

## ZooMiami Volunteer Inspires Peers

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Florida Division of Blind Services "Visionary" February 2013



On January 19, students from the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired transition program went for a special tour of ZooMiami. The teens were not there for the animals, but for their peer, Camille Hall.

Camille has been a ZooMiami conservation teen scientist since 2012. Despite her vision loss, she has spent more than 150 hours educating visitors on wildlife and conservation. Camille is honing her public-speaking and customer-service skills as an

exhibit interpreter. She guided the group of 19 teens and five instructors on a tour of the park, brought artifacts for her friends to touch, and spoke with them about her experience at ZooMiami.

Visually-impaired teens do not have the opportunity to learn about jobs or careers through incidental observation. The Transition Work Experience program provides students with hands-on career training. This assists participants who are completing volunteer work to enroll in the program. The Division of Blind Services provides a stipend to attract teenagers to the program so they can gain invaluable job skills.



Camille applied for and received an hourly stipend of \$6 for her work at ZooMiami. Supervisors, Isabel Sanchez and Tedor Whitman, closely monitored her progress by completing weekly work evaluations. Camille has congenital glaucoma. She encouraged her peers to seek out their own work experience opportunities. "By arranging your own position, you will get experience in a job that actually interests you," said Camille.