

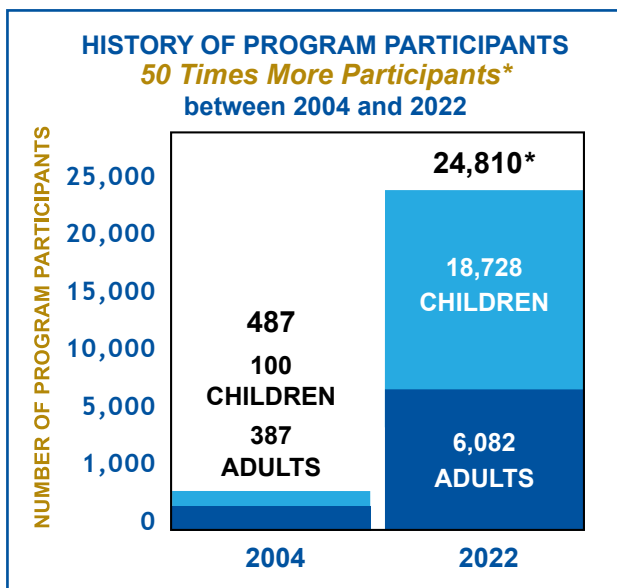
Transforming Lives on the Road to Independence



95TH ANNIVERSARY FUND TO SUSTAIN PROGRAMS FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Our vision as we begin to look towards our centennial is that every blind and visually impaired person, from blind babies to seniors, has the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential, to wholly participate in all aspects of life, and to stay active and engaged.

For nearly 95 years, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has been transforming the lives of our program participants, from early Intervention for blind babies through seniors affected by uncorrectable vision loss, but the future holds many challenges for this growing population. We must do more to proactively address the growing need. The blind and visually impaired population is increasing exponentially. As a result, many more people need our services: over the past 20 years, our number of program participants has grown from approximately 500 per year to almost 25,000 per year – a 50-fold increase!



To serve the increasing numbers of infants, children, and adults who are blind or have low vision problems, Miami Lighthouse is seeking funds to sustain and grow our programs and build upon our status as a National Center of Excellence in Low Vision and Vision Rehabilitation.

The time has come for Miami Lighthouse to take advantage of its reputation, credibility, fiscal and administrative strength, and past successes to provide much-needed intervention and rehabilitation services to our present and future clients of all ages and ensure sustainability of our existing programs.

The goal of our 95th Anniversary Campaign is to identify initially philanthropists to raise \$4.75 million as the “Matching Challenge Team,” with their

one-for-one matching challenge to raise \$4.75 million over two years to generate a total \$9.5 million in recognition of our 95 years of transforming the lives of children and adults. Significant donations will provide naming opportunities such as naming our academy, naming program classrooms, and branding one of our mobile vision units.

FUNDING SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH FOR 95 YEARS AND BEYOND

You can participate in the 95th Anniversary Matching Challenge to sustain programs for the blind and visually impaired by making a donation using the enclosed business reply envelope or by donating online at www.miamilighthouse.org

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for New Playground Expansion

On March 22nd, we hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony in celebration of our playground expansion, the final phase of our Miami Lighthouse Academy multi-year construction project to support the innovative school's classroom growth. Completion of the expanded playground came a year after the opening of the new 30,000-square-foot interior classroom expansion to our existing Academy facility.

The playground features an open field with colorful portable outdoor picnic tables and umbrellas generously funded by former Miami-Dade County Commissioner Rebecca Sosa. Extensive perimeter trees to provide shade were funded in-part by Dixie Landscape and Miami-Dade County Commissioner Raquel Regalado. The entire playground area is protected by a six-foot concrete masonry wall.



Left to Right: Marcel Morlote, Vice-President, Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners; Shelby Reamer, Dixie Landscape; Raquel Regalado, Miami-Dade County Commissioner; Sally Heyman, former Miami-Dade County Commissioner; Virginia Jacko, President and CEO Miami Lighthouse; Harley Miller, CEO Miller Construction Company; Sue Reamer, Dixie Landscape; Charles Nielson, Board Chair, Miami Lighthouse



Harley Miller, CEO of Miller Construction, presents Eagle Award to Virginia Jacko, President and CEO and Charles Nielson, Board Chair, Miami Lighthouse

Sally Heyman, former Miami-Dade County Commissioner, arranged the funding of this most important aspect of the playground.

Miller Construction received an Association of Builders & Contractors Excellence Eagle Award in recognition of the classroom expansion project's great design, execution, safety and quality, as determined by an independent panel. Harley Miller, CEO of Miller Construction, presented the award at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. Miller Construction and Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners were responsible for construction and design of the classroom expansion project.

Miami Lighthouse

Tel. 305-856-2288 • Fax. 305-285-6967

HOURS: Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Miami Lighthouse Lantern Newsletter

Publisher: Virginia A. Jacko

Editors: Sharon Caughill, Heidy Fariñas,
Cameron Sisser

Graphics: Susan Conroy Design

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Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Miami Lighthouse,

On January 27, 2024, Miami Lighthouse will hold its 95th anniversary celebration. My family and I have been involved with Miami Lighthouse for 35 of those years during which this institution has experienced phenomenal growth. During my first term as Board Chair that began in 2006, Miami Lighthouse had a total of 1,700 program participants compared to nearly 25,000 today, and our physical facility was much smaller with construction of our third-floor addition in progress. Since then, we have added a fourth floor and completed our Miami Lighthouse Academy building expansion.

As our building grew to accommodate the increased demand for our services, new programs were added. For example, in 2007 we acquired our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, and in 2021 our Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Collaborative opened. In this newsletter you will read touching stories of a young boy who received his first pair of prescription glasses from our Heiken Program and about a mother whose three-month-old son was diagnosed as functionally blind with CVI and was told by his doctor that there was nothing anyone could do to change that.

As my term as Chairman of the Board draws to a close, I want to thank our dedicated Board Directors, excellent leadership team, guided by the vision of CEO Virginia Jacko, and our outstanding professional staff. It is my pleasure to welcome Steven Solomon as incoming Board Chair. We are grateful and excited to have him bring his unique talents, expertise and perspective to the work of Miami Lighthouse in order to further our vision that every blind and visually impaired person has the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential.

From all of us who work to promote the mission of Miami Lighthouse to create independence and a better life for people with blindness and visual impairment, we extend our deepest thanks to you, our donors. As we celebrate the past and look to the future we count on your ongoing support.

Sincerely,



Charles J. Nielson

Chairman, Board of Directors



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Miami Lighthouse Wins Coveted Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce NOVO Award

As we celebrated Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) month in September it was very fitting that Miami Lighthouse received the coveted Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit Business Innovative Excellence NOVO Award honoring a nonprofit with an annual budget of \$2 million plus for our Cortical Visual Impairment Collaborative Center. Our CVI Collaborative Center is Florida's first initiative addressing CVI through a collaboration of medical professionals, educators, service providers, researchers, and community partners. We express our gratitude to our collaborative members: University of Miami Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, NSU College of Medicine and College of Optometry, The Brain Institute at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, and Miami-Dade County Public Schools as well as our initial funders The Children's Trust and the Health Foundation of South Florida for their support.



Left to right: Claudia Carral, parent of Miami Lighthouse Academy student; Cameron Sisser, Senior Vice President Miami Lighthouse; Tania Perez, Associate Director, Miami Lighthouse CVI Collaborative Center; Myrna Vaca, Director of Community Relations, University of Miami Health System; Francesca Crozier-Fitzgerald, Director, Miami Lighthouse CVI Collaborative Center; Virginia Jacko, President and CEO Miami Lighthouse; Gale Nelson, Chair, Greater Miami Chamber Nonprofit Business Committee; Deborah Koch, Vice Chair, Greater Miami Chamber Nonprofit Business Committee; Hector Ponte, Incoming Chair, Greater Miami Chamber; Juan Dupuy, parent of Miami Lighthouse Academy student; Dr. Anuj Jayakar, Pediatric Neurologist, Nicklaus Children's Hospital Brain Institute

Miami-Dade Optometric Physicians Association Meeting Held at Miami Lighthouse



Miami Lighthouse Honorary Board Director Dr. Maricarmen Perez-Blanco, President and CEO Virginia Jacko, Dr. Carlos Mendoza-Santiesteban, and President of MDOPA Dr. Eric Chow

Members of the Miami-Dade Optometric Physicians Association (MDOPA) held their September dinner meeting at Miami Lighthouse. Dr. Eric Chow, MDOPA President, welcomed attendees and Virginia Jacko, President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse, introduced a video about our Miami Lighthouse Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, which was established by MDOPA members in 1992 as the Dr. Bruce Heiken Memorial Fund. Dr. Carlos Mendoza-Santiesteban, Associate Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, along with Francesca Crozier-Fitzgerald, Director, Miami Lighthouse Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Collaborative Center and Tania Perez, Associate Director, Miami Lighthouse CVI Collaborative Center gave a continuing education

presentation on "CVI: From the Clinical and Educational Perspectives." The evening's music was provided by Miami Lighthouse's nationally recognized Music Program and the event was sponsored by Physician Recommended Nutraceuticals.

Creating a CVI Conscious Community

We were honored and excited to host Christine Roman-Lantzy, PhD, a leading expert in cortical visual impairment (CVI), developer of The CVI Range, and director of the Pediatric VIEW Program at The Children's Home & Lemieux Family Center, for a full-day workshop at Miami Lighthouse on May 17th. With over 30 years of experience working with children with CVI, Dr. Roman-Lantzy's lectures, workshops and multiple texts on the assessment and intervention methods for children with CVI are internationally acclaimed.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy's, "Creating a CVI-Conscious Community" focused on the implementation of her infant screening protocol for infants at high-risk for CVI, structured educational intervention methods in the classroom and at home, social interaction skill-building for children with CVI, orientation and mobility skills, and best practices for collaborating across the whole team of educators, therapists, and parents when working with a child with CVI.

The workshop was funded by our The Children's Trust Innovation Grant to facilitate communitywide events for educational and health professionals, service providers, and community partners to increase awareness of CVI. Our 39 participants included representatives from neuro-ophthalmology at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, optometrists from Nova Southeastern University and Miami-Dade, educators and service providers from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, representatives from University of Florida's Deafblind Project, parents, Miami Lighthouse Academy teachers, TVIs, professionals and staff.

Miami Lighthouse Featured in *Exceptional Parent Magazine*

"Diversity and Inclusion Prepare Everyone for the Real World" by CEO Virginia Jacko appeared in the August 2023 issue of *Exceptional Parent Magazine*. The article talks about the importance of enrolling a visually impaired child in an inclusive environment for higher academic achievement, increased self-esteem, more social interactions within the classroom and a better understanding of diverse abilities.

"Seven years ago, we opened the Miami Lighthouse Academy, an inclusive learning environment for early learners ages one through four, with and without vision impairments, to ensure that children thrive together and form lasting connections and friendships," writes CEO Jacko. "A study from the University of Miami indicates that our classes are above national averages in the areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support for both our toddlers' and Pre-K programs. When our visually impaired students graduate from our second grade they more easily adapt to mainstream public schools."



Visually impaired students in our Miami Lighthouse Academy learn about crabs and turtles using toys and an educational book



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT CVI:
THE LEADING CAUSE OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN KIDS
BY VIRGINIA A. JACKO

An article authored by CEO Virginia Jacko entitled "What to Know about CVI: The Leading Cause of Visual Impairment in Kids," appeared in the March 2023 issue of *Exceptional Parent Magazine*. It featured Lorenzo, one of our Miami Lighthouse Academy second grade graduates who entered our public school system reading at grade level despite at age three months his physician's hopeless prognosis. Lorenzo is one of thousands of children across the United States with Cortical Vision Impairment (CVI), a condition that affects approximately one third of children with visual impairment. Despite being told that there was no cure for her son's condition, Lorenzo's mother was determined to get help. She brought him to Miami Lighthouse where he joined our inclusive preschool program and began CVI educational intervention. Now as an elementary school student, Lorenzo is reading adapted text at grade level with

appropriate spacing between words and lines to reduce complexity. Lorenzo's story is a testament to the power of early diagnosis and intervention, two things that are critical when it comes to children with CVI.

Both articles are available on our website at www.miamilighthouse.org under the News and Events tab, "In the News."

PROGRAMS

Art and Music

Our artistic clients, despite their vision loss, continue to receive recognition. Their works have been chosen for juried art exhibitions and have won awards at state, national and international art competitions.

We are proud to announce that works by four of our Senior Group Health and Activities (SGA) emerging artists were selected for the juried Unity Art Exhibition that was held in Tampa this October. The artworks exhibited were “Tower of Hope” by Victor Brown, “Seeing Eye Dog #2,” a large collaborative mixed media painting by SGA artists, “United Casas” a mixed media work by Juana Castenada, and “Universal Faces United,” a colored pencil drawing by Alondra Roldan.



Griselle Diaz’s painting “Healthy Energy Emerges” was selected for the juried exhibition “The Next Step,” which was held April 28th through June 29th at the Dr. Gene Prough Center for the Arts located on the Marianna Campus of Chipola College in Marianna, FL, and SGA artist Ester Almaguer won her first award with her mixed media piece “Owl Vision,” which will be featured in the 2024 Arts4All Florida calendar.



At the American Printing House Global Art Competition awards held in Louisville, Kentucky, this October, three artworks by Miami Lighthouse clients received second place International Awards: “Live Planet Luv,” created by students in our Miami Lighthouse Academy, “SEE Shark,” a large collaborative mixed media painting created by our SGA adult artists, and “Emerged in Tranquility” by SGA program participant Nora Delabat.



Annual Art Walk at Miami Lighthouse

On Saturday, March 11th we celebrated our Third Annual Art Walk at Miami Lighthouse. This tactile and visual arts show was created by artists who are blind or visually impaired, from our early learners to seniors, guided by our motto, "It's Possible to See ART Without Sight." Attendees enjoyed our various art exhibits, music by our Miami Lighthouse United Voices Choir, and our interactive community art experience that culminated in a magnificent collaborative collage. Our unique art show continues to embrace inclusion, diversity and equity in the arts with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners.



Collaborative collage



Miami Lighthouse student Kaden with his contribution to the collaborative collage



SGA artist Nora with her painting "Natural Woman"

Miami Lighthouse United Voices Choir

Miami Lighthouse's innovative Music Program offerings are opening doors to careers in music. Our United Voices Choir was selected to promote the Alicia Keys Concert at FLA Live Arena in partnership with the Florida Panthers on June 28th. They performed the Alicia Keys hit, "If I Ain't Got You." Miami Lighthouse is one of the only organizations in the nation offering all-inclusive music, sound engineering, and youth development programs for the blind and visually impaired and sighted peers. We are a leader in music education for the blind and provide the only comprehensive Braille music distance learning curriculum accessible to any musician throughout the world. Our music program is offered at no cost to participants.



United Voices Choir members holding their tickets to the Alicia Keys Concert

We are grateful to our generous donors who have helped our artists excel by contributing to the Wildflower Foundation Matching Challenge. **You can help our artists and musicians demonstrate that visual impairment is not a barrier to artistic achievement by joining the new Wildflower Foundation Matching Challenge by donating online at www.miamilighthouse.org.** New gifts or increases in existing donor contributions will be matched dollar for dollar. Please call CEO Virginia Jacko at 305-856-4176 for details.



THE WILDFLOWER
FOUNDATION, INC.

Miami Lighthouse Academy



*Dr. Kelli Hunter-Sheppard
and CEO Virginia Jacko*



Fifteen Pre-K and second grade students graduated from our Miami Lighthouse Academy on June 2nd. We are pleased to report that all of our visually impaired students who completed second grade matriculated to third grade in community schools. At our graduation ceremony Academy officers were represented by President Virginia Jacko and Treasurer Karla Richey.

We express our appreciation to Dr. Kelli Hunter Sheppard, District Director at Miami-Dade County Public Schools, who is responsible for exceptional learning throughout Miami-Dade County. She oversees our curriculum and educational practices for early learners and early elementary school students attending our Miami Lighthouse Academy.



*August was back to school time for students
in our Miami Lighthouse Academy*

Cars for Charity: Our Students Enjoyed a “Once in a Lifetime” Experience!



*Miami Lighthouse students with CEO Virginia Jacko in
front of Homestead-Miami Speedway NASCAR race car*

More than 50 Miami Lighthouse students embarked on an extraordinary adventure when car enthusiasts and sponsors donated their time to give them the ride of their lives. Our students interacted with an impressive fleet of over 20 high-performance vehicles and were able to hear and feel the roar of the engines, as well as sit in, explore and ride in the captivating cars ranging from Ferraris, McLarens, Porsches, Lamborghinis, and Vipers, to a NASCAR race car and many more. The highly anticipated event was carefully designed to instill confidence through the power of touch and interaction with the cars.

The event garnered extensive media coverage including CBS-4 Miami, WPLG Channel 10, DuPont Registry and Community Newspapers. We thank our sponsors who made the event possible: Michael Weintraub, Homestead Miami Speedway, Grove Bank & Trust, Luisa and George Foyo, Milagros and Juan Fernandez Barquin, Sr., Caridad and Edward Ruggiero, The Collection, Baptist Health South Florida, Caterina Sastri, Frank Voytek, Pete Fernandez, Alexander Mendoza, the Nielson Family, Neil Solser, Trish and Dan Bell, Pepe Abrante Cosio, John Vidalin, Dr. Mike McDermott, Jhonny Mercado, German Valencia, Olga Villaverde, Alexander de la Cruz, Dr. Ari and Patty Abril, David Pernas, The Grandio Family, Albert Gocsman, Becoming Legendary, SFM Services, AG Supercars, WTS Dynamics, Flatout Investments, and others.



Cars for Charity Sponsors

Miami Lighthouse Summer Camp Students Visit U.S. Bankruptcy Court

Miami Lighthouse students experienced a fascinating visit to the United States Bankruptcy Court recently as guests of Chief Judge Laurel Isicoff and her courtroom staff. The students were present in several hearings held via Zoom. Judge Isicoff explained important information about the bankruptcy proceedings and laws established in the US. She also engaged in a Q&A with students and answered all their questions. During the visit, which was organized by incoming Board Chair Steven Solomon, the students had the opportunity to tour the different courtroom areas and learn about the various roles of each person who works with Judge Isicoff during a court case. Our thanks go out to Judge Isicoff and her staff for providing our students with this meaningful summer experience.



Chief Judge Laurel Isicoff welcomed our Pre-Employment Transition students to the United States Bankruptcy Court

Pre-Employment Transition Program Visits Miami Seaquarium

Our teen Summer Camp participants loved their field trip to the Miami Seaquarium. This educational and multisensory experience allowed our teens to have hands-on encounters. This specially curated program included feeding, playing with, and petting the animals, allowing every student, regardless of their visual ability, to connect with the marine creatures through touch and interaction. Thank you Miami Seaquarium for helping us prove that “It is possible to see without sight™.”



Transition Program teenagers at Miami Seaquarium

Girl Scout Troop 552 Creates Unique Music Curriculum



Miami Lighthouse summer music students and teachers practice the drumming curriculum developed by Girl Scout Troop 552

summer and, in collaboration with Friends of South Florida Music, created a drumming curriculum for Miami Lighthouse music students.

What makes Gabriella extremely proud is knowing that her drumming curriculum will be implemented into the music classes at Miami Lighthouse, leaving a lasting legacy. Congratulations Girl Scout Troop 552 and Gabriella, and thank you for your efforts!

You can help teenagers who are visually impaired reap the benefits of music education by making a donation on our website earmarked for our Youth Music Program.

Miami Girl Scout Troop 552 and Troop member Gabriella selected Miami Lighthouse as their project in order to achieve a Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can achieve. This award requires a troop to undertake a sustainable project. Gabriella and her troop worked with our Miami Lighthouse Music Program throughout the

Miami Marlins Host “Touch Tour” for Miami Lighthouse Summer Camp Students



The Miami Marlins hosted the annual “Touch Tour” for Miami Lighthouse students on June 21st at loanDepot Park. Students had the opportunity to interact with the team manager and players, touch the field and test professional baseball equipment. The event was covered by



Summer Campers at loanDepot Park

Channel 10. You can watch the coverage by visiting our website at www.miamilighthouse.org, clicking the “News and Events Tab” and selecting “In the News.”

Teenagers Visit the Florida Panthers and Learn to Play Floorball

On July 14th, students in Miami Lighthouse’s Pre-Employment Transition Program for teenagers enjoyed taking part in a hands-on hockey clinic thanks to the Florida Panthers Foundation. The teenagers played floorball in the bowl of FLA Live Arena and also participated in a career development panel. The hockey clinic taught the youngsters stick handling and passing and shooting using balls containing a bell to enable students to track it auditorily and to aim it toward the net with a beeper on top.

The outing was covered by several news outlets including CBS-4, WSVN-7, Channel 10, the *Miami Herald* and *New Castle News*.

Miami Lighthouse has been the recipient of several Community Champions Grants from the Florida Panthers Foundation. Thanks to these grants, our Florida Heiken Children Vision Program has broadened its reach throughout South Florida by providing the opportunity to have better vision to a greater number of financially disadvantaged children who are in dire need of eye care.



Transition Program students visit to the Florida Panthers

You can help teenagers who are visually impaired become job ready by making a donation on our website and specifying that it is for our Pre-Employment Transition Program.

Miami Lighthouse’s Florida Heiken Program Makes a Lasting Impact on the Lives of Children throughout the State

A Lafayette County Public Schools Student Received His First Pair of Prescription Glasses from Our Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program

During the 2022-2023 school year our Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program provided more than 18,000 schoolchildren throughout the State of Florida a comprehensive eye exam and nearly 12,000 received prescription glasses. A story about a seven-year-old boy named Joey, as told by Melissa Pearson from Lafayette County Public Schools, is a typical story and very heart warming. Joey is just one of many children who are heard to say in amazement,

“Oh, I can see better now!”



Ms. Pearson says, “Joey received his very first eyeglasses from the Florida Heiken Program. The glasses were a very strong prescription, and the little boy was over the top with joy when he received them. One of the first things he did when he returned to the classroom was to ask his teacher what the spots on her face were. The spots were actually freckles, and Joey had never seen anything like them before. He also told several teachers that he thought they looked very skinny. I told him that was because they were all blurry blobs before his new glasses allowed him to actually see details.

Joey was so busy looking at everything with his wonderful new eyeglasses that he kept asking questions about what different things actually were. I decided to call his mother who was awed to hear what was happening. She remarked that her son had never worn glasses before, even though his doctor had mentioned that she should have his eyes checked. She had never done so, although she had noticed her son always placed his face very close to anything he was trying to look at.

In closing, Ms. Pearson remarked that Joey’s story had her crying at the wonder of the little boy’s incredible new eyesight thanks to the prescription glasses provided him by our Florida Heiken Program. “Believe me, I wasn’t the only one crying in that room,” she said. “It was a very moving day for all of us.”

Back-to-School Eye Screenings, Eye Exams and Prescription Glasses Provided to Keys Gate Charter High School Students



We are proud to collaborate with Lions Clubs International Foundation and Johnson & Johnson Vision on the Sight for Kids Program to support quality, comprehensive eye-health services and treatment for students in low-income and underserved communities in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and St. Lucie Counties in an effort to address the nationwide challenge of eye health equity.

The goal of Sight for Kids is to engage Lions Club volunteers to work in collaboration with our Heiken Program to provide vision screenings to children across South Florida. Through this collaborative effort more than 4,000 Keys Gate Charter High School students received vision screenings, and students who failed their vision screening received a comprehensive, dilated eye exam from our Heiken Program optometrists. In addition, the Sight for Kids program provided a back-to-school supplies give-away and celebration assembly program for all Keys Gate Charter students.



Keys Gate Charter School students and principals in front of our Heiken Program mobile eye care unit

Senior Group Health and Activities Program Goes Bowling!

On September 22nd, our Senior Group Health and Activities (SGA) program participants went on a field trip to Bird Bowl. The clients had a wonderful time and were all happy and thankful for the opportunity to attend this fun outing. We extend our thanks to Lions for the Blind for sponsoring this field trip, to Lions Gutty, Cepero and Basulto for volunteering to help and to Samly, Alondra, Daliany, Horacio and Jose.



SGA Program Participates in Accessing the Arts Showcase

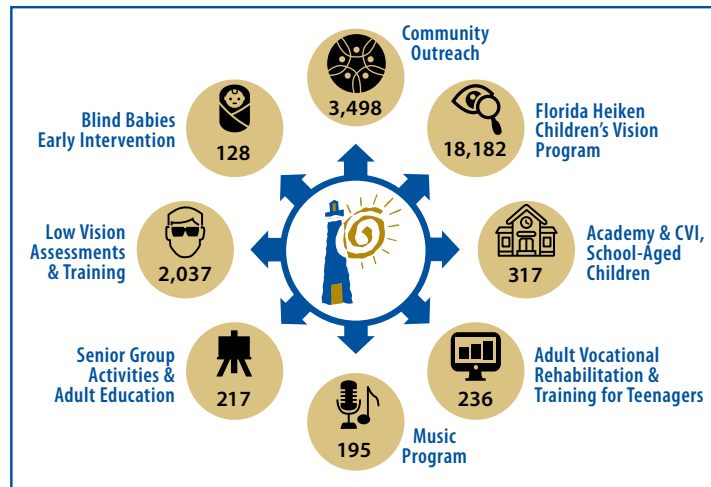
On September 27th clients in our Senior Group Health and Activity (SGA) Program were honored to participate in the Accessing the Arts Showcase 2023 at the Adrienne Arsht Center. Our clients rehearsed with Adrienne Arsht Center staff for seven weeks prior to the performance, which was produced with the visiting artist. An original comedy sketch was created about a jury disputing the music choices for the Hialeah Music Festival that culminated with dancing, laughs and rhythm. Our SGA clients did a magnificent job during their performance and received a standing ovation!



Senior Group Health and Activities Program clients on stage at the Arsht Center

Accessing the Arts provides an arts enrichment experience to adults with varied abilities. Participants engage in music, theater or dance throughout an eight-week program provided by a guest artist at sites throughout Miami-Dade County.

**SERVING
24,810
PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS
ANNUALLY**



VOLUNTEERS, TOURS, PRESENTATIONS AND PODCASTS

Temple Beth Am and Hochberg Lower School East Campus Volunteer at Miami Lighthouse

On May 16th we welcomed volunteers from Temple Beth Am and Hochberg Lower School East Campus who spent the day with our Miami Lighthouse program participants. The Temple Beth Am children's choir volunteered in our Miami Lighthouse Academy, and students from Hochberg Lower School East Campus served lunch to our senior program participants. The Temple Beth Am choir

then led a sing-a-long during lunch for our seniors and the Hochberg Lower School East Campus students. We thank both groups for spending the day at Miami Lighthouse volunteering their time.



Temple Beth Am Children's Choir



Students from Hochberg Lower School East Campus

Florida Blue Leadership Visits Miami Lighthouse

On May 31st, the Florida Blue leadership team was able to see for themselves that a blind person can do anything a sighted person does, but they just need to learn how to do things a bit differently. The Florida Blue team interacted with students in our Miami Lighthouse Academy who were walking with their white canes and viewed award winning art created by adults in our Senior Group Health and Activities Program. The Florida Blue team truly witnessed firsthand how we fulfill our mission by serving people of all ages—from babies to seniors—affected by uncorrectable vision loss. We are deeply grateful to the Florida Blue leadership team for taking the time to visit Miami Lighthouse.



Left to right: Cameron Sisser, Miami Lighthouse Senior Vice President; Fiorella Smyth, Florida Blue Senior Manager; Martha Garcia, Florida Blue Senior Director; Virginia Jacko, Miami Lighthouse President and CEO; and Florida Blue leadership team members David Wagner, South Florida Market President; Ivy Patron, Senior Director; and Al Molina, Market Leader

Miami Lighthouse Receives Grant from Libra Philanthropies

In May, Dr. Eduardo J. Padron, former Miami-Dade College President and longtime Miami Lighthouse for the Blind partner, invited the Libra Group and Libra Philanthropies to visit Miami Lighthouse. Libra Group founder George Logothetis along with Libra Philanthropies Director of Operations and Philanthropic Giving Gina Crivelli and Executive Director Jen Clarke toured our Miami Lighthouse facility. From their visit a fruitful collaboration transpired including Miami Lighthouse receiving a generous grant from Libra Philanthropies, Miami Lighthouse staff participation in the 2023 Annual Concordia Summit in New York and our Pre-Employment Transition Program participating in a summer mentorship program at Elandis, a Coral Gables real-estate partner company of Libra Group.



CEO Virginia Jacko Addresses “New Markets Tax Credit Summit”

The morning of May 11th was highlighted by Miami Lighthouse CEO Virginia Jacko’s stirring address to over 600 people attending CohnReznick’s 22nd Annual New Markets Tax Credit Summit at the Loews Hotel. A video of the event highlights our new Miami Lighthouse Academy and how the New Markets Tax Credit Program helped to quickly complete the construction of the expansion to the Academy premises. You can view the video by searching online for “CohnReznick NMTC Case Study: Miami Lighthouse.”


Our Miami Lighthouse Academy offers an inclusion environment for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and first grade and second grade for blind and visually impaired students. As a certified Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Provider, our Academy pre-kindergarten enrolls students with and without vision impairment, promoting an inclusive program and resulting in a sense of belonging for all children and families.



Miami Lighthouse Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer Campus

A Discussion of Employment Training and Work Opportunities for the Disabled

On Episode 8 of Vision Insights, we interviewed three guests whose experiences informed their viewpoints on an important topic: training and employing the disabled. Podcast participants include Jonathan Villalobos, who lost his eye sight and is now gainfully employed after completing life skills and job readiness training at Miami Lighthouse; David Wagner, South Florida Market President of Florida Blue, who oversees operations in eight counties from the Treasure Coast to the Keys and who has been involved in his company's hiring and job retention practices for persons with disabilities; and Carol Brady-Simmons, Miami Lighthouse's Chief Program Officer, who has more than 30 years' experience in educating persons with visual challenges and who supervises our organization's various employment training programs. You can listen to this episode and our other Vision Insights podcasts by visiting miamilighthouse.org and clicking on the icon to the right.

Listen to our Podcast
 Vision Insights

EVENTS

Music Under the Stars Celebrates 31 Years of Providing Comprehensive Eye Exams and Glasses at No Cost to Underserved Children

On May 24th attendees were treated to an evening of entertainment and culinary delights with proceeds from the highly successful annual event benefiting Miami Lighthouse's Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program. We celebrated our 31st anniversary of providing comprehensive eye exams and prescription glasses at no cost to underprivileged schoolchildren throughout the State of Florida.



Our Florida State Government Champions: Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez and Representative Juan Fernandez-Barquin with CEO Virginia Jacko and Board Director Dr. Stephen Morris

The event honored our Florida State government champions, Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez and Representative Juan Fernandez-Barquin. Dr. Stephen Morris, Secretary of our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program and Miami Lighthouse Board Director, was recognized for his dedication to children's eye health and for providing the Miami-Dade Optometric Physicians Association's leadership for the 2007 merger. The evening's entertainment featured Styrofoam Cup, comprised of Miami Lighthouse Music Program students, who recently placed second in the Young Talent Big Dreams competition. Our amazing, award-winning Miami Lighthouse Band also performed. The event was emceed by Olga Villaverde, host of The Health Channel's Balancing Act.

Our generous sponsors included ABB Optical Group, Publix Super Markets Charities, FP&L, Walgreens, VSP iCare Health Solutions, Alivi Health, Grove Bank & Trust, Rotary Club of Miami, the H. Angela Whitman Foundation, The George and Luisa Foyo Foundation, Genesis Systems Consulting, GrayRobinson, Monster Sound Productions, BizSolutions, Susan Conroy Design, Perry Ellis International, *Miami Kids Magazine*, Affiliated Healthcare Centers, Inc., and more. Fabulous beverage sponsors included Perricone's, Don Paella, Season's 52, Roaster's 'N Toasters, Genesis Café, PF Chang's, Sports Grill, El Carajo, Vicky Bakery, E11even Vodka, Eagle Brands and others.



Front row left to right: Susie Conroy, Susan Conroy Design; Miami Lighthouse Academy Officer Karla Richey, Miami Kids Magazine; Cathy Cahill and Nicole Santiago, Rotary Club of Miami; Virginia Jacko, President and CEO; Nivia Santiago and Georgia Lehoczky, Walgreens; Chair-Elect Steven Solomon, GrayRobinson. Back row left to right: Alex Valcarcel, Monster Sound Productions; George Foyo, The George and Luisa Foyo Foundation; Christian Infante, SFM Security; Danny Sanchez, Genesis Systems Consulting; Caleb Rojas, Alivi Health; Olga Villaverde, Emcee; Natasha Lowell, Grove Bank & Trust

Legislative Luncheon is a Huge Success

Our annual Miami Lighthouse Legislative Luncheon was held on July 26th in appreciation of our elected officials' support of our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program and our Senior Group Health and Activities Program. The special event provided attendees with the opportunity to meet and network with local elected officials, Miami Lighthouse Board Directors, and other community leaders. Guests enjoyed a musical performance by our talented Miami Lighthouse Music Program student band, Styrofoam Cup, and a tour of our newly expanded campus. We thank Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman for sponsoring the luncheon and The Montes Family owned and operated McDonald's for providing lunch.



Miami-Dade Clerk of Courts Juan Fernandez-Barquin and Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez present check to Miami Lighthouse President and CEO Virginia Jacko, Chair-Elect Steven Solomon and YOPL Chair Alexander Nostrro

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Reception and Dinner at Miami Lighthouse

On August 31st Dr. Eduardo Alfonso, Professor and Chairman at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, and Miami Lighthouse CEO Virginia Jacko welcomed Bascom Palmer faculty, fellows, and residents to our annual Miami Lighthouse collaborative dinner, which reinforces the longstanding, strong relationship between the two institutions.

Guests enjoyed a buffet dinner sponsored by Doce Provisions and a video presentation of Miami Lighthouse programs. Oseas De Leon, Senior Technology Specialist and former client of Miami Lighthouse, spoke about his experiences growing up as a blind child. Mr. De Leon explained how the skills he gained at Miami Lighthouse gave him the confidence to pursue being a player on the USA Paralympic Soccer team and his work to bring blind soccer to Miami Lighthouse.

As early as 1943, Dr. Bascom Palmer, University of Miami Trustee and President of Miami Lighthouse's Board of Directors from 1947 to 1952, discussed the establishment of an eye clinic to serve the local community. Dr. Bascom Palmer made it his life's work to raise funds and support for the eye hospital in cooperation with Miami Lighthouse. Six years later, Miami Lighthouse contributed substantial funds toward the building of the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. A strong collaboration between the two institutions continues to this day as both entities transform lives through vision-related services and research.



Miami Lighthouse Board Director Stacey Jones, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Chairman Dr. Eduardo Alfonso, Miami Lighthouse President and CEO Virginia Jacko and Board Director George Foyo



Dr. Delia DeBuc, Dr. Carolina Mercado, Dr. Chris Alabiad, Dr. Maura Abraham, and Dr. Konica Singla of Bascom Palmer Eye Institute

SAVE THE DATE

95TH DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, January 27, 2024
at The Biltmore Hotel

McCrea Family
Volunteer Luncheon
Wednesday, February 14th,
2024
at Miami Lighthouse



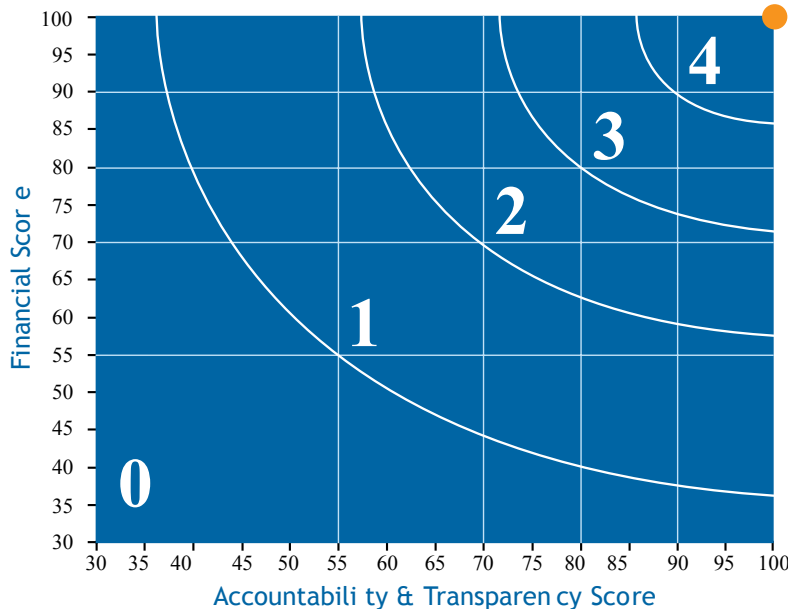
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CURRENT CHARITY NAVIGATOR SCORES

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has received 13 consecutive 4-star ratings, the highest rating possible, from the nation's premier independent nonprofit evaluator Charity Navigator. Only 1% of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received 13 consecutive 4-star ratings indicating that Miami Lighthouse outperforms most other charities in America.



| | SCORE (out of 100) | RATING |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| OVERALL | 100.00 | ★★★★★ |
| • Financial | 100.00 | ★★★★★ |
| • Accountability & Transparency | 100.00 | ★★★★★ |



Source: Miami Lighthouse listing on Charity Navigator website
www.charitynavigator.org

CHARITY NAVIGATOR ENCOMPASS BEACONS

ACCOUNTABILITY AND FINANCE 100%

This beacon provides an assessment of a charity's financial health (financial efficiency, sustainability and trustworthiness) and its commitment to governance practices and policies.

LEADERSHIP AND ADAPTABILITY 100%

This beacon provides an assessment of the organization's leadership capacity, strategic thinking and planning, and ability to innovate or respond to changes in constituent demand/need or other relevant social and economic conditions to achieve the organization's mission.

CULTURE AND COMMUNITY 100%

This beacon provides an assessment of the organization's culture and connectedness to the community it serves.

CONTACT US: General Information: 305-856-2288

Low Vision or Vision Rehabilitation Services: 786-362-7479 • Senior Case Manager: 786-362-7445

Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Collaborative Center: 786-636-6498

Visit our website: www.miamilighthouse.org