



## **MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE STUDENT EXCELS DURING MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAM**

Over the summer, Melanie, an eight-year-old Miami Lighthouse STAR Program student, won the drawing for the grand prize, a Miami Seaquarium dolphin encounter, in the Miami-Dade Public Library System Summer Reading Program. Tickets for the drawing were earned based on achievement, reading every day this summer as part of the Library System and Miami Lighthouse's summer reading program which is made possible by the Miami Dolphins Foundation and Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Library.

The Miami-Dade Public Library System and the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired partnered to help promote early literacy, Braille literacy, and the joy of reading. Approximately 50 children in the Miami Lighthouse's STAR 1 and STAR 2 groups participated in the Summer Reading Program which encouraged them to read every day during summer camp. Miami Lighthouse provided the Library System with a reading list, and the Library loaned the titles in print/Braille, Braille, audio, large print, and/or print formats for the children to enjoy. Children who read or were read to for a minimum of two hours each week received one entry ticket into a grand prize drawing – and there were no limits to the number of tickets a child could earn. The six week program concluded with a grand prize party where tickets from all 49 Library branches, including Talking Books and Connections, were combined.

Our continuing emphasis on Braille instruction empowers blind children to become fully literate and competent in a sighted world. Miami Lighthouse has expanded its outreach to blind children by adding year-round Braille instruction on Saturdays, in addition to its summer programs. "Braille means literacy. Without Braille literacy, we won't have an upcoming generation of blind lawyers, executives, or college professors," said President and CEO Virginia A. Jacko.



Students in the Miami Lighthouse Braille Literacy classes work on summer journals using slate and stylus

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