



# LIGHT LINE™

A MONTHLY BLOG FROM MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND

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## Miami Lighthouse Celebrates 85th Anniversary at the Historic Biltmore Hotel



85th Diamond Anniversary Celebration Ballroom

Three hundred of Miami's leading philanthropists and elected officials spent an extraordinary evening on Saturday, January 28th, enjoying cocktails provided by Bacardi and wine by El Carajo. Presenting sponsor for the evening was Northern Trust. The co-chairs of the celebration, Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Casas and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Nostro, were announced this past March at the Northern Trust pre-gala event.

Entertainment was provided by Miami Lighthouse's nationally-recognized student and instructor musicians and vocalists.



Walkway entrance to the 85th Diamond Anniversary Celebration

The evening, commemorating Miami Lighthouse's 85th year, highlighted its beginning in 1931 during an era when Helen Keller challenged the Lions to become "knights for the blind in the crusade against darkness." In recognition of that important moment, CEO Virginia Jacko referred to an original letter from Helen Keller pertaining to a garden party that she attended. Ms. Jacko explained that funds were raised in those early years by holding garden parties attended by prominent Miamians such as Mrs. Charles Brickell, Mrs. Freeman Burdine, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas, Mrs. Charles Deering, Mrs. Harvey Firestone and Mrs. Hugh Matheson. The legacy of those formative years continues today, noted CEO Jacko, recognizing those in attendance as truly "knights for the blind."



A section of the silent auction

The silent auction committee was chaired by Jackie Munilla. Corporate sponsors included Florida Power & Light, Florida Blue, Marlins Foundation, Comcast, Perry Ellis International, Gus Machado Ford, Walgreens, *The Miami Herald* and others. Laurie Jennings, WPLG-TV co-anchor, served as Mistress of Ceremonies; the keynote speaker was Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho.

## Mayor Regalado Visits Miami Lighthouse to Deliver Toys

We thank Mayor Tomas Regalado, his wife Ana Cristina Regalado, Virginia Shomar and VISA employees for their generous gift of toys to our Miami Lighthouse children and teenagers. In addition, Jorge Munilla of MCM Construction and Ana Vidal-Rodriguez of radio stations La Poderosa and Cadena Azul toured the facility. Our students were delighted by their generosity.



Left to right: Vice President of La Poderosa and Cadena Azul Ana Vidal-Rodriguez, Ana Cristina Regalado, CEO Virginia Jacko, Mayor Tomás Regalado, Jorge Munilla of MCM Construction, and Virginia Shomar

## Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners Recognizes Miami Lighthouse

On January 24th the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners presented a congratulatory letter to Miami Lighthouse in honor of earning our ninth consecutive 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier independent nonprofit evaluator. Of the approximately 8,000 charities evaluated each year by Charity Navigator, Miami Lighthouse is ranked among the top 1% in the nation and is the only nonprofit in Miami with nine consecutive 4-star ratings. This distinction reflects our sound fiscal management, responsible use of donor dollars, and financial strength.



Left to right: Miami-Dade County Commission Chair Esteban Bovo, Commissioner Sally Heyman, CEO Virginia Jacko, Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava and Cameron Sisser

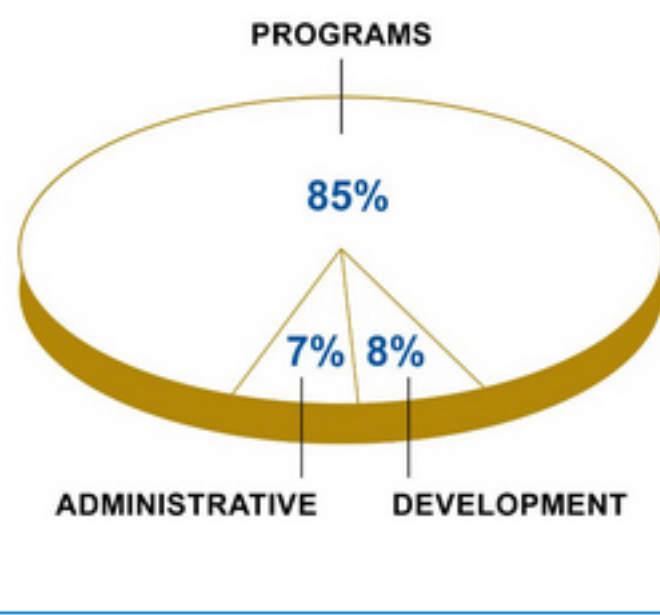
## In the Tradition of Louis Braille

Today, our studies range from Braille for school age-children, including pre-kindergarten and pre-braille for our blind babies. Braille Music courses are offered for professional musicians. Youngsters and adult students learn to feel the alphabet and understand what the braille dots mean. They learn to punch Braille dots using a braille machine called Perkins Brailier or Slate & Stylus.

Heading up the Miami Lighthouse's Braille classes is Jin Ho Choi, Braille & Assistive Technology Specialist. Jin is a Library of Congress-Certified Brailist in Literature and Music, and we are so fortunate to have him with us.

At Miami Lighthouse we owe a great deal to the gentleman born in Coupvray, France on January 4, 1809. There is no substitute for the ability to read. We are reminded of how grateful we are to be able to teach and support those who are blind and visually impaired with many of the new Braille technologies that allow our students to keep pace with the world around them.

## Functional Expense Allocation-2015



Contributed by Joan Spector

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for the BLIND  
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