



MILLER CONSTRUCTION BEGINS MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND EXPANSION

COMPLEX BUILD TACKLES CHALLENGES TO KEEP EXISTING FACILITIES OPERATIONAL THROUGHOUT CONSTRUCTION

MIAMI – Miller Construction has launched the 30,000-square-foot expansion of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind’s Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™, which will create a five-story adjoining center to the existing campus located at 601 SW 8th Avenue.

The new Learning Center will include 8,595 square feet of classroom and office space, plus two levels of covered parking. Expanding Miami Lighthouse’s building footprint to encompass the organization’s entire 1.39-acre site, the project draws on Miller Construction’s expertise to complete the expansion while keeping existing facilities operational during the 11-month build.

The project’s scope and complexities demand craftsmanship, precise scheduling and close coordination, according to Miller Construction President Brian Sudduth. New construction will connect on each of four stories with an existing parking and classroom structure that was completed in 2018. Multiple challenges range from precisely matching floor elevations, to tying into the existing storm drainage system and ensuring new building finishes match. At the fourth floor, for example, Miller will demolish a portion of existing exterior wall and connect the buildings at a storage room location. Miller is employing Building Information Modeling (BIM) for clash detection and coordination of trades, to ensure the entire project runs smoothly.

“Miami Lighthouse has grown to meet demand with a series of expansions at the site over the years,” explained Sudduth. “This latest project will tie all sections together seamlessly, adding new facilities and some flex space for future use. We’ve planned the construction to minimize any disruption to Miami Lighthouse’s vital day-to-day operations for the community,” he added.

The project plans also include design features that align with Miami Lighthouse’s mission of serving the visually impaired of all ages, Sudduth noted. All signage and elevators will incorporate Braille. Three stair towers leading to specific locations will help students exit the building safely, and the build includes a playground and green space where students can learn orientation and mobility skills and play in a safe environment.

“Blind and visually impaired children from communities throughout Miami-Dade will attend alongside sighted classmates from the surrounding Brickell neighborhood” said Virginia Jacko,

President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse. “With the expertise of Miller Construction we will be able to open our expanded facility by the beginning of the 2021 school year so our blind and visually impaired students in Pre-K through first grade can easily transition to public schools.”

The expansion was designed by Wolfberg Alvarez, which is also the project’s civil and MEP engineer. Bliss & Nyitray Inc. is structural engineer. The expansion to the current Miami Lighthouse facility was made possible by private donations in response to a challenge grant from a local philanthropist.

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Founded in 1973, Miller Construction Company is a prominent South Florida design/builder and construction services firm serving commercial, industrial, hospitality, automotive, retail, healthcare and educational markets. For more information: www.millerconstruction.com.

Celebrating its 90th Anniversary, Miami Lighthouse was established in 1930 by Dolly Gamble with the aid of Helen Keller and support from the Miami Lions and Miami Rotary Clubs. Miami Lighthouse is the oldest and largest private agency in Florida assisting persons of all ages who are blind and visually impaired. Today, Miami Lighthouse annually transforms the lives of 90,000 blind and visually impaired people, babies to seniors, and their families. The impact of our programs is statewide, national, and international. For more information about Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, visit www.MiamiLighthouse.org.