



LIGHT LINE™

A MONTHLY BLOG FROM MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Issue 104
June 2023

In This Issue

- Music Under the Stars Celebrates 31 Years of Providing Comprehensive Eye exams and Glasses at No Cost to Underserved Children
- CEO Virginia Jacko Addresses "New Markets Tax Credit Summit"
- Temple Beth Am and Hochberg Lower School East Campus Volunteer at Miami Lighthouse
- Florida Blue Leadership Visits Miami Lighthouse

[DONATE NOW](#)

[LEARN MORE](#)

Music Under the Stars Celebrates 31 Years of Providing Comprehensive Eye exams and Glasses at No Cost to Underserved Children

On Wednesday, May 24th attendees were treated to an evening of entertainment and culinary delights with proceeds from the highly successful annual event benefiting Miami Lighthouse's Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program. We celebrated our 31st anniversary of providing comprehensive eye exams and prescription glasses at no cost to underprivileged schoolchildren throughout the State of Florida.

The event honored our Florida State Government Champions, Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez and Representative Juan Fernandez-Barquin. Honored alongside them was Dr. Stephen Morris, Secretary of our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program and Miami Lighthouse Board Director, for his dedication to children's eye health and for providing the M-DOPA leadership for the 2007 merger. Evening entertainment featured Styrofoam Cup, comprised of Miami Lighthouse Music Program students recently coming in second place in the Young Talent Big Dreams competition. Our amazing award winning Miami Lighthouse Band also performed. The event was emceed by Olga Villaverde, host of The Health Channel's Balancing Act.



Our Florida State Government Champions: Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez and Representative Juan Fernandez- Barquin, Virginia Jacko President and CEO and Board Director Dr. Stephen Morris.

Our generous sponsors include ABB Optical Group, Publix Super Markets Charities, FP&L, Walgreens, VSP iCare Health Solutions, Alivi Health, Grove Bank & Trust, Rotary Club of Miami, H. Angela Whitman Foundation, The George and Luisa Foyo Foundation, Genesis Systems Consulting, GrayRobinson, Monster Sound Productions, Biz Solutions, Susan Conroy Design, Perry Ellis International, Affiliated Healthcare Centers, Inc., and more. Our fabulous restaurant and beverage sponsors include Perricone's, Don Paella, Season's 52, Roaster's and Toaster's, Genesis Café, PF Changs, Sport's Grill, El Carajo, Vicky Bakery, E11even Vodka, Eagle Brands and more.



Top left to right: Alex Valcarcel, Monster Sound Productions; George Foyo, The George and Luisa Foyo Foundation; Christian Infante, SFM Security; Danny Sanchez, Genesis Systems Consulting; Caleb Rojas, Alivi Health; Olga Villaverde, Emcee; Natasha Lowell, Grove Bank & Trust.

Bottom left to right: Susie Conroy, Susan Conroy Design; Miami Lighthouse Academy Officer Karla Richey, Miami Kids Magazine; Cathy Cahill and Nicole Santiago, Rotary Club of Miami; Virginia Jacko, President and CEO; Nivia Santiago and Georgia Lehoczky, Walgreens; Chair-Elect Steven Solomon, Gray Robinson.

CEO Virginia Jacko Addresses "New Markets Tax Credit Summit"

The morning of May 11th was highlighted by Miami Lighthouse CEO Virginia Jacko's stirring address to over 600 people attending CohnReznick's 22nd Annual New Markets Tax Credit Summit at the Loews Hotel. The video highlights our new Miami Lighthouse Academy and how the New Markets Tax Credit Program helped to quickly complete the construction of the expansion to the Academy premises. Our Miami Lighthouse Academy offers an inclusion environment for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, and second grade for blind and visually impaired students. As a certified Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Provider, our Academy pre-kindergarten enrolls students with and without vision impairment promoting an inclusive program and resulting in a sense of belonging for all children and families. Please enjoy the below video.



CohnReznick NMTTC Case Study: Miami Lighthouse

Temple Beth Am and Hochberg Lower School East Campus Volunteer at Miami Lighthouse

On May 16th we welcomed volunteers from Temple Beth Am and Hochberg Lower School East Campus who spent the day with our Miami Lighthouse program participants. Temple Beth Am's children choir volunteered in our Miami Lighthouse Academy and students from Hochberg Lower School East Campus served lunch to our senior program participants. Temple Beth Am choir then led a sing-a-long during lunch for our seniors with Hochberg Lower School East Campus students. We thank both groups for spending the day at Miami Lighthouse volunteering their time.



Temple Beth Am children choir



Students from Hochberg Lower School East Campus

Florida Blue Leadership Visits Miami Lighthouse

On May 31st, the Florida Blue leadership team witnessed our motto that, "A blind person can do anything a sighted person does, they just need to learn how to do things a bit differently." The Florida Blue team interacted with students in our Miami Lighthouse Academy walking with their white canes and looked at award winning art by seniors in our Social Group Activities Program. Florida Blue truly witnessed first hand how our venerable mission serves people of all ages affected by uncorrectable vision loss. Thank you Florida Blue for your very special visit.



SVP Cameron Sisser; Fiorella Smyth, FB Senior Manager, Martha Garcia, FB Senior Director; President and CEO Virginia Jacko, David Wagner, FB South Florida Market President; Ivy Patron, Senior Director; and Al Molina, Market Leader.

In the News:

- [Miami Lighthouse for the Blind President and CEO Virginia Jacko was quoted in a Bandt Article about British Vogue's landmark braille edition](#)
- [Islander News, April 28, 2023 – "Miami Lighthouse for the Blind opens expanded playground, thanks to County funding contribution"](#)

[Read more!](#)

Contributed by Joan Spector

Follow us



[Visit Our Website](#)

Listen to our Podcast



Vision Insights



WHEN IS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

CHOOSE MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE

AS YOUR CHARITY ON FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER



Shop on eBay and give at checkout!

If you're shopping on eBay, make **Miami Lighthouse** your "Favorite Non-profit" and choose to give a donation at checkout.

Selling on eBay? You can also support us by designating Miami Lighthouse to receive 10-100% of your final sale price.

[Get Started](#)

EMPLOYER ID #59-0637847. MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED, FLORIDA REGISTRATION #CH775. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE, WITHIN THE STATE, 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED, INC. NON-PROFIT IRS EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER IS 59-0637847.

