



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE ACADEMY GRADUATES AND THANK YOU FOR SHOWING EVERYONE THAT “IT’S POSSIBLE TO SEE WITHOUT SIGHT™”

Parents of our Pre-K and second-grade students proudly watched their children participate in our graduation ceremony processional and receive their diplomas. The Pre-K early learners are now enrolled in our kindergarten class, and second-grade students entered third grade at their community school or other educational institution.

Our Miami Lighthouse is home to an internationally recognized Pre-K program that provides an inclusive setting for both sighted and visually impaired students with the goal of demonstrating increased school readiness in children with and without visual impairments through center-based, high quality early childhood inclusion programming. Our Pre-K program implements the U.S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services Department recommendation that all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in meeting high expectations.



We are pleased to report that our Early Childhood Research Demonstration Project received renewal funding from The Children’s Trust so that teams from the University of Miami research faculty and Miami Lighthouse can continue collaborative research on our Miami Lighthouse Academy, LLC inclusion program where sighted and blind children interact and study the same curriculum.

We recently received our spring CLASS scores from the University of Miami, which showed we are once again above national averages in the domains of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support for both toddler and Pre-K programs. Notably, our emotional support domain for toddlers scored 6.8 out of 7—more than two points above the national average of 4.62 out of 7.

*Miami Lighthouse Academy students performing at their graduation*

*(continued on page 2)*

## Mission Statement

Through education, training, research and vision enhancement, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides hope, confidence, and independence to people of all ages.

## Miami Lighthouse Academy (continued)

This program doesn't stop at changing individual lives. It's shaping the future, creating an environment that fosters play and educational collaboration between visually impaired and sighted kids that supports future generations' development of vital social-emotional skills from perspective-taking to problem-solving to empathy.

Research results of our Early Childhood Research Demonstration Project were published in the May 17, 2022, issue of the *Early Childhood Education Journal* "Associations between Peer Play Interactions and Empathy within an Early Childhood Inclusion Program for Children with Visual Impairment." You can read this manuscript by going to <https://rdcu.be/cNMzI>

*You can help us sustain our life-changing early education program that prepares blind and visually impaired children to thrive in a sighted world by participating in a challenge by The Family Foundation that will match your donation dollar for dollar.*



### SAVE THE DATE! MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tours of Miami Lighthouse**  
to arrange a tour of  
Miami Lighthouse  
call CEO Virginia Jacko  
305.856.4176

**See the Light Luncheon**  
Thursday, October 27, 2022  
11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.  
at The Biltmore Hotel

**Third Annual  
"It's Possible to See ART  
Without Sight" Art Walk**  
Saturday, March 11, 2023  
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

### Miami Lighthouse

Tel. 305-856-2288 • Fax. 305-285-6967  
HOURS: Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

**Miami Lighthouse Lantern Newsletter**  
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## Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Miami Lighthouse,

As you will read in this issue of our newsletter, Miami Lighthouse continues to empower our program participants by providing education, job training, art and music programs for our talented children and adults, free eye care for underserved children throughout the State of Florida, and much more. We extend our reach into the community by participating in initiatives such as the "Safe Streets Summit" (see page 6) to address safety issues affecting the visually impaired and by offering our website auditing service that helps businesses ensure their sites are ADA compliant and accessible for users with disabilities.

Far too often, visually impaired people are told what they cannot do rather than what they can do. With your help, we are teaching our children and adults that they can regain or obtain mainstream employment, that they can create beautiful, award-winning works of art, and that they can succeed and thrive in a sighted world. Your support makes it possible for us to help our program participants gain self-confidence, triumph over the challenges inherent in vision loss, and reach their full potential.

Our commitment is to provide the highest level of service to our program participants and the highest degree of value to you, our stakeholders. Our 13 consecutive 4-star ratings from Charity Navigator are a testament to our tradition of sound fiscal management, transparency and responsible use of donor dollars—only eight cents of every dollar received goes to administration.

Thank you for trusting us to use your contributions wisely and for being part of our ongoing effort to transform the lives of the blind and visually impaired.

Sincerely,



Charles J. Nielson  
*Chairman, Board of Directors*



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## Focus on Children

### Music Program Summer Campers Meet the Miami Marlins

Blind and visually impaired summer campers from our Music Program enjoyed a great day at the ballpark courtesy of the Miami Marlins. Our summer music students were led out onto the field of play just beyond the third base line where they met the manager of the field maintenance team and were invited to feel the outfield grass and the dirt surface of the infield. They visited the Marlin's dugout where they had the opportunity to hold various players' bats, major league baseballs, protective helmets, and gloves. Nick Fortes, catcher for the Miami Marlins, helped our students try on his face, head and chest protectors and autographed baseballs for our students. Following the tour, the campers enjoyed lunch and seating in a guest suite for the Marlins' noon game against the Pittsburgh Pirates. The Marlins won the game 5-4 in the 10th inning! We count on our corporate supporters like the Miami Marlins. You too can help by signing up through your employer for matching donations, by attending our events or by volunteering with us.



*Miami Lighthouse Summer Camp Music Program students on the Miami Marlins infield with catcher Nick Fortes*

### Beeping Easter Egg Hunt for our Academy Students



*Representatives of the South Florida Police Benevolent Association and the Miami-Dade Police Department Bomb Squad with our students and CEO Virginia Jacko*

Miami Lighthouse Academy students enjoyed a wonderful holiday tradition as they searched for colorful beeping eggs hidden by the mythical Easter Bunny throughout Miami Lighthouse Academy's Owen S. Freed Playground. The sounds emitted by the eggs enabled the blind and visually impaired children to locate them by listening rather than searching by sight.

We express our appreciation to the South Florida Police Benevolent Association and Miami-Dade County Police Department Bomb Squad who sponsored the event and assembled the beeping eggs. The Bomb Squad members also brought with them a friendly police dog, a police robot

to interact with the children and distributed holiday baskets and candy. The event was featured in local news coverage by WSVN Channel 7 and WPLG Local 10.

### Teenage Students in our Transition Program Participated in a Fishing Excursion

Thanks to Miami-Dade Commissioner Sally Heyman in partnership with the Aventura Marketing Council/Chamber of Commerce, several teenage students attended the second annual Cops, Kids & Community Friendship thru Fishing Event aboard a boat that left from Haulover Park. The trip was a new and exciting experience for our students, many of whom had never been out on a boat.



*Miami Lighthouse teenagers enjoyed a deep-sea fishing excursion*

## Focus on Adults

### Job Readiness Program and Call Center Training

Miami Lighthouse has reintroduced sales and customer service call center training as a component of our workforce development program that also includes instruction on the use of technology and adaptive devices. Our call center training is an in-house course that focuses on customer service communication and software skills using adaptive technology to prepare adults who are visually impaired for work in call centers and related environments. Students practice mock calls, learn phone etiquette, problem-solving strategies, how to deliver a sales pitch, and are taught how to use Zendesk platform, which is used by call centers. We have successfully placed graduates of our program in customer service roles in the hospitality, travel and healthcare industries as well with state agencies and non-profits.



*Guadalupe, a vocational rehabilitation client, learns computer skills from Braille and Technology Literacy Coordinator Oseas de Leon in order to work in a call center*

Our Job Readiness Program provides visually impaired individuals with the skills needed to enter, remain in or return to the workforce. In 2022, 15 vocational rehabilitation clients have obtained jobs in a variety of for profit and nonprofit entities, and we continue to expand our network of employers. Our community partners include The Beacon Council, Department of Health and Human Services and the University of Miami. We launched new collaborations with The Opportunity Center, Miami-Dade College, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Goodwill Industries, increasing to 20 the number of participating local employers.

The partnership between 1Hotel and Miami Lighthouse has resulted in four job placements – a wonderful example of the power of inclusive brands intersecting with job-ready Miami Lighthouse candidates. Another successful partnership for employment is The Early Learning Coalition of South Florida’s call center. Their IT team collaborated with Miami Lighthouse to ensure a smooth onboarding for one of our 2022 Call Center graduates. In 2022, Amazon’s growing presence in South Florida has resulted in jobs for four job-ready Miami Lighthouse clients.

Local employers can help us build an even more inclusive workforce of the future by hiring our highly motivated clients who are proficient in the use of on-the-job technology such as all Microsoft Windows applications. For more information, contact CEO Virginia Jacko at 305-856-4176 or [vjacko@miamilighthouse.org](mailto:vjacko@miamilighthouse.org).

### Vision Rehabilitation Program Participant Testimonial from Callie

Whether teaching adults technology or schoolchildren Braille, Mirna Garcia is a role model for students and exemplifies our commitment to excellence in teaching. This recent client testimonial confirms the effectiveness of Mirna’s instructional skills and empathy for her students.



*Mirna Garcia*

*“I came to Miami Lighthouse in August 2020, after losing my vision in April. It was a very scary time for me. I did not know if I would ever be able to use a computer again, and then I met Mirna Garcia. I was uncertain what kind of a future I had, but with her guidance and patience she showed me “It’s possible to see without sight,” and kept me going when I wanted to give up on the program. Even though I no longer had eyesight, there were things that I still needed to do online in my everyday life: pay bills, fill out forms, write and reply to email, prepare budgets, attend Zoom webinars, and yes, even watch YouTube videos. In the beginning, I was unsure if I would be able to take care of my online needs, but with Mirna’s encouragement and insightful instruction I can confidently say, “Yes, I can!”*

*Losing my vision at the age of 57 was a gut punch. When I showed up at Miami Lighthouse I was broken. I needed someone to show me how to adjust to being blind. Mirna was the mentor I desperately needed to guide me through this new phase of my life. I will be forever grateful to her for the time she has given me to learn, grow and be confident, not just as a computer user but as a person.”*

## Program News

### Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Collaborative

We recently convened a meeting of pediatric ophthalmologists, physicians specializing in neurology and pediatric care, infant development specialists and a health systems professor and chair of management for the first meeting of our Cortical Visual Impairment Collaborative Planning Group. These experts from Nicklaus Children's Hospital, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, The Children's Home and Lemieux Family Center and Nova Southeastern University joined forces with our professional staff to establish proposed 18-month objectives as well as five-year goals and immediate next steps for our Virginia A. Jacko Cortical Visual Impairment Collaborative Center and to begin implementation of a planning grant we received from The Children's Trust. Among our objectives for the next 18 months are to pilot, refine, and document our unique collaborative service model and to prepare the necessary foundations for research grants. These collaborators also will help us expand community awareness regarding CVI diagnosis and treatments in the medical and educational communities as well as with the general population. The planning group will continue to work with Miami Lighthouse to improve diagnosis and timely treatment of CVI and to pursue funding to assure sustainability of our CVI Collaborative Center.

Dr. Luxme Hariharan, a member of our CVI Planning Group recently wrote:

*"It has been an honor to work with the interdisciplinary team of your novel CVI Collaborative. As a Pediatric Ophthalmologist at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, I truly believe the way we will prevent and treat childhood blindness in the future is not only with Ophthalmologists around the table, but also with different professions, parents, teachers, thinkers, disciplines and unique strategies. A complex diagnosis requires a complex treatment approach that is multidisciplinary, such as your CVI initiative.*

*Several of my patients and their families have already benefited greatly from this initiative. One mother wrote, 'I have had innumerable ophthalmologists who have told me that there is no help for my child's vision. The CVI therapy he receives at Miami Lighthouse brings us all much hope. He is not just a number or diagnosis, but rather a child that can be helped.'* "

Luxme Hariharan, MD, MPH, *Pediatric Ophthalmology, Nicklaus Children's Hospital  
Board of Directors Nicklaus Children's Hospital Foundation  
VP Education, Florida Society of Ophthalmology*

### Community Engagement: Safe Streets Summit Makes Stop at Miami Lighthouse

Safe Streets Summit, a collaborative effort that brings together public officials, technical staff, and community partners to elevate efforts on how to design and implement safe and equitable transportation, recently made a stop at Miami Lighthouse. Our Director of Rehabilitation Programs, Florian Utchitel, demonstrated Polara's new, innovative Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) system. This system includes Bluetooth capabilities for our blind and visually impaired program participants to use while walking streets around our campus in east Little Havana. By utilizing the PedApp, as it is called, our blind program participants can use their mobile phone to know the status of a traffic light and/or when the walk signal is displayed. We are optimistic that more such APS systems will be installed throughout Miami-Dade County using this highly accessible new Polara Bluetooth technology.

Thank you to Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins, Florida Department of Transportation, City of Miami, Polara, Healthy Little Havana, Urban Health Partnerships, and MHCP Colab for making the Safe Streets Summit possible this year!



*Safe Streets Summit attendees on the corner of SW 8th Avenue and SW 6th Street*

## Community Engagement: Lowe Art Museum Collaboration

The University of Miami Lowe Art Museum partnered with Miami Lighthouse for the Blind to conduct an advisory group discussion with six members from Miami Lighthouse and two staff members from the Lowe Art Museum: Jodi Sypher, Curator of Education, and Mark Osterman, Director of Digital Engagement and Head of Education. Conversations focused on the museum experience, participation in programs, and insights into how visual descriptions can be used at the museum. The discussion was enlightening for the Lowe Art Museum staff to chart a path forward for more accessible museum experiences. Outcomes included planned regular museum visits by Miami Lighthouse program participants, potential apprenticeships and internships at the museum, and continued collaboration and advisement related to the museum's efforts to develop visual descriptions and to determine the best way to surface those descriptions for visitors and online participants. The Lowe Art Museum also contracted with Miami Lighthouse to make their website ADA compliant. The Lowe Art Museum looks forward to establishing a consistent and continuing relationship with Miami Lighthouse to better serve the community.



*Victor Brown, Aaron Hill, Kaden Jamid, Natalia Mazo, Oseas De Leon, Florian Utchitel, Jodi Sypher, and Mark Osterman*

## Recognitions

Lions Clubs District 35-N Governor Lee Maloff and Lions Clubs International Director and Miami Lighthouse Board Director Stacey Jones presented Lions Clubs International Presidential Pins to CEO Virginia Jacko, her husband Bob Jacko and Senior Vice President Cameron Sisser in recognition of their service to the blind.



*Miami Lighthouse Board Chair Charles Nielson, Lion Lee Maloff, Miami Lighthouse Board Director Lion Stacey Jones, Lion Virginia Jacko, Bob Jacko, and Lion Cameron Sisser*



## Miami Lighthouse Employee Appreciation Day

Miami Lighthouse celebrated Employee Appreciation Day on March 14th. One of our core employee values states, "Focus on what you give, not what you get." Each day our employees give the greatest gift to our clients--they help them achieve fulfilling and independent lives.

During Employee Appreciation Day, our staff were presented with a "self-care" gift card through the "Help the Helper Fund" made possible by The Miami Foundation, Allegany Franciscan Ministries, The Children's Trust of Miami-Dade County, Coral Gables Community Foundation, Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation, Health Foundation of South Florida, Jorge M. Perez Family Foundation, Key Biscayne Community Foundation, and United Way Miami.



*Miami Lighthouse Team*

**Through Art and Music, Miami Lighthouse is Demonstrating that Visual Impairment Is Not a Barrier to Artistic Achievement**

Join the new Wildflower Foundation Matching Challenge and support music and tactile art for our talented schoolchildren and adults who have garnered local, state, national and international recognition. 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.

Two paintings by our SGA artists have been selected winners in the 2023 Arts4All Florida Calendar Statewide Competition. Nora Delabat's *"Natural Woman"* (on the left) will be featured for May and Griselle Diaz's *"Modern Woman"* (on the right) for July.



*"White Cane Flower Power"* (on the left) created by artists in our Senior Group Activities Program has been selected to be displayed at the Diverse Abilities Arts Festival as part of the EMERGE Art Exhibition in Tampa to kick-off October National Disabilities Awareness Employment Month.



As reported in our fall 2021 newsletter, *"White Cane Energy,"* (above, right) created by our talented SGA artists, placed second overall in the mixed media category in the 2021 American Printing House (APH) for the Blind Insights competition, an international art contest open to artists of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. It was subsequently purchased by the APH for their private collection and is currently on exhibit at the Huntington Museum of Art in West Virginia.



*"Rainbow Flowers"* (on the left) and *"Spread Your Wings"* (on the right) were two of twenty statewide winners in the Arts4All Florida 2022 "Nature: The Great Inspiration" adult coloring book competition.





# T AND MUSIC

“*Seeing Eye Dog*” by artists in our Senior Group Activities Program was the Arts4All Florida 2021 calendar cover winner. Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally Heyman subsequently arranged to have the painting permanently displayed in the lobby of Animal Services in Doral.

*Senior Group Activities Instructor Aaron Hill with Commissioner Sally Heyman*



*Lion Diana Cheng, Senior Group Activities Program Coordinator, at Lions Club District 35-N meeting*

Lions Clubs District 35-N held their District Meeting at Miami Lighthouse where arts and crafts pieces made by participants in our Senior Group Activities Program were displayed. Lions Clubs members acquired several items, and their donations will be used to purchase materials that are essential for our SGA participants to continue their artistic endeavors.

Our children’s art also received recognition in the APH Insight competition. Not only did “Save the Earth and See Turtles” created by children in our summer camp receive first place in its age group, it also was in the top ten of Channel 10’s eARTh Day Contest. Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava has given our award-winning “Save the Earth and See Turtles”



*“Save the Earth and See Turtles”*

community visibility by offering it a permanent home in the lobby of her office. Insight second place winner was “Magical Monet” made by four Miami Lighthouse second grade art students who were inspired by Claude Monet’s “Water Lilies.”



*“Magical Monet”*

## Congratulations Silvio!

We are proud to announce that Silvio Plata, a graduate of our Music Program, is attending the Frost School of Music this fall on a full University of Miami Presidential Scholarship. In preparation for his studies at UM, Silvio enrolled in our Braille Music Program where he learned highly specialized concepts of Braille musical notation that enable a blind musician or vocalist to have access to music scores the the same as a sighted musician. While Silvio pursues his degree at UM, Miami Lighthouse Literary Braille and Braille Music Library of Congress Certified instructor Jin Choi will provide Braille sheet music for him. Our Braille Music Program is offered around the globe through remote learning of 26 Braille Music lessons.



*Silvio Plata*

## Events

### “It’s Possible to See ART Without Sight” was a Major Success



*George Hustus and Casey Wicks create their own “eye” canvas as part of a community art project*

Miami Lighthouse brought together the blind artistic community and renowned national artists to make a statement on Miami’s historic street art scene. Celebrating inclusion, diversity and equity in the arts, this event featured art by Miami Lighthouse artists and acclaimed international artists as well as onsite casual conversations with prominent local artists.

Miami Lighthouse thanks our partners who supported “Possible to See ART Without Sight”: The Children’s Trust, Arts4All Florida, The Jorge M. Perez Family Foundation, Florida Division of Blind Services, Citizens Interested in Art,

The Wildflower Foundation, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, and the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners.



*Miami Lighthouse vocational rehabilitation client Renee*

### Music Under the Stars Celebrates 30 Years of Providing Comprehensive Eye Exams and Glasses at No Cost to Underserved Florida Schoolchildren

Music Under the Stars...Bon Appétit Miami treated guests to an evening of entertainment and culinary delights with proceeds from the highly successful annual event benefiting our Miami Lighthouse Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program. Generating support for our Heiken Program is particularly important since the number of referrals we receive has returned to pre-pandemic levels. In school year 2021-2022 we did not have the resources to serve 7,600 of the children who were referred to our Heiken Program after failing their vision screening.

The event honored Johnson & Johnson Vision and Lions Clubs International Foundation for addressing health equity in eye care and Florida State Legislators for their commitment to our Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program. The evening’s entertainment featured the amazing Miami Lighthouse Band and was emceed by Olga Villaverde, host of The Health Channel’s Balancing Act.

Generous sponsors included ABB Optical Group, Publix Super Markets Charities, Florida Power & Light, Walgreens, Baptist Health South Florida, Verdeja, De Armas & Trujillo, LLP, Grove Grove Bank & Trust, GrayRobinson, Celebrity Cruises, H. Angela Whitman Foundation, Genesis Systems Consulting, Monster Sound Productions, Biz Solutions, Susan Conroy Design, Perry Ellis International, Miami Kids Magazine, and Affiliated Healthcare Centers, Inc.



*Event Honorees representing Lions Club International Foundation and Johnson & Johnson Vision Sight for Kids: Lion Alan Campbell, Lion Diana Castillo, Lion Jane Colona and Board Director Lion Stacey Jones*



*Event emcee Olga Villaverde, Yolanda Abrams (representing Honoree State Representative Nick Duran) and Senior Vice President Cameron Sisser*

## Events



*Music Under the Stars sponsors, left to right: Karla Richey, Miami Lighthouse Academy, LLC, Treasurer, and publisher of Miami Kids Magazine; Susie Conroy, Susan Conroy Design; Dr. Barry Burak, Affiliated Healthcare Centers Inc.; Jessica Pineda, Walgreens; Michael Jimenez, Genesis Systems Consulting; Honorary Board Director Ed Joyce, Grove Bank & Trust; Danny Sanchez, Genesis Systems Consulting; Alex Valcarcel, Monster Sound Productions; Board Director Steven Solomon, GrayRobinson*

### Miami Lighthouse Legislative Luncheon



*Representative Juan Fernandez-Barquin and Miami Beach Commissioner David Richardson, and legislative aids with CEO Virginia Jacko and Immediate Past Chairman George Foyo*

The Young Professionals of the Lighthouse hosted our annual Lighthouse Legislative Luncheon on July 14th honoring Miami Lighthouse champions in the Florida Legislature. The Florida Legislature supports our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program as well as our Senior Group Health and Activities Program. Miami



*D. Porpoise Evans, Esq., Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, receives plaque handmade by Senior Group Activities Program Participants.*

Lighthouse Immediate Past Board Chairman George Foyo welcomed luncheon attendees. Music and Transition Program student Silvio Plata played piano and sang "Amazing Grace." The event concluded with a musical performance by our Miami Lighthouse United Voices Choir and tour of our facility. We thank Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman for their generous sponsorship of this year's luncheon.

### Young Professionals of Miami Lighthouse Host Networker

The Young Professionals of Miami Lighthouse hosted a networker on August 25th at Jaxson Maximus, a bespoke custom clothier and fine men's luxury salon. The event was generously sponsored by Panorama. We thank everyone who attended the event that was held to support of our important mission.

*Young Professionals of Miami Lighthouse Chair Alex Nostro, Austin Hollo representing sponsor Panorama and Madison Boehm of Jaxson Maximus*



### Young Professionals Mixer

On March 30th, the Young Professionals of the Lighthouse (YPOL) joined forces with Miami-Dade Beacon Council New Leaders Taskforce and United Way Young Leaders for a networker on the Miami River hosted by The Underline. Beverages were sponsored by CBRE and Popeyes food sponsored by Restaurant Brands International. The evening's entertainment was provided by the talented musicians in our Miami Lighthouse Band.

*Young Professionals Mixer Sponsors Kevin Gonzalez, CBRE Chair Beacon Council New Leaders Taskforce; Alex Nostro, Chair Young Professionals of Lighthouse; Ali Sanchez, Restaurant Brands International; Cameron Sisser, Miami Lighthouse; Masi Faroqui, The Underline*



## Tours

**Restaurant Brands International (RBI)** CEO José Cil and other members of the RBI team toured Miami Lighthouse. RBI gives back to the communities it serves through its brand foundations and by supporting local programs. CEO Virginia Jacko said, “Many public companies are adopting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The leadership at RBI does not just talk about DEI, they act on its core principles.” We will collaborate with RBI on integrated employment for our Job Readiness Program graduates as well as internship and job shadowing for students in our Transition Program, which is funded through the Florida Division of Blind Services as part of our pre-employment training program.



*Jose Cil, CEO of Restaurant Brands International (center back) with CEO Virginia Jacko and representatives from RBI*



*Donna Kalajian Lagani of the Hearst Foundation (back row, center) and CEO Virginia Jacko with teachers and students in our Miami Lighthouse Academy. A Hearst Foundation grant supports our Teachers of the Visually Impaired.*



*Cadets from the City of Miami Police Department visited our Miami Lighthouse Academy, Music Program and Senior Group Activities Program. We applaud the Police Department for keeping our city a safe place to live and work.*

## Thank You to Our Supporters

Food insecurity affects most of our clients and the families of our schoolchildren. As we try to address this crucial need among the blind, we are grateful to **Publix** and **Trader Joe's** as well as the **Miami Springs Lions Club**. We are also grateful to **The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at the Miami Foundation** for helping with the inflationary impact of our fuel and utility costs, which for the first six months of 2022 exceeded the prior year same period by \$75,000.

A grant from the **Florida Blue Foundation** enabled us to put “Living with Low Vision” presentations on YouTube to help educate our elderly population on the most common age-related eye conditions such as macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma and cataracts. If you know someone affected by vision loss, check out this virtual “Living with Low Vision” series on YouTube by visiting our web site: [www.miamilighthouse.org](http://www.miamilighthouse.org)

Miami Lighthouse is grateful for a renewal grant from **Baptist Health South Florida Community Benefit Services Program** for our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program to fund free vision care for 830 low-income children in the vicinity of Homestead Hospital and for new funding to support our Healthy Living for Visually Impaired Adults nutrition initiative. Our Healthy Living initiative will educate adults, including our young adult population of 150, on nutrition, healthy lifestyle changes and wellness to prevent, reverse or manage diseases such as diabetes, a leading cause of vision loss in adults ages 29 to 74.

We express our sincere gratitude to the **Ocean Reef Community Foundation** for their generous \$10,000 grant to our statewide Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, to provide comprehensive eye examinations and prescription glasses when needed to low-income children in Homestead, Florida City and the Florida Keys. We also express our appreciation to the **Children's Services Council of Broward** for its grants to help address the unmet need for children's eye care in Palm Beach County.

## EASY WAYS TO DONATE!

We would like to thank friends of Miami Lighthouse who support our mission when making online purchases through AmazonSmile and eBay giving works.

When shopping at Amazon, shop through the AmazonSmile website and choose Miami Lighthouse as your Charity. Amazon will then donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to Miami Lighthouse.



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



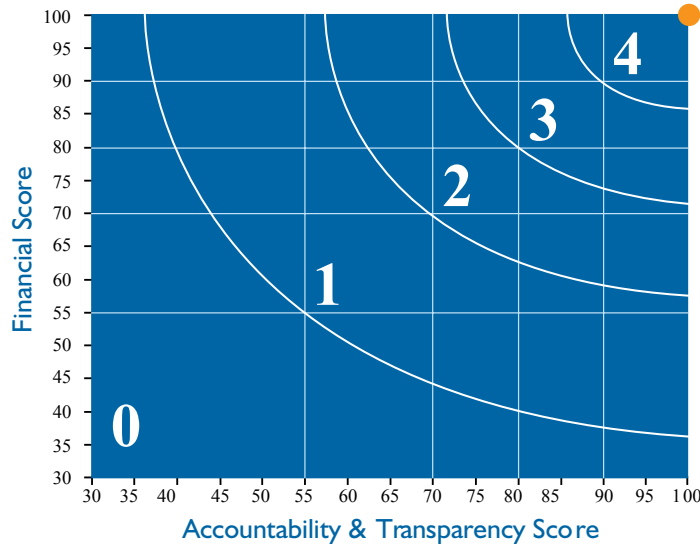
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Permit No. 7487

Please assure delivery by October 20, 2022

## CURRENT CHARITY NAVIGATOR SCORE

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 placing us in the 99th percentile of the over 9,000 charities in the U.S. rated by Charity Navigator.



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

Of the thousands of charities rated by Charity Navigator, we are among the elite 119 charities that have attained perfect scores for Financial Health as well as Accountability and Transparency resulting in an overall score of 100.

*Less than one percent of the thousands of charities rated by Charity Navigator have earned perfect scores.*

## LEADERSHIP AND ADAPTABILITY ENCOMPASS BEACON SCORE 100

This score 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.



Source: Miami Lighthouse listing on Charity Navigator website  
[www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org)

Mission	10/10
Vision	10/10
Goals	20/20
Leadership Development	15/15
Mobilizing for Mission	15/15
Adaptability Story	30/30
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>

**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](http://www.miamilighthouse.org)