



CELEBRATING 50+ YEARS  
**LIGHTHOUSE**  
OF BROWARD  
Empowering the Blind and Visually Impaired

# IMPACT REPORT 2025

*In a world of darkness, we are the light.*



*Serving the visually impaired and blind for more than 50 years.*

# *A Message from the CEO/President and Board President*



With each passing year, we are humbled by the impact Lighthouse of Broward has had on the visually impaired and blind in our community. Thanks to our donors, sponsors and dedicated staff and board of directors, our programs continue to soar.

In 2025, we served 878 new clients while serving a total of 3,075 clients. We are so proud of the fact that all of our programs saw a double digit percentage increase over the previous year. What's even more heartwarming is the extraordinary impact we have had:

- In our Bright Beginnings Early Intervention Program, parents remained actively involved in their child's development, ensuring a strong foundation for future success.
- We saw 100% of participants, youth ages 6–13, in our David & Jean Colker KIDS Program improve daily living skills, social interactions and self-determination while gaining proficiency in STEAM activities and safe travel techniques.
- TeenLIFE, for youth ages 14–21 recorded a 50% increase in participants over the previous year.
- The Ready to Work Program internship component, now entering its fifth year, has been transformative raising the employment rate of participants from 30% to 50%.
- Through Vital Living 96% of seniors ages 55 and older in the program improved daily living and communication skills, 91% reported greater confidence in life decisions and 100% maintained independence or living in supportive environments.

On a personal note, we would like to acknowledge our exceptional Lighthouse staff, our incredibly dedicated board of directors, our amazing sponsors and donors and all who attended and supported our two annual events. We raised a record \$262,678.02 from Dining in the Dark and \$70,403.83 from our Heroes event. We are so deeply grateful for the love and support for Lighthouse of Broward.

We continue to settle into our new building in Sunrise, upgrading and renovating our new space to meet our needs well into the future. At the same time, we are expanding our marketing outreach and growing our social media presence because while we have positively impacted the lives of the 3,075 individuals we served in 2025, there are still more than 175,000 residents living with vision loss in Broward County and that number is predicted to grow as our population ages.

As always, we will continue to be guided by our mission which is to be the leader in providing the services, advocacy, and resources necessary to enhance the lives of people who are blind and visually impaired, empowering them to live independent, healthy, employed, and fulfilling lives.

*Thank you for all of your support. It is because of you that in a world of darkness, we are the light.*

*Ellyn Drotzer*  
Ellyn Drotzer, MSW, LCSW  
President & CEO

*Tim Moffatt*  
Timothy J. Moffatt, J.D., MBA  
Board Chair

# Board of Directors



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Stewart**



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**Patricia Martinez, MBA,  
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**Cameron McDonough**



**Tracey Seaton, M.A.**



**Judge Kathleen McHugh, JD**



**So Yeon Sharon (Lee) Tse,  
OD, FAAO**

# Programs that Moved the Needle

The Lighthouse of Broward served **3,075 people** who are visually impaired and blind in 2025, including **878 new clients**, unduplicated, through a variety of programs and initiatives.



**Bright Beginnings** is a year-round developmental and support program for parents and children aged from birth through five years old.

**Clients served:** 43 – a 19% increase over 2024

**Impact:** The program continued to deliver strong outcomes, with all children effectively engaging with assistive technology, building socialization skills, and maintaining focus on sensory-stimulating activities. Parents remained actively involved in their child's development, ensuring a strong foundation for future success.

**David & Jean Colker KIDS Program** is a year-round program that provides a summer camp, weekend activities each month, and school holidays during the school year for 6- to 13-year-olds.

**Clients served:** 77 – a 28.3% increase over 2024

**Impact:** Through the program, 100% of participants improved daily living skills, social interactions and self-determination while gaining proficiency in STEAM activities and safe travel techniques. Parents reported stronger advocacy skills and reduced stress, highlighting the dual impact on children and families.

**TeenLIFE** (Learning Independence From Experience) is a year-round program for teens and young adults aged 14 to 21 that achieved notable growth. It focuses on career exploration, job readiness, work experience, daily living skills and college preparation.

**Clients served:** 96 – an increase of 50% over 2024

**Impact:** Through hours of group training and individual instruction, participants gained essential independence and career-readiness skills. The program prepared teens and young adults to transition confidently into adulthood, supporting their academic, vocational and personal goals.

**Ready to Work** provides working-age adults with skills training, job preparation, placement services, and ways to overcome barriers to gain employment and reduce the effects of vision loss on job performance.

**Clients served:** 204

**Impact:** Through extensive instruction, 95.65% of participants improved essential skills in daily living, mobility and adaptive technology and 75% developed professional resumes and interview skills. The program's internship component, now entering its fifth year, has been transformative in raising the employment rate of participants from 30% to 50%. Of those completing internships this year, half secured employment, reflecting the program's continued success in breaking down barriers to meaningful work.

**Vital Living** serves seniors who participate in group and individual rehabilitation training, enabling them to maximize their independence, well-being, and health. Vital Living helps the elderly age in place and learn skills empowering them to remain safe and live independently.

**Clients served:** 338

**Impact:** Of the seniors completing the training, 96% improved daily living and communication skills, 91% reported greater confidence in life decisions, and 100% maintained independence or living in supportive environments. In all, we have 2,042 Lifetime Learners graduates of this program.

**Visually Impaired Seniors using Technology (VISIT) and Family Support Group** offers training at the Sunrise Senior Center, with weekly two-hour sessions in six-week cycles for small groups of five to seven seniors. The off-site model increased accessibility for those facing transportation or mobility challenges, and expansion to additional Broward County centers is being explored.

**Combined clients served:** 120

**Impact:** This year, VISIT services expanded to include training sessions at the City of Sunrise Senior Center, improving access to support and instruction for seniors who are blind or visually impaired.

**NSU Vision Clinic** assists low-vision clients and the public in partnership with Nova Southeastern School of Optometry. In-home follow up includes teaching best use of remaining vision with adaptive low vision devices.

**Combined clients served:** 155



*David & Jean Colker  
KIDS Program in action.*

# Our Mission in Action



## Lighthouse in the News

In recognition of Blindness Awareness Month, Lighthouse of Broward CEO Ellyn Drotzer penned an opinion column for the Sun Sentinel highlighting the extraordinary services and programs at the Lighthouse that enhance the independence, productivity and dignity of children and adults who are visually impaired and blind.



↑ Check out the story here.

## What's Cooking?

The Jim Moran Foundation awarded a transformative \$1 million grant as a part of its 25th anniversary to the Lighthouse of Broward. This substantial gift will support capital improvements and the creation of a state-of-the-art teaching kitchen in the organization's new Sunrise facility. The new kitchen will serve as a cornerstone of independence training for individuals living with vision loss – teaching essential daily living skills such as safely preparing meals, operating kitchen appliances, and using sharp tools with confidence and control. For individuals who are blind or visually impaired, a teaching kitchen is more than just a room – it's a place where confidence is built, fears are overcome, and dignity is restored through the mastery of everyday tasks many take for granted.



*A kitchen renovation is underway at the Lighthouse.*



*Hands-on activities at STEAM event*

## Full STEAM Ahead

The Lighthouse once again hosted “For the Love of STEAM,” a dynamic and inclusive learning experience where children explored hands-on activities in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics in an environment designed specifically to support accessibility and engagement to foster creativity, collaboration and confidence while strengthening critical skills such as problem-solving, communication, decision-making and critical thinking.

## An Epic Dining in the Dark

The 11th Annual Dining in the Dark: Island Edition, presented by the Josephine S. Leiser Foundation and hosted by Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort, raised more than \$262,678.02 for Lighthouse of Broward. Many thanks to co-chairs Von Freeman and Carmen Miller, emcee Julie Guy from LITE FM 101.5, auctioneer Shane Smith, and all sponsors and guests!



*(L to R) Tim Moffatt; Maria Pierson; Ellyn Drotzer; Carmen Miller; Scott McCullough; and Von Freeman celebrate Dining in the Dark*



*Jose and Louis*

## In Focus

The Lighthouse launched In Focus to introduce supporters to the organization's impact through an intimate storytelling format led by President & CEO Ellyn Drotzer. The first issue spotlights the powerful journey of Vice President of Public Affairs and Government Relations Jose Lopez Masso, who shares his testimony of suddenly losing his sight at 31 and how Lighthouse of Broward helped him reclaim his independence. His story is one of resilience and purpose. To learn more about the Lighthouse of Broward, and ways you can engage with us to impact lives, please visit: [www.lhob.org](http://www.lhob.org) and sign up to receive updates on stories, news, and events.

## Broward's Champion of Philanthropy

Congratulations to our very own Vice President of Public Affairs & Government Relations Jose Lopez Masso who was named the Fundraising Professional of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Honored at the National Philanthropy Day Luncheon, Jose was recognized for his outstanding leadership in philanthropy and volunteerism throughout Broward County.



*Jose Masso Lopez, his wife Carla and guide dog Louis*



*Heroes hosted by American Heritage Schools*

## Prom Night for the Ages

American Heritage Schools hosted the 5th Annual HEROES, a 1950s-themed prom night concert and auction that raised \$70,403.83 for the Lighthouse. Guests enjoyed a reception before moving into the auditorium which came to life with live music by Clay Cartland alongside talented American Heritage Schools Fine Arts students, all of whom kept the crowd on its feet all night long.

# Thank You to our Generous Supporters

Baptist Health  
Batchelor Foundation  
Blanche S. Buck Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
Charles and Joan Hermanowski  
Family Foundation, Inc.  
City of Deerfield Beach  
Florida Agencies Serving the Blind (FASB)  
Florida Blue Foundation  
Florida Division of Blind Services (DBS)  
Florida Panthers Foundation, Inc.  
Francis F. Ferry Trust  
Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation  
Future Force Personnel Headquarters  
Gore Family Memorial Foundation Trust  
Gunther Motor Company  
Helen S. Burke Estate  
Henny Obermaier Trust  
Henry L. & Kathryn Mills Charitable Foundation  
Josephine S. Leiser Foundation  
Margaret McCartney & R. Parks Williams  
Charitable Foundation  
Marilyn and Francine Gruder  
Memorial Healthcare System  
Moss Family Office Worldwide  
Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation  
Peck Foundation, Milwaukee LTD  
The Pulte Family Charitable Foundation  
TD Charitable Foundation  
The Jim Moran Foundation  
The William R. Watts Foundation, Inc.  
UKG  
United Way of Broward

\*List includes funders at \$5,000 or more during fiscal year 2024-2025.



# 2025

## BY THE NUMBERS

### \$262,678.02

THE MOST EVER RAISED AT  
DINING IN THE DARK

### \$28,700+

VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

### 24,103

HOURS OF CLIENT INSTRUCTION

### 2,042

LIFETIME LEARNERS, GRADUATES  
FROM VITAL LIVING

### 878

NEW LIGHTHOUSE CLIENTS

### 825

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

### 154

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

### 43

BABIES AND CHILDREN  
UNDER 5 YEARS SERVED



*Thank You to Our  
Lighthouse of Broward  
Legacy Society!*

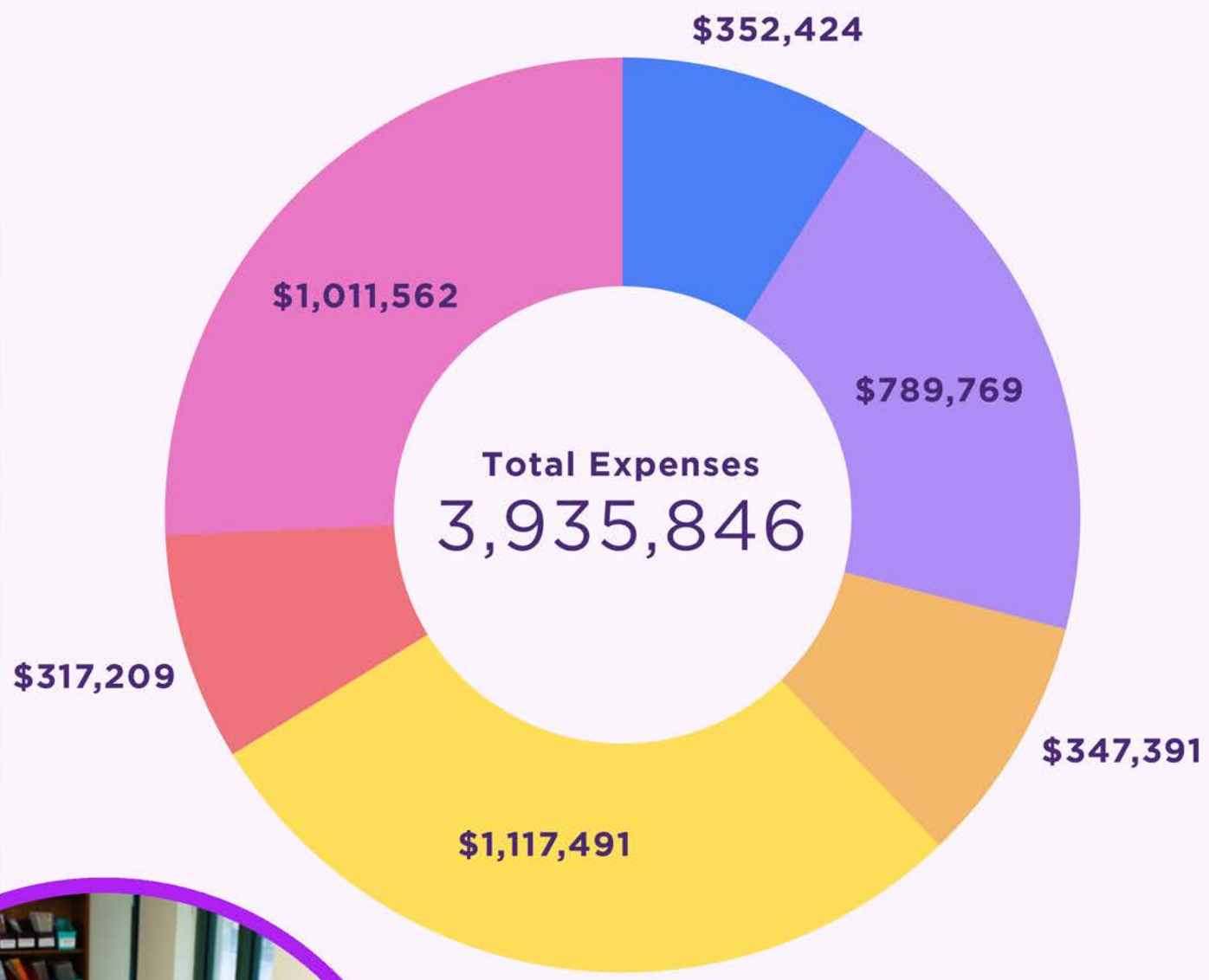
**The Lighthouse of Broward Legacy Society honors friends who include the Lighthouse of Broward as part of their legacy. We are deeply grateful to our Lighthouse of Broward Legacy members, whose generosity helps ensure and transform the future for individuals who are visually impaired and blind.**

Sally E. Abbey Estate\*  
Sheila Bechert  
The Rose L. Bender Family Trust \*  
Estate of Ronald William Brown\*  
Helen S. Burke Estate\*  
Dorothy Cason Family Trust\*  
Lois L. Deicke\*  
Susan DiOrio Trust\*  
Revocable Living Trust of DMP\*  
Frances F. Ferry Trust\*  
Gladys Finkel Revocable Trust\*  
Gertrude Groning\*  
Francine and Marilyn Grudner\*  
Rose Hackman\*  
Rose Jonan\*  
Jacquelin J. Kelly Revocable Trust\*  
Henry Obermaier Trust\*  
Eileen O'Connor and George Henderson  
The Estate of Doris M. Saltmer\*  
Cindy and Brian Schutt  
Marion M. Washburn Revocable Trust\*

\*Deceased -- 2/20/2026

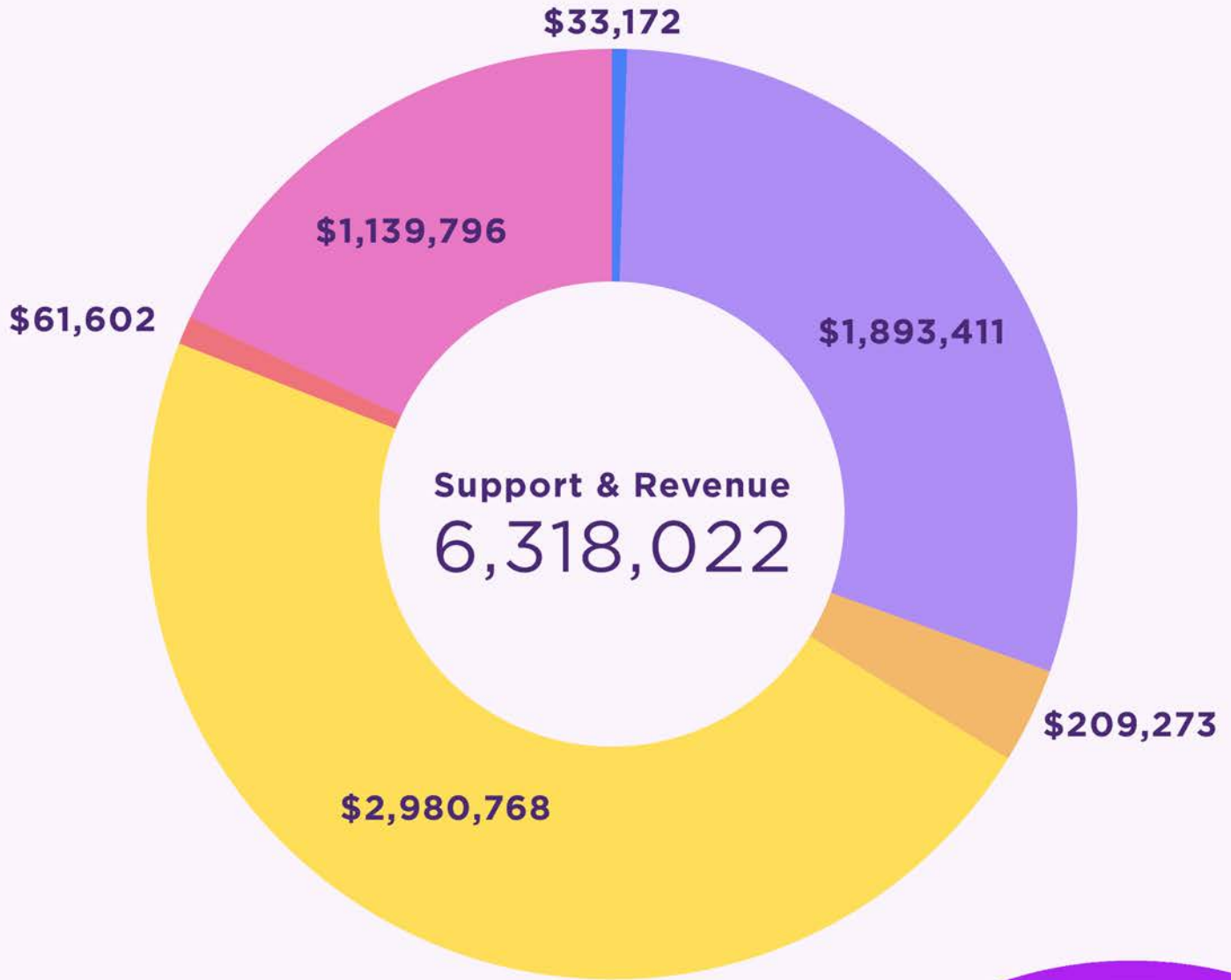


# EXPENSES



- Bright Beginnings
- Support Services
- Teens
- Kids
- Vital Living
- Ready to Work

# REVENUE



- Contract Revenue
- Grants & Contributions
- Contributions of Nonfinancial Assets
- Investment Income
- Fundraising Events
- Program Income

THE LIGHTHOUSE OF BROWARD  
IS GRACIOUSLY SUPPORTED BY



# What We Do

## VISION

*To be the place of choice that allows all Broward residents, who are visually impaired or blind, to enjoy independence and a high quality of life through our transformative work.*

## MISSION

*To be the leader in Broward County that provides leadership, services, advocacy, and the resources necessary that enhance the lives of people who are visually impaired and blind.*

## RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE BY



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