



Dear Miami Lighthouse Friends,

Just an hour ago, we celebrated the "Topping Off" of our new Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ four-story structure adjacent to our existing rehabilitation facility. This expansion project designed by Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners and constructed by Munilla Construction Management is on schedule for our Grand Opening on August 16th -- just in time for our pre-kindergarten expansion starting this fall semester. We are grateful to our many supporters who helped make our Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ a reality and to Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Early Learning Coalition for partially funding this initiative.

In related breaking news, announced by The Children's Trust last evening, we have been awarded a grant to conduct a longitudinal research study of these early learners in order to determine the outcomes of our program. Beginning with 10 toddlers in our one- to two-year-olds' daily program and 30 three- and four-year-olds in our pre-kindergarten, in collaboration with the University of Miami Department of Psychology, these children will be followed until they enter first grade as part of this longitudinal study. Our primary goal is to examine effects of implementing the Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ inclusion model on participating children, parents, and teachers. University of Miami researchers will evaluate best practices within our inclusive early childhood setting to:

- Evaluate the LLCC early childhood inclusion model to assess both short-term (school year) and longitudinal (4 year) positive outcomes for children and families*
- Continuously inform and improve the model throughout each school year*
- Develop and demonstrate best practices to be replicated in Miami-Dade County and the U.S.*

As you may know, our Early Intervention Blind Babies Program was named Children's Program of the Year for 2016 by The Children's Trust, and we are confident our preschool and pre-kindergarten will receive national recognition, as it is the only inclusion program with 50% visually impaired children and 50% sighted children learning alongside each other.

Thank you for supporting Miami Lighthouse.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia A. Jacko".

Virginia A. Jacko
President and Chief Executive Officer
Miami Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Inc.
and President, Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, LLC