





TOP 1% in USA by Charity Navigator

Our new Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] is open! Dedicating our Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer Campus



Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** Ophelia Roca; Olga Nielson; Honorary Board Director Charles Nielson; Mrs. Sash A. Spencer; CEO Virginia Jacko; Jorge Munilla, MCM; Marcel Morlote, Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners; Board Chair Louis Nostro

The Grand Opening of our new Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] and our dedication of the Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer Campus was celebrated on Wednesday, August 16th. This exciting event was sponsored by the Charles and Olga Nielson family.

We extend our deepest thanks to all of the dedicated people and organizations that supported the building of this unique educational facility of our Miami Lighthouse, especially MCM our highly efficient general contractor, Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners our innovative architects, and our generous donors who made our Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] a reality.



With the help of the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, our experienced general contractor and architects, we are pleased to report that we received our Permanent Occupancy Permit within 11 months of getting our construction permit; furniture has been moved into our new building and classes began at the start of this fall semester. Yes, all of this was accomplished in less than one year because of an awesome synergy of many committed people.

(continued on Page 2)

Mission Statement

To provide vision rehabilitation, eye health services and education that promote independence, to collaborate with and train professionals, and to conduct research in related fields.

(continued from page 1)

Our new Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ is open! Dedicating our Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer Campus



Children sing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" at the Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ Dedication Ceremony



Campus Dedication Commemorative Marker CEO Virginia Jacko and Mrs. Sash A. Spencer

DID YOU KNOW?

Miami Lighthouse is the only charity in Miami and one of two in Florida with nine consecutive four-star ratings, the highest rating possible, from the national evaluator Charity Navigator.

We have also been featured in:

The Miami Herald

- "Blind author who survived 9/11 to speak at Miami Lighthouse luncheon," October 9, 2017
- "Miami Lighthouse in Little Havana gets new Learning Center for Children," August 18, 2017
- "HeroBoys comics donates to kids at Miami Lighthouse for Blind and Visually Impaired," July 10, 2017
- "Visually impaired children and their dads enjoy close shave at Lighthouse Center," *June 14, 2017*
- "Miami Lighthouse's new Mobile Eye Care Unit to have baseball theme," May 16, 2017
- "MLB All-Star Game Legacy Project to support Miami vision program," May 16, 2017

Miami New Times

- "Here's How Miami's Blind Handled Hurricane Irma," September 25, 2017
- "2017 Best Charity: Miami Lighthouse for the Blind," June 16, 2017

CBS Miami

• "Miami Lighthouse for Blind Scores Thanks to MLB, Marlins," July 8, 2017

Miami's Community Newspapers

- "Miami Lighthouse Children's Center: brighter future for visually impaired," September 2, 2017
- "New mobile optometric unit donated by Marlins and MLB," June 11, 2017
- "Miami Lighthouse to present Music Under the Stars benefit," May 7, 2017

The Miami Metropolis

• "Miami Lighthouse to present Music Under the Stars benefit," May 12, 2017

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Miami Lighthouse,

If you have not already visited our new Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] you are missing a unique opportunity. Imagine 40 children, blind with their sighted peers, ranging in age from one to five learning together in the first fully inclusive classroom setting in a vision rehabilitation institution using the evidencebased HighScope Curriculum.

In this issue of the *Lantern* you will read about our Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] dedication, the naming of our complex as the Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer Campus, and testimonials of how Miami Lighthouse transforms the lives of teenagers affected by vision loss. Consistent with Mary M. and Sash A. Spencer's motto "strive for excellence," our team of highly credentialed professionals provides services for our low vision patients, rehabilitation clients and students adhering to best practices in the profession. We thank our Miami Lighthouse supporters whose collective impact helps us transform the lives of more than 16,000 people in our community each year.

Miami Lighthouse continues to be recognized as a Center of Excellence. Miami Lighthouse was named "Best of Miami Charity 2017" by Miami New Times. Our programs, instructors and program participants have been featured in the Miami Herald, Miami Today, Excellence in Coral Gables, Preservation Today (a publication of the Dade Heritage Trust) and other community newspapers. In addition Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen addressed the U.S. House of Representatives on October 11, "Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Miami Lighthouse for the Blind on its new Lighthouse Learning Center and Pre-K program." Her public congratulations were entered into the Congressional Record. We are grateful for this recognition because it helps spread the word about how our programs transform the lives of the blind and visually impaired so that they can lead independent, productive, and fulfilling lives. We count on your support to ensure continuation of our tradition of excellence in service for the blind and visually impaired.

Sincerely,

Cuis nostio

Louis Nostro Chairman, Board of Directors



Miami Lighthouse Board of Directors

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Miami Lighthouse Luncheon Emphasizes How the Blind and Visually Impaired Lead Confident and Independent Lives

For the 200 community leaders attending our 2017 See the Light Luncheon, the focus was on the opportunity to raise funds necessary to sustain programs that improve the lives of children through our new innovative Learning Center for early learners.

On October 12, our See the Light Luncheon filled the ballroom at the Riviera Country Club in Coral Gables with enthusiastic supporters who learned about the capabilities of the blind from various perspectives.

Keynote speaker and best-selling author Michael Hingson, who survived the World Trade Center attacks with the help of his guide dog, urged the audience to stand up for the rights of the visually impaired and empower them to achieve their full potential. He noted that the unemployment rate among the blind currently stands at 70 percent, even though a clear majority of that population is able to join the workforce.

"It's not that blind people can't do the jobs," Mr. Hingson said. "It's other people who don't believe that blind people can do the job."



Keynote speaker Michael Hingson addressing guests at our See the Light Luncheon



CEO Virginia Jacko, Dr. Harry Flynn, and Board Director Angela Whitman



Honorary Board Director Bill Beckham, Norma Jean Abraham, CEO Virginia Jacko, and Board Director Jan Morrison



Representing The Art of Shaving standing: Buck Dutton, David Hakman, Whitney Martin, Vicente Sanavia; Sitting: Maeli Niebles, Kaela Ballard, Farrah Santana, Jessica Agar, Anne Wiseman, Jackie Ortuno



Miami Lighthouse Luncheon Emphasizes How the Blind and Visually Impaired Lead Confident and Independent Lives

Later in the luncheon, philanthropist Mrs. Sash A. Spencer announced that she has established a new challenge grant, which will match dollar for dollar private contributions to Miami Lighthouse during the next four years to a maximum of \$2 million. She explained that the challenge is intended to motivate others to support the Miami Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] to create the type of opportunity for today's blind children that Mr. Hingson advocates.

Sponsors of our See the Light Luncheon included The Art of Shaving, JM Private Insurance, GenSpring Family Offices and Serendip-A-Tea.

New Four-Year Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] Matching Challenge

You can make a difference in the lives of our early learners by making a gift to sustain our Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] which will be matched one-for-one up to \$500,000 each year for the next four years. For naming opportunities in our new Learning Center, such as classrooms, contact CEO Virginia Jacko at 305-856-4176.







Laura Nipper, Olga Nielson, CEO Virginia Jacko and Honorary Board Director Charles Nielson



Board Director George Foyo, Luisa Foyo, Trish and Dan Bell



Evelyn Villanueva, Ana Margarita Martínez, Lourdes Tudela, Sonia Gibson, CEO Virginia Jacko, Jacquelyn Munilla, Barbara Pérez Muñoz, Ana Hernandez and Estrella Fajardo

Miami Lighthouse for The Blind's Tenth Annual Music Under The Stars Event Benefits Heiken Children's Vision Program



Representing Commissioner Sally Heyman, Mary Juncadella-Ferreiro and Bonnie Michaels present Miami-Dade County proclamation to Dr. Sidney Stern



Claude Delorme, Executive Vice President, Operations and Events for the Miami Marlins and Miami Lighthouse Board Chair Louis Nostro make new artwork design of mobile optometric unit public

May 24th was the date of our 2017 Music Under the Stars event benefiting our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program. The occasion marked the 25th anniversary of the program and the 10th anniversary of its merger with Miami Lighthouse. Held at the new Brickell City Centre Mall, nearly 200 attendees were welcomed by Mistress of Ceremonies and Emmywinning Journalist Maity Interiano. Guests enjoyed performances by Miami Lighthouse musicians and vocalists. This year, in addition to our traditional silent auction featuring exciting get-away packages, restaurant gift certificates, and much more, attendees had the opportunity to participate in a raffle made possible by Board Director Angela Whitman and Saks Fifth Avenue.

Proclamations from the Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation and Miami-Dade County recognized our Heiken Program's 25 years of eye care for needy schoolchildren. Wednesday, May 24, 2017, was designated Dr. Sidney Stern Day in a proclamation by Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor of Miami-Dade County, Chairman Esteban Bovo, Jr. and the Members of the Board of County Commissioners. Dr. Stern was honored for his longterm commitment to providing eye care and glasses to underserved children in Miami-Dade County. Dr. Stern was instrumental in the creation of the Heiken program in 1992 during his term as President of the Miami Dade Optometric Physicians Association.

We express our thanks to Brickell City Centre for allowing us to hold our event in their new exciting venue and to our sponsors: ABB Optical Group, Publix Super Markets Charities, Marlins Foundation, Essilor Laboratories of America, H. Angela Whitman Foundation, Donna Abood Principal Managing Director Avison Young, GrayRobinson, Genesis Systems Consulting and BB&T Bank. In-kind sponsors were Susan Conroy Design, Monster Sound Productions, Saks Fifth Avenue, Starbucks Coffee, Zyr Vodka and East Hotel.



Music Under the Stars Sponsors: Susan Conroy; Sarah Garcia, Marlins Foundation; Michael Jimenez, Genesis Systems Consulting; Miami Lighthouse Board Directors Donna Abood, Avison Young and Angela Whitman; and Marcos Freire, Brickell City Centre

Miami Lighthouse Hits a Grand Slam!





Ribbon cutting for new mobile eye care unit at Marlins Park

On behalf of Major League Baseball and the Miami Marlins, Claude Delorme Executive Vice President, Operations and Events for the Miami Marlins, announced that our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program was chosen as a 2017 All-Star Game Legacy Project of Major League Baseball. Legacy funding provided a new mobile optometric unit that was unveiled during the Miami All-Star Game in July. At the game, Major League Baseball and the Miami Marlins dedicated the newly-purchased, All-Star branded Mobile Eye Care Unit for our Heiken Children's Vision Program. We are humbled and grateful to have been chosen as a 2017 All-Star Game Legacy Project.

This new mobile optometric clinic replaces an outdated, 14-year-old mobile unit that has been in constant need of repair. The new unit will allow our Miami Lighthouse Heiken Children's Vision Program to expand our services of free comprehensive eye examinations and glasses to address the unmet need of exams for 17,000 underserved schoolchildren referred to our program each year after they fail their vision screening.

On behalf of our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, we express our thanks to Major League Baseball, the Miami Marlins, and the Marlins Foundation!





Celebrating the 2017 MLB All-Star Game at Marlins Park: Miami Lighthouse immediate past Chairman of the Board Ramon Casas, Commissioner of Baseball Rob Manfred, Miami Lighthouse CEO Virginia Jacko and Miami Marlins Former President David Samson

The Able Trust Recognizes Miami Lighthouse Leadership



Karen B. Moore, Chair, The Able Trust, Susanne F. Homant, President & CEO The Able Trust, Virginia A. Jacko, President & CEO, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind, and Bob Bromberg, Ambassador, The Able Trust

The Able Trust named our President & CEO Virginia Jacko as the recipient of the 2017 prestigious Dr. George L. Spelios Leadership Award. This highly competitive award recognizes outstanding leadership and advocacy efforts of a chief executive leading one of Florida's non-profit disability organizations.

"Helping our most vulnerable populations be independent has been the Miami Lighthouse's mission since 1931," said CEO Jacko. "With today's technology, the blind and visually impaired are no longer confined to making brooms and caning chairs. Here at Miami Lighthouse they learn to use computers with

special magnification or screen-reading software and become empowered to lead productive, confident and independent lives."

The Spelios Award highlights innovative programs that lead to employment for individuals with disabilities, with mention of the Lighthouse's innovative High School High Tech Program that saw 18 teenagers working in competitive internships this past summer and five of our high school students off to college with STEM majors as a result of training received at Miami Lighthouse. The High School High Tech Program is partially funded by the Florida Department of Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and The Able Trust.

This award also recognized CEO Jacko's introduction of our first-of-its-kind inclusive adult music program and its outstanding success helping our adult musicians be hired for numerous paid performances. The Miami Lighthouse Band, comprised of highly professional blind and visually impaired instrumentalists and vocalists along with our sighted instructors can be commissioned for private and corporate events for reasonable fees.

For information on hiring our Miami Lighthouse musicians for corporate, community or private events, please call CEO Virginia Jacko at 305-856-4176.



The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. More information about The Able Trust can be found at www.abletrust.org

Board Kudos

Miami Lighthouse Board Director George Foyo, former Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, Baptist Health South Florida, was honored as the "Visionary Leader of the Year" by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce "Salute to Miami's Leaders" on June 7, 2017. The Salute to Miami's Leaders recognizes and honors Leadership Miami alumni who are community leaders that have made significant contributions to the community, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and their chosen profession, making Miami a stronger, more vibrant community.



Aventura North Miami Beach Lions Club Presents Scholarship to Miami Lighthouse Students

Miami Lighthouse students Angel Wallace and Marino Flores were presented collegiate scholarships for their hard work and dedication to achieving good grades in school. The Aventura North Miami Beach Lions Club provides partial college scholarships to local students in the name of their deceased Past President Michael Young.

> Angel Wallace and Marino Flores with Luis Olarte, Past 35-N Centennial District Governor



Pre-Employment Transition Program Graduation

The Miami Lighthouse Pre-Employment Transition and High School High Tech Program held its annual graduation ceremony on August 11th, 2017. The mission of the High School High Tech program component is to decrease the high school dropout rate of students with disabilities and to encourage those students to pursue careers in STEM. Miami Lighthouse had a total of 15 graduates of which 10 have enrolled in a two- or four-year university.

Our students participated in an intensive 9-week program during the summer. The summer program focused heavily on job readiness, assistive technology training and much more. Students also took part in a summer internship in their field of interest and visited a local college for a tour.



Transition Program Supervisor Michelle Fischer presents Jonathan Flores with his graduation certificate

HeroBoys Reinforce Positive Values to Children's Summer Camp Students

On June 28th the HeroBoys visited our Summer Training and Recreation Campers to celebrate adventure, imagination, and limitless potential with blind children. HeroBoys is a line of toys and comic books created by parents aimed at using children's love of superheroes to reinforce positive values like honesty, loyalty, humility, compassion, and diligence.

Our youngsters listened to the exciting first issue of the HeroBoys comic book read by Edward Boland, Cofounder/CEO of Whimzy Entertainment. They participated in



STAR Summer Campers pose with HeroBoys

a question and answer session and had the opportunity to wear their own capes and masks so they could create their own Hero with their very own "essence stone" (the key to the HeroBoys super powers).

The Art of Shaving Collaborates with Miami Lighthouse

Daddies of Pre-K Kids Get Early Father's Day Gift

Daddies are always special, so what could be more fun than to offer those attending our Pre-K graduation a complimentary shave by The Art of Shaving. But before the dads got their early Father's Day gift, Vice President Rafael Niebles and his staff introduced both the girls and boys to the feel of cool shaving cream on their little faces followed by the introduction of popsicle sticks to imitate razors that would be used in an actual shave. The dads were delighted to receive a shave by The Art of Shaving's professional barber using a traditional straight-edge razor. The kids and parents had a blast as the photo shows! Our thanks to The Art of Shaving, a division of Proctor and Gamble. They were a great finale to an incredible day!

Blind Teenagers Learn the 'Art of Shaving'

Teenage boys in Miami Lighthouse's Pre-Employment Transition Program were visited by a group of shaving professionals from The Art of Shaving. The students were given individualized training on grooming where they learned and practiced several techniques that are used by professionals. Our teenage boys were thrilled to participate, and some even said it was their first time shaving. Afterwards, the students were each given a special Art of Shaving kit as a gift.



Miami Lighthouse Pre-K student Mariel spreads shaving cream on dad Jose's face



Pre-Employment Transition Program students get help from an Art of Shaving associate

Miami Lighthouse Celebrates its Inaugural Pre-K Graduation with the Class of 2017



First graduates of our Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ pre-kindergarten

Proud parents and teachers applauded as six visually impaired four-year olds with their sighted peers wearing caps and gowns paraded into the room to receive their Certificates of Achievement.

The three-year olds in this first-ofits-kind inclusive Pre-K program also were awarded Certificates of Completion marking their year with the class as well. The students performed three songs for their parents and guests: "Beautiful Day," "I've Been Going to My Preschool" and "You Are My Sunshine" before light refreshments were served.



Volunteer to Change Lives!

During the past few months, we've had many groups and organizations volunteer with us at Miami Lighthouse, among them were:





Warby Parker



Delta Gamma-Beta Tau Chapter at the University of Miami





University of Miami Law School



Telefonica

Aptos

White Cane Day

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind celebrated over 85 years of service to the blind and visually impaired community on National White Cane Day in Miami on Monday, October 16th. Nearly 250 people of all ages, escorted by City of Miami Police and Fire Departments, walked from Miami Lighthouse, at 601 S.W. 8th Ave., around the block and back, where the celebration continued with food and music featuring Miami Lighthouse Music Program musicians.



2017 Miami Lighthouse White Cane Day Celebration

Emceed by NBC-6 Chief Meteorologist John Morales the event featured a special presentation by Florida Blue Senior Director of Business Development, Doug Bartel. The City of Miami Police Department and Department of Fire-Rescue were also acknowledged and honored at the event.

Serving as grand marshals were District Administrator of the Florida Division of Blind Services Juan Carlos Diaz, Miami Lighthouse Chairman of the Board Louis Nostro, and representing the Marlins Foundation, Billy the Marlin. Special guest Paul Schroeder, past Vice President of the American Foundation for the Blind and representative of Aira, gave a presentation about new Aira technology that enables the blind using smart glasses and their iPhone to hear a description of what is in front of them as seen by a subscription agent.

We thank our participating sponsors, which included Florida Blue, MassMutual Miami, Lions for the Blind, Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Aira, OrCam Technologies, Walgreens Store #2544, Starbucks Store #8506 and Burger King Store #12778. Thank you to all of our supporters of White Cane Day benefiting programs provided by Miami Lighthouse.





Pre-K students with Billy the Marlin at our White Cane Day event

Pre-K students with City of Miami Firemen and Florida Blue representatives

"Topping Off" Ceremony for Lighthouse Learning Center was the Tops!

The date was Friday, April 7th, as guests gathered on the first floor of the new building that now houses our innovative and inclusive Lighthouse Learning Center for Children[™] to celebrate the construction tradition marking the topping off of a new structure. At the event, CEO Virginia Jacko announced that the building would be finished on schedule in time for the first day of school on Monday, August 21st.

Munilla Construction Management, LLC, hosted the celebration. Attendees included representatives of the architectural firm Wolfberg Alvarez & Partners, County and City government officials, Miami-Dade County Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho, members of the Miami Lions Club and Lions for the Blind, Miami Lighthouse Board Directors, and supporters who responded to a challenge grant from a local philanthropist that made construction of the building possible. At the event, two special checks were presented.



Lion Alan Campbell presents a check on behalf of Lions Clubs International Foundation and Lions Foundation of District 35N to Lion Virginia Jacko, Miami Lighthouse CEO.



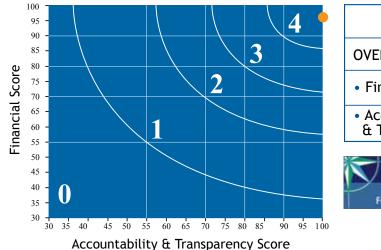
Bird's eye view of workers



Michael Mejia, Division III Group, one of the subcontractors for our new Learning Center, presents a check for \$5,000 to CEO Virginia Jacko

Charity Navigator Score December 1, 2016

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is rated nationally among the top 1% of the 8,000 charities rated by Charity Navigator. In other words, we are among the elite 39 charities in the U.S. that have received nine consecutive 4-star ratings, the highest rating possible, from the nation's premier independent nonprofit evaluator Charity Navigator reflecting our sound fiscal management, responsible use of donor dollars and financial strength.



	SCORE (out of 100)	RATING
OVERALL	98.06	$\star\star\star\star$
• Financial	97.27	****
• Accountabilit & Transparence		****



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





LuHanna using a Perkins Brailler



A joyful Eric Ortiz at the Pre-Employment Transition Program graduation ceremony



Students Joshua Meza, Isaac Meza, and Christian Belsaguy performing at the The Children's Trust Summer Showcase 2017 held at the Wynwood Yard



A light box helps Early Intervention Blind Babies Program students Ethan, Arya and Mikaela develop awareness of light, color and shapes



Our early learners like William welcomed the arrival of fall by learning about pumpkins, straw and corn stalks through touch

Miami Lighthouse Donor Bill Of Rights

Miami Lighthouse respects the rights of its donors, and under no circumstances will donor contact information be shared with or sold to another entity. To read our Donor Bill of Rights, please visit our website: http://www.miamilighthouse.com/Docs/ADonorBillOfRights20100812.pdf

Join the Helen Keller Legacy Society by including Miami Lighthouse in your estate plans. Contact Virginia Jacko, President and CEO, at 305-856-4176

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If you are shopping at Amazon, simply shop through the AmazonSmile website and choose Miami Lighthouse as your charity. Amazon will then donate 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile puchases to Miami Lighthouse.



If you are shopping on eBay, make Miami Lighthouse your "Favorite Non-Profit" and choose to give a donation at checkout.









MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE for the BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

601 SW 8th Avenue Miami, Florida 33130 305-856-2288



SAVE THE DATE!

Events at Miami Lighthouse

McCrea Family Volunteer Luncheon February 14, 2018

Music Under the Stars • May 16th, 2018

Miami Lighthouse

601 SW 8th Avenue • Miami, FL 33130 305-856-2288 Fax. 305-285-6967 HOURS: Monday - Friday, 8:00 am-4:30 pm

Miami Lighthouse Lantern Newsletter Publisher: Virginia A. Jacko Co-editors: Salomon Aburto Cameron Sisser

LIVING WITH LOW VISION

WHAT IS LOW VISION?

Low vision is a visual loss not correctable by standard eyeglasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery.

MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE CAN HELP... An optometrist specializing in low vision and a licensed occupational therapist can help by providing low vision assessments and recommending assistive devices such as low vision aids and equipment.

> To schedule an appointment or if you need assistive devices call our Vision Solutions Center at 786-362-7479. 601 SW 8th Avenue • Miami, FL 33130 www.miamilightbouse.org

For the print impaired, the Lantern is available in an alternative format. For more information, call 786-362-7514 or visit our website at www.miamilighthouse.org

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For vision rehabilitation program information call: 786-362-7479 Visit our website www.miamilighthouse.org