during their June 3 meeting. Of the two trustees unable to attend, one sent a letter of support,

See **KAMOUTSAS**, Page 2A

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