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MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE WINS SOUTH FLORIDA BUSINESS JOURNAL EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH CARE - COMMUNITY OUTREACH AWARD

MIAMI--Oct. 7, 2011--Miami Lighthouse, Florida's oldest and largest agency serving the blind and visually impaired, received the *South Florida Business Journal* 2011 Excellence in Health Care Award in the Community Outreach category at yesterday's awards luncheon in Fort Lauderdale.

The award is a reflection of Miami Lighthouse's growing presence in the community. In the 2010-2011 school year, the Miami Lighthouse Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program performed 7,950 eye exams for children from low-income families who have no other resource for eye care. Nearly than 6,000 of those children received free eyeglasses through the program. University research has indicated that low vision is a factor in poor school performance and resulting delinquency, and receiving vision correction as early as possible helps kids succeed in school and in life.

The Miami Lighthouse Florida Heiken Program provides free eye care to children enrolled in the public school system who have failed state-mandated vision screenings twice, have no insurance including commercial or governmental assistance programs, and who are eligible for the free and reduced school lunch program.

"This award is especially meaningful to Miami Lighthouse as we celebrate our 80th anniversary this year," said CEO Virginia A. Jacko. "We are grateful to the *South Florida Business Journal* for recognizing the work we are doing as a Center of Excellence in Low Vision and Vision Rehabilitation."

The Miami Lighthouse Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, through a contract with the state Department of Health, now brings eye wellness services to children in 42 Florida counties. The program is funded by grants from the Florida Department of Health, community and private foundations and trusts, as well as individual donors. Only 6 cents of every donor dollar goes to the cost of fund raising. Miami Lighthouse ranks among the elite 8% of U.S. nonprofits having earned a 4-Start rating for four consecutive years from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier independent nonprofit evaluator.

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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.*