



DAVID CENTNER

CENTNER ACADEMY FOR THE MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

BY MEGHANN COLLARD

BACKGROUND

David Centner's spirit of service was inspired by his father, a Miami optometrist who did all that he could to improve the lives of so many people. After reaching out to the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Centner Academy quickly learned that the pandemic was denying many families the resources they so desperately needed. In his father's honor, David created the Dr. Herman Centner Matching Challenge for Family Security, where they matched dollar for dollar contributions up to \$25,000, a goal they exceeded in October!

LIVES TOUCHED

When veteran Miami Marlins groundskeeper, Javier Carrillo's, first born son was born visually impaired, he quickly remembered the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind as they had annually visited the baseball stadium. Every year, the Marlins hosts Lighthouse so that children can come feel, smell and hear the experience in the ball field. Since Sergio's birth, Javier and his wife, Madonna, now lean on the organization to care for their son. "My wife and I just want to help our son understand the world he lives in, to help him catch up developmentally, and to teach him to be independent and look at the future. Miami Lighthouse helps us do that in every way," says the father.

PARTNERS IN A PANDEMIC

During the pandemic, families with special needs were struggling to get the basics. Miami Lighthouse for the Blind quickly mobilized with food drives and delivery meals to those who weren't able to pick up. Families like Javier's typically have 5-6 therapy sessions per week, and the organization pivoted to host the highly tactile therapy through parent-guided zoom calls, allowing the children not to fall behind in their important development. All of these resources require funding, and donors like the Centner Academy help to make this possible.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Since the fundraiser, David Centner has been in constant contact with Virginia Jacko, President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. "She's an excellent representative of the organization and an extremely strategic, competent leader. She truly deserves all of the support in her fight to change the lives of these individuals," tells Centner. The passion and positive effects of this program trickle down from there. For individuals like Sergio and his family, the Lighthouse also provides a much-needed community. "We can talk to other families like ours, learn from each other, and the therapist is always connecting us to other people as well," tells Javier. This initiative from the Centner Academy for Miami Lighthouse and thus the Carrillo family, has proven to be a huge success.



IT IS POSSIBLE TO SEE WITHOUT SIGHT.

