



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6 MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE STUDENTS EXCEL IN MUSIC, BRAILLE COMPETITIONS

MIAMI, Fla. – May 9, 2012 – Four Miami Lighthouse Better Chance Music Production Program™ students recently participated in local competitions.

Arantza Espinoza and Eddy Camacho won the group instrumental/vocal category in the Young Talent, Big Dreams competition sponsored by The Children’s Trust and Actors’ Playhouse. Arantza and Eddy, both legally blind, beat hundreds of other ensembles competing in various categories. The Young Talent, Big Dreams competition follows the popular TV talent show model with judges prominent in the performing arts community. A total of 88 acts made it to the semifinals, and 22 advanced to the finals.



Photo ©2012 Joshua Prezant

Arantza Espinosa and Eddy Camacho perform at The Young Talent Big Dreams competition

In addition, two more students from the Miami Lighthouse Better Chance Music Production Program™ recently participated in Miami Dade College’s Music Competition. Renaldo (Rey) Sanchez came in first out of six finalists in the MDC Piano Sonata competition. Matthew Smith’s “Hominis Noturna” placed second out of eight finalists in the Jane Pyle Music Composition Competition.

At the South Florida Regional Braille Challenge, two Miami Lighthouse Braille Literacy Program students, Juan Pablo “JP” Paniagua, a seventh-grader at Palmetto Middle School, and Marino Flores, a seventh-grader at W.R. Thomas Middle School, won first and second place in the Junior Varsity category. Junior Varsity at the Braille Challenge is an advanced category, where competitors must Braille what an audio file dictates to them. The sample includes graphs as well as text. Five Miami Lighthouse Braille Literacy Program participants competed in different categories at the Braille Challenge. Hundreds of blind and visually impaired students

competed this year, and our winner, JP, will go on to the National Braille Challenge for the second year in a row. JP says he likes the Braille Challenge because it is a way to hone in on his Braille skills. Marino has studied Braille at Miami Lighthouse since 2004.

The South Florida Regional Braille Challenge has become an important yearly competition since Braille literacy has become an issue of great concern to blind adults, parents of blind children, and teachers of blind students. Miami Lighthouse the Braille classes are intended to supplement instruction students receive in school enhancing their Braille literacy skills.

We express our gratitude to the Children's Trust for funding our music program and our summer camp Braille literacy.

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