



For Immediate Release

**Florida Heiken Children’s Program, LLC a Division of Miami Lighthouse
for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Awarded National Grant for 2011 Healthy Eyes Healthy People®**

Program will raise awareness of prevention, early detection and treatment of vision problems in children



Sherrol A. Reynolds, OD, FAAO, (second from right), Healthy Eyes Healthy People Chairperson for the Florida Optometric Association presents check to Miami Lighthouse President & CEO Virginia Jacko (center)

MIAMI, FL. June 22, 2011— The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc. has announced that The American Optometric Association (AOA) and Optometry Cares –The AOA Foundation have awarded a grant through their 2011 Healthy Eyes Healthy People® (HEHP) Community Grant Program. The grant is made possible by the generous support of Luxottica Group. “We are very grateful for Luxottica’s support. Healthy vision is one of the most important tools children need for success in school; when their vision suffers, so does their learning,” said Virginia A. Jacko, President & CEO of Miami Lighthouse.

The funding will allow Miami Lighthouse to create tri-lingual brochures and educational material about the importance of early intervention and eye examinations for children, targeting parents, school officials and community leaders.

“As the Healthy Eyes Healthy People Chairperson for the Florida Optometric Association and the Project Director for this initiative, I am proud to be able to spread the word through community outreach for this great program,” said Sherrol A. Reynolds, OD, FAAO, Associate Professor at Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry. “My role is to encourage parents to sign the consent form for their child if they fail the state-mandated vision screening,

and I know that Nova is extremely delighted to be one of the Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program collaborators." Initiated in 2004, the HEHP[®] grant program is providing this award for innovative community outreach projects addressing two of the targeted vision objectives established under the U.S. Department of Health & Human Service's Healthy People 2020 public health agenda.

Studies show one in four children in the U.S. has an undetected vision problem. Since Miami Lighthouse acquired the Heiken Children's Vision Program in a merger that occurred in 2007, over 19,000 low-income schoolchildren have received free comprehensive eye examinations and prescription eyeglasses when needed.

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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.*

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