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MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE KIDS SING ABOUT “A BETTER CHANCE”

New CD Available Now By Calling 305-856-9100

MIAMI—Dec. 10, 2007—This summer blind and visually impaired high school students enrolled in the music program at Miami Lighthouse, along with sighted kids participating through the ACT (All Children Together) program of The Children’s Trust, produced a new CD titled “A Better Chance”. This CD is the third by Miami Lighthouse musicians and the first produced completely at the Lighthouse’s new state-of-the-art Henry & Inez Stone Music & Sound Studio.

The talented teenagers received a standing ovation when they performed two tracks from “A Better Chance” live before one thousand community leaders at the Childrens’ Trust Life Time Achievement Awards luncheon Nov. 19. Through the ACT program the Miami Lighthouse musicians shared their knowledge about the business of music production, song writing and performance with sighted students from Miami Springs, Coral Gables, South Miami, Miami Northwestern, American, Hialeah Miami Lakes, and Miami Krop Senior High Schools.

The music studio, made possible by a gift from Gloria Martin in 2006, features an array of music production hardware and software that enables blind and visually impaired students to gain skills in composition and music engineering. The new CD features rhythms and styles as diverse as the young musicians themselves, including pop, hip hop, reggaeton, new modern disco, rap, Brazilian rhythm, samba and merengue.

The title of the CD is taken from a song by Antonio “Tony” Cobo, who instructed the students throughout the process of performing, recording and mixing the CD.

“I like to think of ‘A Better Chance’ as the anthem of the Miami Lighthouse, said CEO Virginia A. Jacko, who is blind. “The students who participated in our music

program this past summer included blind, vision impaired and sighted young people, all singing in their own styles, making music together. How symbolic that is of our mission, creating opportunities for mainstream participation in which vision impairment simply doesn't have to get in the way of success."

Student participants, whether they are clients of Miami Lighthouse or not, were universally enthusiastic.

"This summer I've written a new song that sounds awesome," said Natalia Sulca, a blind teen vocalist who often performs at Miami Lighthouse functions. "I've recorded a few harmonies with other students for the first time. I enjoyed this experience because it's exciting to create new harmonies. Basically, a song is empty without the harmony. I made a few friends, too, and I talk to them regularly now." Sulca, a student at Miami Krop Senior High, is featured on the CD singing "Teach Me to Love."

Furrious Berrain, a student at Miami Northwestern Sr. High, said: "I really enjoyed the collaboration with other students because it demonstrates great interaction. We helped each other out with verses and choruses and collaborated on songwriting. The best experience was hearing how my songs came out, in other words, the final product. It made me feel that I accomplished something worthwhile."

Tony Cobo, ACT music director, said: "Teaching these kids was not just teaching. It was about sharing all my musical knowledge and experience. This included theory, performing, handling computers, what to do to get gigs, how to act with a client, legal advice regarding contracts and songwriting and answering all their questions related to the world of music."

"A Better Chance" may be purchased through the Miami Lighthouse Solutions Store; call 305-856-9100.

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Each year the Miami Lighthouse helps almost two thousand blind and visually impaired people and their families learn to live safe and independent lives while coping with vision loss. Twenty percent of these clients are children.

