

OPINION

JOHN S. KNIGHT (1894-1981)

DAVID LANDSBERG, PUBLISHER | AMINDA MARQUES GÓNZALEZ, EXECUTIVE EDITOR | MYRIAM MARQUEZ, EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR

JAMES L. KNIGHT (1909-1991)

THE READERS' FORUM

Lighthouse students excel

The Herald reported recently that half of our 9th and 10th graders in Miami-Dade County were able to perform at their grade level on the mandated FCAT reading exam.

At Miami Lighthouse for the Blind, our kids have had many successes recently. Did you know that a student has two choices of FCAT format — print or Braille?

Because of our commitment to Braille literacy, two of our students took top honors at the South Florida Regional Braille Challenge, winning first and second place. Our first-place winner goes on to the National Braille Challenge for the second year in a row. Another one of our students, Tomas Ramon Cacicedo, just received the prestigious Silver Knight Math Award.

What's our secret? The students are motivated and they have learned that hard work pays off. They have to overcome barriers every day.

The training they receive at Miami Lighthouse, in addition to giving them the skills they need to function independently and succeed academically, bolsters their confidence and instills an attitude of what I call "able-ness." Blind and visually impaired kids learn this attitude at Miami Lighthouse as we create an atmosphere of ability and learning.

We are empowering these students to compete in a sighted world. These are our next engineers, lawyers and teachers despite their vision loss.

— Virginia A. Jacko, president and CEO, Miami Lighthouse