



MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE RECEIVES \$50,000 FOR THE HEIKEN CHILDREN'S VISION PROGRAM FROM THE DR. JOHN T. MACDONALD FOUNDATION

MIAMI— August 2, 2011—Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has received a grant award of \$50,000 from the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation to support its Heiken Children's Vision Program, a mobile eye care program that ensures underprivileged children in Miami-Dade do not go without necessary eye care.

“The Miami Lighthouse Heiken Children's Vision Program provides free comprehensive eye examinations and eyeglasses to thousands of low-income children who have failed the state-mandated vision screening in Miami-Dade County,” said Miami Lighthouse President Virginia Jacko. The funding is crucial to fill the widening gap, as each year more than 8,000 schoolchildren need eye care that their families cannot afford and that is not covered by other resources.

"Without these services many Miami-Dade Public schoolchildren who fail their school's vision screening would continue to go through school unable to read and see the board, because their families do not have access to insurance and are financially disadvantaged," CEO Jacko said.

The Heiken Children's Vision Program was started by the Dade County Optometric Association in 1992 and merged with Miami Lighthouse in 2007. Since its inception, almost 60,000 needy children have received free eye examinations and glasses when prescribed.

The Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation grant will help support the direct operating cost of two mobile eye units and a portable optometric office which provide examinations and prescription eyeglasses for children who fail the state-mandated vision screenings. Eight schools which are of special interest to the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation will be included in the program: Fulford Elementary, Gertrude Edelman/Sabal Palm Elementary, Greynolds Park

Elementary, John F. Kennedy Middle School, North Miami Middle School, Booker T. Washington Senior High, North Miami Senior High and North Miami Beach High School. Miami Lighthouse operates three mobile optometric units that travel to schools to provide comprehensive eye examinations on-site under an agreement with Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

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The Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc. is a private grant-making foundation, supporting projects and programs designed to improve, preserve or restore the health and health care of the people in Miami-Dade County. For more information or a grant application, please contact Ms. Kim Greene, Executive Director, 1550 Madruga Avenue, Suite 215, Coral Gables, FL 33146, (305) 667-6017, website: www.jtmacdonaldfdn.org.

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Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is located at 601 S.W. 8th Avenue, Miami, FL 33130. Since 1931, Miami Lighthouse has provided vital rehabilitation and low vision services and training to give blind and visually-impaired people of all ages hope, confidence and independence. In 2011, Miami Lighthouse received its fourth consecutive four-star rating, the highest rating, from Charity Navigator the independent evaluator of not-for-profits in recognition of its fiscal responsibility. This rating reflects Miami Lighthouse's continued stewardship and places it among the elite 8% of not-for-profit organizations nationwide to achieve such a distinction. Visit www.miamilighthouse.org for more information.

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.*