



MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE RECEIVES GRANT FOR THE HEIKEN CHILDREN'S VISION PROGRAM FROM THE DR. JOHN T. MACDONALD FOUNDATION

MIAMI—July 29, 2009—Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has received a grant from the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation to support its Heiken Children's Vision Program, a mobile eye care program that ensures underprivileged children in Miami-Dade do not go without necessary eye care.

"The Miami Lighthouse Heiken Children's Vision Program provides free comprehensive eye examinations and eyeglasses to thousands of low income children who have failed the state-mandated vision screening in Miami-Dade County," said Miami Lighthouse President Virginia Jacko. During the 2008-2009 school year Miami Lighthouse served almost 5,000 schoolchildren who otherwise would not have received optometric examinations or eyeglasses. The funding is crucial to fill the widening gap, as each year more than 8,000 schoolchildren need eye care that their families cannot afford and that is not covered by other resources.

"Without these services many Miami-Dade Public School students who fail their school's vision screening would continue to go through school unable to read and see the board, because their families do not have access to insurance and are financially disadvantaged," CEO Jacko said.

The Heiken Children's Vision Program was started by the Dade Optometrists Association in 1992 and merged with Miami Lighthouse in 2007.

The Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation grant award supports the direct operating cost of a second mobile eye unit which provides examinations and prescription eyeglasses for children who fail the state-mandated vision screenings. Five schools which are of special interest to the

Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation will be included in the program: Fulford Elementary, Gertrude K. Edelman Sabal Palm Elementary, Greynolds Park Elementary, John F. Kennedy Middle School, and North Miami Senior High, as well as children enrolled in surrounding F-schools. Miami Lighthouse operates three mobile optometric units that travel to schools to provide comprehensive eye examinations on-site, under an agreement with Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

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The Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc., is a private grant-making foundation, supporting projects and programs designed to improve, preserve or restore the health and health care of the people in Miami-Dade County. For more information or a grant application, please contact Ms. Kim Greene, Executive Director, 1550 Madruga Avenue, Suite 215, Coral Gables, FL 33146, (305) 667-6017, website: www.jtmacdonaldfdn.org.

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Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is located at 601 S.W. 8th Avenue, Miami, FL 33130. Since 1931, Miami Lighthouse has provided vital rehabilitation and low vision services and training to give blind and visually-impaired people of all ages hope, confidence and independence. In 2009 Miami Lighthouse received its second consecutive a four-star ranking from Charity Navigator, the independent evaluator of not-for-profits, in recognition of its fiscal responsibility. The ranking notification letter states: "Only 18% of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received at least 2 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America." The ranking is based on 2008 financial statements. Visit www.miamilighthouse.org for more information.

MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE MISSION STATEMENT:

***To provide vision rehabilitation
and eye health services
that promote independence,
to educate professionals, and
to conduct research in related fields.***