



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MAYOR CARLOS A. GIMENEZ TO BE GRAND MARSHAL
AT MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND WHITE CANE DAY**

Miami, Fla. — Friday, October 5, 2012 — Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired will celebrate **White Cane Day in Miami on Monday, Oct. 15, 2012.** Beginning at 8:30 a.m., an estimated 200 people of all ages led by Grand Marshal Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez will walk from Miami Lighthouse, at 601 S.W. 8th Ave., south across 8th Street, down to 7th Avenue. “I’m honored and excited to serve as Grand Marshal of this year’s White Cane Day,” said Mayor Gimenez. “Miami Lighthouse for the Blind is one of Miami-Dade County’s premiere non-profit organizations, and they have organized a fun-filled day aimed at educating the public on blindness issues and raising awareness of the White Cane Law, which protects blind and visually impaired pedestrians.”

White Cane Day is a national observance celebrated on October 15th each year. The date is set aside to celebrate the achievements of people who are blind or visually impaired and the important symbol of blindness, the white cane. The signature sponsor of the event, Waste Pro USA, will have a special presentation for blind and visually impaired attendees unveiling a new “Side Door Service Program,” a door service trash pick-up, one of the first of its kind. “We are proud to roll out a program for our blind and visually impaired residents on this symbolic day that goes hand-in-hand with our company motto “Caring for our Communities,” said Russell Mackie, Regional Vice President of Waste Pro USA.

This year’s event includes keynote speakers Paul Edwards, President of the Florida Council of the Blind and Earl Oaks, President of the National Federation of the Blind, Greater Miami-Dade Chapter. Breakfast is sponsored by Lions Club Miami Guatemala and lunch is sponsored by Burger King. Special recognition will be given to Michelle Levy and her team at the Division of Blind Services, as well as, District Governor Juan Tejera and participating Lions. “White Cane Day is important for Miami-Dade County residents because it makes people more aware of the tools used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired that allow them to lead independent, productive lives,” said Virginia A. Jacko, President & CEO of Miami Lighthouse.

For individuals who are blind or have significant vision impairment, White Cane Day is considered to be “Independence Day” and is symbolized by the white cane that assists many people for safe travel and mobility. President Lyndon B. Johnson instituted White Cane Safety Day in 1964 with a proclamation declaring the day as a safety reminder to promote consideration of the blind on the streets and roadways. The White Cane Day walk has a \$5 suggested contribution for the visually impaired and \$20 contribution for all other participants. **Media is invited to attend White Cane Day and is advised to arrive by 9:00 a.m.**

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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.*

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