

Mission Statement

To provide vision rehabilitation and eye health services that promote independence, to collaborate with and educate professionals, and to conduct research in related fields.

Miami Lighthouse Provides Vision Rehabilitation for Florida's First Bionic Eye Recipient

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is extremely proud to have played an integral role in the remarkable story of Carmen Torres' "bionic eye," reported in the *Miami Herald* on August 1. Miami Lighthouse's Chief Program Officer, Carol Brady-Simmons, COMS, and Occupational and Low Vision Therapist, Raquel Van Der Biest, OTR/L, CLVT, spent over 100 hours working with Torres after the Argus II Retinal Prosthesis was implanted in her eye at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

As the first person in Florida to receive the innovative medical device, there was no "book" on how to teach Torres to use the highly complicated system, so it was up to Brady-Simmons and Van Der Biest to literally write it themselves, in concert with its manufacturer, Second Sight Medical Products. Many hours were spent both in Miami and in Torres' Tampa home painstakingly teaching Torres how to position her head, her eyes and her body to take fullest advantage of the 6½" x 3½" limited field of view afforded by the device. She also had to be taught how to interpret visual patterns of light by "micro-scanning" for objects and "macro-scanning" for overall areas. Van Der Biest also accompanied Torres to California to test software modifications at Second Sight's laboratories. Brady-Simmons and Van Der Biest were invited by Second Sight to attend the "2015 Argus II Investigator Meeting: Optimizing Patient Outcomes" held at the Kellogg Eye Center at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. This was the first ever gathering of representatives of all disciplines involved in the Argus II project: scientists, physicians, academics, occupational therapists, certified low vision therapists and certified orientation and mobility specialists. Brady-Simmons was one of three certified orientation and mobility specialists invited to represent the importance of rehabilitation for the patient's successful adaptation to and use of the Argus II system.



As part of vision rehabilitation after the retinal implant surgery, our Certified Low Vision Therapist used many strategies to help Carmen adapt to the Argus II system. In this photo Carmen is learning how to identify 3D shapes through a process of relearning these objects to develop a visual memory. This process involves touching the shape to identify it, touching and looking at the shape and finally just looking at the shape.

(continued from page 1)

Carmen wrote to us recently, "It is an honor for me to be able to enlighten people suffering from retinitis pigmentosa with my personal experience using the Argus II prosthetic retinal implant. Raquel Van Der Biest is an integral part of my rehabilitation. She taught me how to move forward in my incorporation of the interpretation of the light patterns, which really is an abstract concept. She is very knowledgeable when communicating the concepts, making them easier for me to grasp. Thank you for allowing her to work with me."

All of us here at the Miami Lighthouse are both excited and proud that the innovative rehabilitation and therapy carried out by our professional staff were integral parts of the successful outcome of this remarkable story. We are grateful for the support of a generous, anonymous donor for underwriting our costs associated with this project.



2015 Sapphire Awards Ceremony

Rear: Bill Beckham, Miami Lighthouse Board Director, Steve Marcus, President & CEO, Health Foundation of South Florida and Cameron Sisser, Miami Lighthouse Director of External Relations. Front: Penny Shaffer, Market President, Florida Blue, Virginia Jacko, President & CEO Miami Lighthouse and Ray Casas, Chair, Miami Lighthouse Board of Directors



2015 Beacon Council Awards Ceremony

Larry Williams, President & CEO, The Beacon Council, Ramon Casas, Chair, Miami Lighthouse Board, Virginia Jacko, President & CEO Miami Lighthouse, Maria Alonso and Donna Abood, Chair, The Beacon Council and Miami Lighthouse Board Director

Miami Lighthouse Board of Directors

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Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Miami Lighthouse,

As we begin celebrating 85 years of service to the blind, I encourage you to personally visit Miami Lighthouse. The little 900-square-foot bungalow where our services began has grown to a state-of-the-art facility capable of supporting our greatly increased programs and services. We have gone from a sheltered workshop environment where “rehabilitation” consisted of clients making brooms, to an organization that offers innovative, transformative programs for the blind and visually impaired.

During your tour of Miami Lighthouse you will see firsthand our Early Intervention Blind Babies Program, our Adult Basic Education/GED Program for blind adults, our Latin Grammy award-winning music production program, arts and crafts made by our visually impaired children and adults along with our Low Vision Solutions Center for adults affected by age-related eye disease. We also focus on finding competitive, integrated employment for visually impaired teenagers and adults. There is much more: mobility training, Braille instruction, life enrichment classes, independent living training, vocational rehabilitation, summer camp, our group health program for seniors and free eye exams and eyeglasses for low-income children.

I'm proud to say that what we do, we do well. Our Board of Directors emphasizes excellence, which has resulted in widespread recognition of our accomplishments:

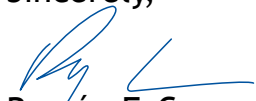
- Miami Lighthouse was honored at the Florida Blue Foundation's 2015 Sapphire Awards as an outstanding nonprofit organization in community health care in recognition of distinguished leadership, innovation and achievements in community health in Florida. Finalists were selected by an independent panel with state and national expertise in community health best practices.
- The Beacon Council chose Miami Lighthouse as the recipient of its Distinguished Industry Award for Education at the 13th Annual Beacon Awards. These prestigious awards recognize outstanding contributions to the community by individuals, non-profits and various organizations in the Greater Miami area.
- Recognition for seven consecutive years as a 4-star charity by Charity Navigator.

We have been able to grow our programs because of our strategy of minimal administrative cost—only 8 cents of every dollar goes to administration. Charity Navigator's recognition is based on our sound fiscal management, responsible use of donor dollars and financial strength. Our receiving 4-stars for seven consecutive years is an achievement of which we are extremely proud. It places us among the top 2% of the 8,000 charities rated nationally by Charity Navigator.

During Fiscal Year 2014 we served nearly 13,000 clients—24 times as many as ten years ago. Donors like you have helped us meet this phenomenal growth.

As we look forward to 2016, our 85th year of serving the blind and visually impaired in our community, we count on your support to assure continuation of our tradition of excellence in service for the blind and visually impaired.

Sincerely,



Ramón F. Casas

Chairman, Board of Directors



Super STARs Shine in Our Summer Program

Silvio, a student in our Summer Training and Recreation Program, wrote the following appreciation which he read to attendees at our end of summer family day.

Dear Ms. Virginia Jacko, President of the Miami Lighthouse, Ms. Isabel Chica, teachers, volunteers, students and all friends and family,

Today we conclude another summer camp in which we had a lot of fun and learned lots of new things. It was a big experience for all of us that we will never forget. Today I would like to thank all the donators and all the people who helped put this wonderful summer camp together. It was because of them that this summer camp was a big success. We enjoyed all the activities that were prepared for us such as yoga, rowing, art, music and lots more. We also enjoyed lots of field trips such as the Miami Seaquarium, Grapeland Water Park, Bird Bowl for bowling, Actor's Playhouse, and this week we will enjoy field day and a carnival. We got to try new things like rowing which was a huge experience for all of us. We also got to enjoy the Little Farm. We got to pet all sorts of different animals. It was a great summer camp!

I have faith that these summer camps will never stop coming because we have donators. I ask to bring more people that will help so that this Lighthouse can grow with each passing day. This Lighthouse is a house filled with light, light that illuminates our future. In this Miami Lighthouse there is light for all. Here they help us and prepare us for life. This is our house. The love of our teachers and volunteers will always remain in my heart. God bless all the donators, teachers, staff and volunteers that help us. We all have faith that this Miami Lighthouse will continue to fill with radiant light that will illuminate our entire lives. Thank you everybody. God bless you and see you next year.

*Love,
Silvio*

*Derwin enjoying lunch on Carnival Day.
Special thanks to Harvey and Ellen Amster
for providing pizza.*



Damian at Bird Bowl



STAR summer campers Laylah and Joey

Super STARs Shine in Our Summer Program



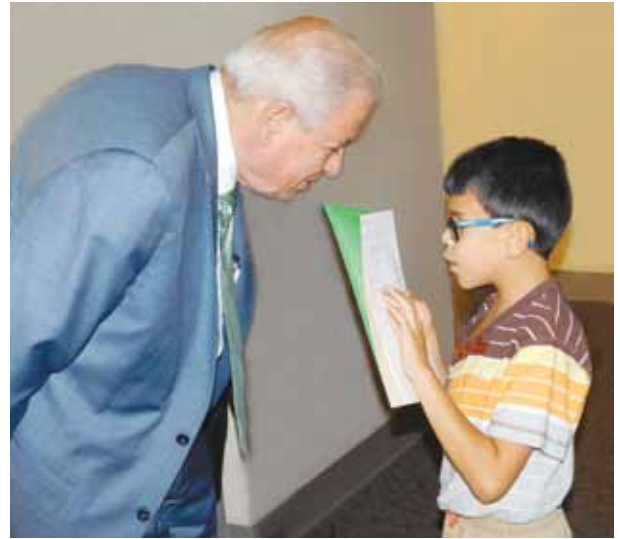
Derwin, Silvio, Alejandro and Ramon in music class trash can band



If you're happy and you know it clap your hands!



Jumping for Joy: Destiny, Alyssa and Dennise



Summer Training and Recreation Program participant Kayden reads a Braille letter that he wrote thanking City of Miami Mayor Regalado for his visit to Miami Lighthouse on July 20th.



Izzabella at the Little Farm Petting Zoo



SGA Volunteer Lissette (center) with STAR students Luhanna and Silvio in ceramics class

Teen and Transition Programs

Miami Lighthouse Teens Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day with Children from the Chapman Partnership

On Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 19, 2015, 80 students attending Miami Lighthouse together with 60 peers from the Chapman Partnership celebrated with free eye exams, a clothing drive, arts and crafts and music provided by our Better Chance Music Program student musicians. The Miami Lighthouse Transition teenagers conducted a clothing drive so that their new friends could take clothing back to their families. The Chapman Partnership children were introduced to making tactile art in Miami Lighthouse's arts and crafts program. Through our Miami Lighthouse Heiken Children's Vision Program we were able to provide the Chapman children vision screenings to detect eye abnormalities such as early onset of glaucoma or diabetic retinopathy.

Honey Shine Girls Visit Miami Lighthouse

On Saturday, January 24th, approximately 90 girls from Honey Shine attended a day of learning at Miami Lighthouse. The students were hosted by Miami Lighthouse Transition and Music students. The young ladies were divided by age in three groups (elementary, middle and high school). They participated in a rotation that included sensitivity training where they wore blindfolds and were led around the building to experience what it feels like to be blind, received music instruction and participated in arts and crafts activities using materials that blind people use to make art. All the children left with smiles, and the transition and music students were proud to have shown what they do and participate in as part of the Miami Lighthouse family.

Beep Baseball and Touch Tour of Marlins Park

The Miami Marlins hosted Miami Lighthouse students on Monday, February 16th for the Marlins Ayudan Beep Ball Classic at Marlins Park. The students teamed up with Miami Marlins players and Marlins Ayudan volunteers to compete in an exciting game of Beep Baseball. On July 23rd our Summer Training and Recreation Program students ages 5 to 13 enjoyed a field trip to Tropical Park where they played Beep Baseball with equipment generously provided by the Marlins Foundation. Through this adapted version of the game, blind and visually impaired students are able to experience the popular game of baseball firsthand. Students and instructors in our Music Program were treated to a hands-on touch tour of Marlins Park on July 30th during which they were able to experience the sounds and smells of the ballpark as the Marlins played the Nationals. We thank the Marlins Foundation and President David Samson for making these exciting experiences possible.



Teen and Transition Programs

Jungle Island: Special Hands-On Sensory Experience

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind Better Chance Music Program teenagers, ages 14-22, had the opportunity to take part in an exciting hands-on tour of Jungle Island that brought the blind and visually impaired teens close to some of the world's rarest and most fascinating animals. With the help of expert tour guides, the Touch Tour Safari included interactions with everything from Australian red kangaroos to black-and-white ruffed lemurs from Madagascar, Aldabra giant tortoises from the Seychelles Islands, capuchin monkeys from South America and parrots from around the world.

During the multisensory journey, 25 students felt, played with and petted the animals at Jungle Island. We are grateful to Jungle Island for making this exciting and educational experience possible for our students.



Music students Leon and Jimena up close and personal with a kangaroo at Jungle Island Touch Tour



Our Transition students were delighted to be invited once again to visit the Coast Guard Air Station Miami. We thank Commanding Officer Captain Todd W. Lutes and Robert Grant, CAPT USCG (Ret.), the pilots and staff for making this a memorable experience for our teenagers.



Transition student Brian gives Joe Green, Manager of Education Services, a bear hug at our Transition Graduation Ceremony on July 23, 2015.



We are grateful to the Florida Division of Blind Services for partially supporting the following programs: Early Intervention, Vocational Rehabilitation, Transition, Independent Living Adult and Independent Living Older Blind.

At the invitation of Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, **Miami Lighthouse music students and instructors performed at the South Florida Congressional Delegation's local swearing-in ceremony** for the new 114th Congress on February 6, 2015. Taking the oath of office were Congressmen Carlos Curbelo and Mario Diaz-Balart and Congresswomen Ileana-Ros Lehtinen and Frederica Wilson. Natalia Sulca, alumna of our music program and graduate of the Berklee College of Music, sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," and current music student Angel Wallace sang "Proud to be an American" and "God Bless America." This was the second time our students have been invited to perform at the local swearing-in ceremony. Our student musicians also performed on the Marina Stage at Bayside Marketplace on December 22, 2014.

Collaborations and Community Awareness

Comcast is partnering with organizations dedicated to serving people with visual disabilities to bring the company's new voice guidance technology to more people. As part of this initiative, Comcast has partnered with Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired to introduce its remarkable "talking guide," which is a feature on the X1 platform that reads aloud selections from program titles, network names and time slots as well as DVR and on demand settings, giving visually impaired users the freedom to independently explore and navigate thousands of TV shows and movies. "By bringing the talking guide to as many people as possible, we can help to bridge that gap and make entertainment just as compelling and fun for people with a visual disability as it is for anyone else," said Tom Wlodkowski, Comcast Vice President, Accessibility.



Miami Lighthouse Computer Technology Services Instructor Roberto Perez receives instruction on use of the Comcast "Talking Guide" from a Comcast trainer. Roberto and our other Computer Technology Instructors are now training our clients on the use of the device.

Engaging the Low Vision Community through Education, Research and Service

On February 7, 2015, Miami Lighthouse in collaboration with the Florida International University Nichole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences Occupational Therapy Department offered our fourth continuing education seminar for Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Nurses to empower healthcare professionals with the knowledge they require to meet the needs of the growing number of patients who are impacted by low vision. The all-day seminar was attended by 44 registrants who received continuing education credits for their participation. Topics related to low vision and blindness as they impact functioning and quality of life from birth through the adult years included infant development, assistive technology, communication, patient/family centered care and independent living. On the evaluation questionnaire participants' overall rating of the workshop was 4.9 out of 5. This annual seminar is made possible in part by a grant from The James Deering Charitable Trust.



Thanks to BB&T Bank and SFM Services, Miami Lighthouse high school students are enjoying a community garden designed to appeal to the five senses, offering fragrance, a variety of natural textures, the sounds of birds and bees and the taste of fresh grown herbs and vegetables.



Raquel Van Der Biest, Miami Lighthouse occupational and certified low vision therapist, gave a presentation entitled "Overview of Independent Living Skills" at our continuing education seminar for Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Nurses.

Collaborations and Community Awareness

Publix Chooses Miami Lighthouse for Day of Service

Publix, where “shopping is a pleasure,” made Friday, April 17th a true pleasure for Miami Lighthouse by selecting us for their “Publix Serves Day.” Publix, founded in 1930, and Miami Lighthouse, founded in 1931, are celebrating their 85th anniversaries, and Publix is celebrating by giving back to the community.

Our “day” consisted of Publix associates beautifying the Lighthouse facility with the laying of sod, mulching and planting herbs and vegetables to create our very own healthy garden. We will be maintaining the new plantings as part of our High School High Tech Program for our teenagers as an opportunity to teach them about gardening.

The associates also served lunch to our blind and visually impaired clients as well as members of the Lighthouse staff. “We are proud to support the work of an organization that provides an essential lifeline to those who need it most in the communities where we work and live,” said Nicole Krauss, Media and Community Relations Manager for Publix’s Miami Division.



“Publix Serves Day” Team

Lighthouse Teens are “Lovin’ McDonalds”

Despite being blind or visually impaired, our Transition Program teenagers enjoyed the rare opportunity this summer to have a “hands-on, back-of-the-house” tour of a McDonald’s restaurant kitchen. Thanks to the Montes Family, owners of the McDonald’s located at 1400 SW 8th Street just a few blocks from Miami Lighthouse, 20 of our Transition teens learned about cleanliness and hygiene as they toured the restaurant’s storage area and got a chilly experience in the facility’s freezer, which is kept at 10 degrees below zero.

During the multi-sensory journey, the students even got to assemble (and eat!) their favorite McDonald’s meal, from the Big Mac to the brand new Premium Asian Salad with Grilled Chicken. By experiencing the process of making food through touch and interaction, the students once again were made aware that “it’s possible to see without sight™.”



During December Walgreens selected Miami Lighthouse to receive donations from their scannable charity giving project.

Georgia Lehoczky of Walgreens presented CEO Virginia Jacko with a check representing the proceeds from this project.



Miami Lighthouse Transition Teenagers with Jose, Kristina and Melissa Montes outside their 8th Street McDonald's in Miami

Events

McCrea Family Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

Each year on Valentine's Day, the McCrea family has honored the spirit of volunteerism by generously underwriting this luncheon so that those who dedicated themselves to providing crucial services to the blind may receive their due praise.

The Valentine luncheon this year recognized 2015 Volunteers of the Year Rene J. Gonzalez-Llorens, Esq., who serves as Miami Lighthouse Legal Counsel, and Paula Jacobs, a devoted Senior Group Health and Activities Program volunteer (SGA). Our Music Program musicians serenaded honorees and guests with SGA client Dan Johnson bringing down the house with his vocal rendition of "Lady" by Lionel Richie.



Lauren Fernandez, Esq., Sheila Cesarano, Esq., Antonia Martinez, Jr., Esq., Shutts & Bowen; The Honorable Migna Sanchez-Llorens; Honoree Rene Gonzalez-Llorens, Esq., Shutts & Bowen; Nelba Gonzalez, Senior Group Health and Activities Coordinator, Miami Lighthouse; David McCrea, Esq. and Francois Henriquez II, Esq., Shutts & Bowen

Walk, Waggle and Stroll Dog Walk

On March 15th Miami Lighthouse held its eighth annual Walk, Waggle and Stroll Dog Walk at the Shops at Midtown Miami. Over 150 walkers with their dog guides, service animals and regular pet companions pledged support for Miami Lighthouse to raise awareness for the amazing work service animals provide. This St. Patrick's Day-themed walk raised public awareness for the services and programs we provide at Miami Lighthouse and recognized the importance of dog guides. Music for the event was provided by our Miami Lighthouse Music Program musicians.

We are thrilled to announce that over \$20,000 was raised this year to support the orientation and mobility services Miami Lighthouse provides to the blind and visually impaired. Esther Reynolds was the winner of a signed Britto "Azul" dog figurine, which was the grand prize for most participant pledges collected.

A special thank you to our Grand Marshals Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally A. Heyman and emcee CBS-4 Miami Anchor Irika Sargent, and to our wonderful sponsors: The Shops at Midtown Miami, Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally Heyman, BB&T, GrayRobinson, Castle Group, BRITTO, Brickell Bay Animal Hospital, D.O.G Miami, Knowles Animal Clinics, Fresh Market, Starbucks Mary Brickell, CBS-4 Miami, tMiami, BizSolutions, Miami Global Columbian Lions Club, Susan Conroy Design and Absolute Graphics.



Rear: Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue team Front: Board Directors Louis Nostro and Bill Beckham, Honorary Director Carol Russo, CEO Virginia Jacko, Commissioner Sally Heyman, Board Chair Ray Casas and Board Director Gil Bonwitt

Events

8th Annual “Music Under The Stars: Bon Appétit Miami”

More than 250 guests gathered for “Music Under The Stars: Bon Appétit Miami” on Wednesday, May 6th. Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho joined school officials, community leaders and the Miami eye care community in celebrating over 20 years of free eye examinations for children in need who failed their school vision screening but have no resources for eye care. More than \$65,000 was raised at this year’s event, which will enable more than 500 underserved schoolchildren to receive free comprehensive eye examinations and prescription glasses through our Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program.



President & CEO of the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce Eric Knowles, Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho, Senator Gwen Margolis, CEO Virginia Jacko and Board Chair Ray Casas

Emceed by G. Eric Knowles, President & CEO of the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce, the event honored Dr. David K. Moore, Miami-Dade Public Schools Assistant Superintendent, as well as special “champions” of Miami Lighthouse in the Florida Legislature represented by State Senator Gwen Margolis. The evening ended with guests giving a standing ovation to Miami Lighthouse Big Band Jazz, special guest internationally acclaimed jazz vocalist Nicole Henry and Miami Lighthouse former client and now professional singer, Natalia Sulca.

Delicious foods from some of Miami’s finest restaurants were sampled, which included City Hall The Restaurant, Shorty’s Bar-B-Q, Thierry’s Catering and Event Design, Whisk, Perricone’s Marketplace, Dr. Barry Burak, Gail Beckham and many more. Beverages included specialty wines by El Carajo, fabulous cocktails by Macallan Scotch Whisky, frosty beers by Samuel Adams and Starbucks Mary Brickell. Thanks to Perry Ellis International, musicians wore custom-made guayaberas in the musically themed venues.

Sponsors for the annual event included ABB Optical Group, celebrating 25 years of service to the optometry industry, Publix Super Markets Charities, Baptist Health South Florida, Brown & Brown, Marlins Foundation, Miami-Dade Commissioner Sally Heyman, Genesis Consulting, GrayRobinson, Aetna and Essilor Laboratories of America.

Miami Lighthouse Hosts “Happy and Healthy Living” LGBT Health Fair

On May 30, in collaboration with Walgreens and with support from the Miami Foundation’s GLBT Community Projects, Miami Lighthouse hosted “Happy and Healthy Living,” a free fun filled LGBT Fair for the entire community. The event featured vision screenings and low vision evaluations, HIV/STD testing, private pharmacy consultations, legal Q&A, information from community health and social service organizations and a musical performance by the Miami Gay Men’s Chorus. State Representative David Richardson welcomed participants, and Dr. Steven Santiago, Medical Director of Care Resource, gave the keynote address.

Participating organizations included Walgreens, Care Resource, SAVE, Planned Parenthood, Florida Department of Health, Florida Guardian Ad Litem, LGBT Visitor Center, Barre Motion, Cosmic Sex, Miami Gay Men’s Chorus, The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth, Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence, Community Life Support, Blind LGBT Pride International, Switchboard of Miami, National GLBTQ Task Force, The Village and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health.

Events

2015 Young Professionals of the Lighthouse (YPOL) host “Miami Lighthouse Legislative Luncheon” Underwritten by All Aboard Florida

The Young Professionals of the Lighthouse hosted our annual Legislative Luncheon on July 1st, honoring Miami Lighthouse champions in the Florida Legislature during the recent legislative session. Honorees in attendance included Senator Gwen Margolis, Representative Jose Felix Diaz and Representative David Richardson. Thanks was also extended to our governmental relations guru, Bob Levy, President of Robert M. Levy & Associates, for his important work with the legislature on behalf of Miami Lighthouse. The luncheon was sponsored by All Aboard Florida.

A highlight of the event was the presentation to Miami Lighthouse of a grant by AT&T. The important new grant will enable youth who are blind or visually impaired to engage in activities related to broadcast journalism, expanding their options for further education in the field and employment. The check presentation was made by Alex Dominguez, Area Director of External Affairs for AT&T.

“We are extremely honored to receive support from AT&T,” said CEO Virginia A. Jacko. “This generous grant will significantly expand Miami Lighthouse’s High School High Tech Program and provide our students with the opportunity to explore jobs in the communications industry.”



Representative David Richardson, President & CEO Virginia Jacko, Board Chair Ray Casas, Representative Jose Felix Diaz and Senator Gwen Margolis

AT&T Regional Director of External Affairs Alex Dominguez and CEO Virginia Jacko

Eighth Annual Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Reception at Miami Lighthouse

On August 26th, more than 50 faculty, residents and fellows from Bascom Palmer Eye Institute (BPEI) along with Miami Lighthouse Board Directors gathered for an informative evening at Miami Lighthouse. Dr. Eduardo C. Alfonso, BPEI Chair, welcomed his colleagues. Guests toured the Miami Lighthouse facility learning about the variety of vision rehabilitation programs we offer, assistive devices and services available in our Low Vision Center, including functional assessments by our low vision consulting optometrist and on-site and in-home services provided by our certified low vision occupational therapist, Raquel Van Der Biest. Raquel described the collaboration between BPEI, whose surgeons performed the first Florida Argus II retinal implant, and Miami Lighthouse, which provided vision rehabilitation for the patient (see article on pg.1). Dr. Harry W. Flynn, Jr., Professor of Ophthalmology at BPEI, was the keynote speaker. He presented a history of BPEI and its longstanding relationship with Miami Lighthouse dating back to Dr. Bascom Palmer’s chairmanship of the Miami Lighthouse Board from 1947 to 1952.

Events

(Bascom Palmer Reception article continued)

Chelsea Haina, Case Manager for our Senior Group Health and Activities Program, spoke about how our SGA Program helps blind and visually impaired seniors adjust to vision loss, how arts and crafts help develop tactile skills necessary to learn Braille and other important benefits of the program such as alleviating depression and isolation, nutrition counseling and assistance obtaining social services. We were honored that David Kurtz, grandson of Dr. Bascom Palmer, attended this year's reception. The event was partially underwritten by The James Deering Charitable Trust.



Board Directors Angela Whitman, Alan Levitt, O.D. and Owen Freed, CEO Virginia Jacko, Board Director Stephen Morris, O.D., Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Physicians Dr. Eduardo Alfonso, BPEI Chair, Dr. Harry Flynn, Board Director Dr. Sander Dubovy and Heiken Advisory Committee Member Dr. Craig McKeown

David Kurtz, who attended this year's BPEI reception, points to the picture of his grandfather Dr. Bascom Palmer who served as Chair of Miami Lighthouse from 1947 to 1952.



Board Kudos



Miami Lighthouse **Board Director Sander R. Dubovy, M.D.**, is the recipient of the Victor T. Curtin Chair in Ophthalmology in the Department of Ophthalmology, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute (BPEI), University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine. He is director of the Florida Lions Ocular Pathology Laboratory at BPEI, serves as medical director of the Florida Lions Eye Bank, on the Medical Advisory Board of the Life Alliance Organ Recovery Agency, and on the board of directors of the American Association of Ophthalmic Oncologists and Pathologists. The Victor T. Curtin Chair in Ophthalmology was made possible by a generous gift from the Lions of South Florida and was named in honor of Dr. Curtin, who established the Florida Lions Eye Bank and the Florida Lions Ocular Pathology Laboratory at BPEI in 1962.

Miami Lighthouse has collaborated with BPEI since it was founded. Dr. Bascom Palmer served as Miami Lighthouse Board chair from 1947 to 1952 and established a fund at Miami Lighthouse for the creation of an eye hospital in Miami. From this fund, by 1959 Miami Lighthouse had contributed \$305,000 of the half-million dollars need to construct BPEI. Through the perseverance of Dr. Edward Norton and Dr. Victor Curtin, BPEI opened its doors in 1962 after Dr. Palmer's death in 1954. Later, additional funds were allocated for construction of the Anne Bates Leach Eye Hospital. A strong collaboration between Miami Lighthouse and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute continues today as both institutions are partners in transforming lives through vision rehabilitation.

In Memoriam

In 2015 five friends of Miami Lighthouse passed away.

R. Kirk Landon

Philanthropist Kirk Landon (1929-2015) was a source of knowledge, inspiration and generosity. He has left behind many memories for Miami Lighthouse to cherish, honor and emulate. The values he set in our community will always remain with us. We mourn his loss as a coach, mentor and crucial supporter of Miami Lighthouse.

Board Director Owen Freed and Honorary Board Director Pam Garrison placed a butterfly in memory of Kirk Landon on our Tree of Life at the June 18th Board of Directors meeting.



Philip Corey

Philip Corey passed away on August 19, 2015. He leaves a legacy of philanthropy, which has supported many Miami institutions, especially the University of Miami School of Medicine, the Chapman Partnership and Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Because of his and his wife Linda's generosity, blind and visually impaired musicians have been able to work on the latest software to arrange and compose their music, and adults have been able to get jobs because of the training they receive in our computer laboratories on the latest versions of Microsoft and Apple computer software. Phil's benevolence truly made a difference in the lives of our clients.



Linda and Phil Corey, Miami Lighthouse CEO Virginia Jacko and Board Chair Ramon Casas. Miami Lighthouse recognized Phil and Linda Corey at the 2015 Leave A Legacy/Donor Next Door luncheon.

Jack Admire

Community philanthropist and friend of Miami Lighthouse Jack Admire passed away on August 8, 2015. Jack and Ruth Admire supported many local charities devoted to helping children, including our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, which provides free eye exams and glasses to financially disadvantaged schoolchildren. We extend our condolences to Ruth and the entire Admire family.

Humberto J. Gonzalez, Jr.

Bert passed away on January 3, 2015, at the age of 41. He was a member of the Miami Lighthouse Board of Directors as Co-Chair of the Young Professionals of the Lighthouse. Bert was actively involved with both YPOL and MLB and regularly attended events. He is missed by his family and his Miami Lighthouse family.



Miami Lighthouse honored Ruth and Jack Admire for their support of our Heiken Program at our 2011 Music Under the Stars event.

Jeanne Westphal

Jeanne, who was well known and respected throughout the tourism and hospitality industry, passed away on May 15th. In 2013 she joined the Miami Lighthouse as the Job Developer and in that position placed graduates of our Job Readiness Training Program in positions with various employers throughout Miami. We shall miss Jeanne and are grateful to her for her dedication to our blind and visually impaired job seekers.

Newsworthy Notes

Raquel Van Der Biest, our occupational and certified low vision therapist, was featured in an “Alumni Spotlight” article in the Fall 2014 issue of *Noteworthy*, the Florida International University Occupational Therapy newsletter. In the article Raquel talked about her experience working at Miami Lighthouse in one of the profession’s emerging fields—low vision therapy.

Another article entitled “Putting the Pieces Together: a field work rotation at a low-vision residence brings classroom theories to life” appeared in the Special Focus: Vision Rehabilitation section of the December 2014 issue of *Advance for Occupational Therapy Practitioners*. In it two FIU OT interns related their fieldwork experiences under Raquel’s supervision. “Our time at Miami Lighthouse enriched who we are as individuals. The opportunity to work with this population taught us to view the world differently. The connections we made went beyond the teachings of the classroom.” Having Occupational Therapy as well as Orientation and Mobility interns at Miami Lighthouse helps to grow the number of professionals in the field of vision rehabilitation and enables students to supplement lessons learned in the classroom with hands-on experience. Our internship program is made possible by a grant from the Anthony R. Abraham Foundation.

A new High School High Tech Grant funded in part by The Able Trust and the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides our transition youth (ages 13-22) opportunities to prepare for careers in the 21st century job market. A Business Advisory Council representing prominent South Florida industry leaders will help provide internship and mentoring opportunities for 30 participants. Business Advisory Council members include: Janet Acheson, Special Education Teacher, M-DCPS; Michael Balbone, Director of Retail Operations, Perez Art Museum Miami; Gil Bonwitt, Self-Employed Entrepreneur; Robert Guaragna, Self-Employed; Christian Infante, Vice President, SFM Services, Inc.; Cornelius Myers, Broadcast Journalist; Dr. Robin Tellez, RN, MS/HAS, DM/OL, Corporate Director, Office of Diversity/Human Resources Liaison, Baptist Health South Florida and Steven Solomon, Attorney, GrayRobinson, P.A. and Miami Lighthouse Board Director.

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment.

More information about The Able Trust can be found at www.abletrust.org



On July 14th Board Director Steven Solomon and United States Bankruptcy Judge Laurel Myerson Isicoff gave a **Credit Abuse and Resistance Education (CARE) presentation** to our High School High Tech students. Founded in 2002, the CARE Program seeks to educate high school and college students on the responsible use of credit and other fundamentals of financial literacy, as well as the potential consequences of poor money management and credit-card abuse. Our students learned the importance of budgeting, the benefits and risks of credit, how credit if used improperly can be detrimental if, for example, a bad credit record is discovered by a prospective employer during a background check. During the question and answer session following the presentation the students asked many questions, the answers to which gave them a better understanding of using credit responsibly. We express our thanks to Board Director Solomon and Judge Isicoff for arranging this excellent learning opportunity for our students.

Board Director Steven Solomon (left rear), Ileana Espinosa Christianson, Esq., (second row left) and Judge Laurel Isicoff (far right) with our High School High Tech students



*Your gift will double in value if you choose to participate
in our 85th Anniversary Capital Challenge*

At our 2014 See the Light Luncheon, a generous donor announced the “*Expansion of the Center of Excellence in Vision Rehabilitation Grant Challenge*.” Under the terms of the Challenge, the donor will match gifts dollar for dollar up to a total of \$5 million supporting facility expansion of our Center of Excellence in Vision Rehabilitation for young children with total capital and program costs equaling \$10 million. When completed, the expansion will enable Miami Lighthouse to increase—and provide access to—critically needed services for the growing numbers of blind babies and young children as a means of empowering them to lead independent and productive lives. *For more information contact Virginia Jacko at 305.856.4176 or vjacko@miamilighthouse.org*

Miami Lighthouse Donor Bill Of Rights

Miami Lighthouse respects the rights of its donors, and under no circumstances will donor contact information be shared with or sold to another entity. To read our Donor Bill of Rights, please visit our web site:

<http://www.miamilighthouse.com/Docs/ADonorBillOfRights20100812.pdf>

**Join the Helen Keller Legacy Society by including Miami Lighthouse in your estate plans.
Contact Virginia Jacko, President and CEO, at 305.856.4176**

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is in the top 2% of U.S. charities having received seven consecutive 4-star ratings, the highest rating possible, from Charity Navigator in recognition of our ability to efficiently manage and grow our finances.

Lighthouses serving the blind throughout the United States are autonomous, have no affiliation with each other and do not share funding.





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A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS...
We would like to thank the many generous donors who responded to our summer appeal enabling us to provide nutritious morning and afternoon snacks as well as a hot lunch to our summer campers. Our summer camp provides blind and visually impaired children Braille and Technology instruction which helps them perform at grade level when they return to school along with fun and educational field trips.



LIVING WITH LOW VISION

WHAT IS LOW VISION?
Low vision is a visual loss not correctable by standard eyeglasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery.

MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE CAN HELP. . .
An optometrist specializing in low vision and a licensed occupational therapist can help by providing low vision assessments and recommending assistive devices such as low vision aids and equipment.

To schedule an appointment or if you need assistive devices call our Vision Solutions Center at 786-362-7479.
601 SW 8th Avenue • Miami, FL 33130
www.miamilighthouse.org

SAVE THE DATE!

**Miami Dade Optometric Physicians Association
CEU Dinner Meeting**
October 5, 2015 at Miami Lighthouse

White Cane Day
October 15, 2015 at Miami Lighthouse

See the Light Luncheon
November 12, 2015 at Riviera Country Club

McCrea Volunteer Luncheon
February 12, 2016 at Miami Lighthouse

85th Anniversary Celebration
November 12, 2016 at The Biltmore

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HOURS: Monday - Friday, 8:00 am-4:30 pm

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For vision rehabilitation program information call: 786.362.7479
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