Elly du Pré to receive the **Courage Award**

Lighthouse of Broward is proud to award its highest honor, the **Courage Award** to Dr. Elly du Pré. Dr. du Pré, the Executive Director of the Lighthouse of Broward, since 2005, will receive the honor at the Lighthouse’s annual donor appreciation event, **Dining in the Dark**, on October 28th. “During her eleven and a half year tenure, both existing and new programs received high commendations, culminating in 4 Star Charity Navigator rating, Gold Star Guidestar designation and full accreditation from the National Accreditation Council for Blind and Low Vision Services.” Elly’s work has had a positive impact on our agency as well as on the state and national level,” said Board President Daniel Trottman.

Dr. du Pré announced that she will be leaving the Lighthouse of Broward in December.

**Jeanette Salvatierra - Living in Gratitude Mode**

No one speaks to “gratitude,” better than Lighthouse client, Jeanette Salvatierra. **Living in Gratitude Mode: Your passport to abundance and well-being**, is Jeanette’s first book. According to Salvatierra, “I learned from seeing others at the Lighthouse living with their conditions. Sighted people believe people with disabilities are limited. But meeting people at Lighthouse of Broward was the proof that this is not true. Finally realizing this was very important.” Ms. Salvatierra, a successful and driven business woman, was a sales executive at the Latin American Division of IBM and Microsoft. Jeanette dared to reinvent herself many times. “I learned so much—IBM made me the professional I am,” adds Salvatierra. “They developed my leadership and people skills, as well as it is where I met my husband.”

Her extensive work and travel schedule took its toll on Jeanette, especially, when she could no longer drive. Jeanette’s vision loss stems from being born with high myopia and subsequent development of glaucoma. Undaunted, she owned several businesses including a point of service computer and software business and a beauty salon. “I am a type A personality,” she admits, and she has strong desire to help other women. The salon was her “social work.” Salvatierra, hired single mothers and then taught them to use a bank account, apply for assistance and social programs. “I learned a lot, too, about their creativity and resilience.”

(continued on Page 3.)
People who are blind or visually impaired have a rate of unemployment upwards of 70%. The top reason is that losing sight in your adult working years requires a major self-reassessment to identify marketable skills. Skills acquired when you have vision need to be reconfigured; the education that led to your career never took into account becoming blind or visually impaired. Add to that the age at onset of vision loss, going back to school may not be practical. Second, despite a strong Americans with Disabilities Act, every job applicant needs diplomacy skills above and beyond just having the best résumé. They must help an employer understand how the “blind guy” can be competitive. These are “soft skills.” They are an important ingredient of success—and a prime component of our KIDS program. Thirdly, we rarely choose where to live based on the “what ifs” like blindness or disability which means “getting to the job” can become a major hurdle. Finally, the persistence and resilience required is huge.

The Lighthouse has built a support infrastructure for teaching the soft skills that help clients get good paying jobs. That support is built on partnerships. Three recent examples are FAU, First Transit Paratransit provider, and our in-house partner Florida Vision Technology Store. For the past two summers, Florida Atlantic University has been a great partner where our TeenLIFE participants have had work opportunities, classroom space and experience living in the dorms. The teens truly are learning independence from experience, and 100% of our teens have college or vocational school plans.

This past June, Lighthouse of Broward’s, Dolores McDiarmid presented a powerful sensitivity training to more than 100 employees and drivers of First Transit. You have seen their white vans around town with the TOPS paratransit service logo on it. Almost all adult Lighthouse clients use TOPS to get to our classes and this training helped the drivers to be comfortable working with people with a visual impairment. We commend First Transit for reducing what is one of the biggest hurdles in the daily round of shopping, appointments, and working—which is actually “getting there.” (continued on page 4)
In her book, *Living in Gratitude*, Jeanette shares her own experience with gratitude practices. The book is a practical roadmap, using tools she has developed, as part of her current role as a Life Coach. Jeanette moved from Venezuela to the United States in 2011. Less than a year later she started receiving training at Lighthouse of Broward. “I wanted to learn and network with my peers. I felt I needed to meet people like me.” She immersed herself in all aspects of “life re-training.” She told LHOB’s case manager and job readiness instructor, Leticia Vaz, that she didn’t want to go back to her former career. “Leticia saw my desire to use my people management skills. I have the passion and the natural ability” for life coaching.

In 2014 she started studying with Harvard educated sociologist, Martha Beck, whose holistic approach suited Jeanette’s own eclectic and flexible sentiments. Many of the practical tools in the book are the result of Jeanette’s studies and her positive rehabilitation experiences. In the book, Jeanette admits she was “very depressed.” Needing to cope with her frustration and doubt, “I coached myself out of my problems,” meditating and writing a daily journal. Her husband was the first to suggest that she write a book about her journey. In 3 months she had the manuscript and she began learning how to publish it.

Many of the clients at the Lighthouse of Broward share Jeanette’s reality – they want a purpose driven life and simply need quality “re-training” to accomplish it.

You can go to www.smile.Amazon.com and buy Jeanette’s book and support the Lighthouse of Broward at the same time. Search for *Living in Gratitude Mode: Your passport to abundance and well-being*. Select Lighthouse of Broward when you sign up and Amazon Smile will give us a donation and you don’t pay any more than the usual Amazon price for any eligible purchase you buy.

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**Executive Directors Message-Getting Back to Work**

(continued from page 2.)

Lighthouse of Broward as well as Florida Vision Technology, the retail store located in our facility, employ many blind professionals. Over 25% of staff at LHOB, and 75% of the on-site store employees are blind or visually impaired. Kudos go to these other major employers as well: Walgreens, which has won Florida and National honors for its leadership in employing people with disabilities, Nova Southeastern University, Broward College, Social Security Administration, and First Call for Help 2-1-1.

You are making these successes happen every day through your support. By volunteering, referring patients to our services, donating, and yes, hiring people who are visually impaired or blind, you are making a difference. Thank you.

Elly du Pré, DPA, Executive Director
Lunch and Learn

Individuals and Groups are welcome to tour the Lighthouse of Broward! In less than an hour you can see some of what we do!

Technology – Sensory Garden – Babies Room

To tour the Lighthouse of Broward, contact Jose Lopez at 954-463-4217, ext. 141.

Whole Family Network

Attention: Seniors
The Lighthouse can help you and your family maintain independence and quality of life – in your home!

To find out more about this exciting program Call Karen at 954-463-4217 x130 or kparparian@lhob.org

The Lighthouse of Broward is sponsored by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services, and the State of Florida.

Real life experience - members of the TeenLIFE program lived, worked and studied in the dorms at FAU.

Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation
Making Philanthropy Personal

The Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation has been a bedrock of support for the David and Jean Colker KIDS Keys to Independence program since 2005. Ms. Flinn’s long-time assistant Ann Quayle was key in the current relationship between the Lighthouse and the Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation.

Negley and Ann met quite by chance. Ann had just moved to Broward with her 6 year old, visually impaired, granddaughter, Kendra Washington. Ann was looking for work. Negley was in need of a gardener. “When I saw how overgrown the yard had become, I figured if I killed something, nobody would know,” Ann jokes, and so she took the job. Eventually, she became Negley’s full-time assistant and caregiver until Negley passed away in January, 2012 at the age of 64. All the while, Ann’s granddaughter, Kendra had been receiving services at the Lighthouse of Broward.

The Flinn family fortune was originally made in the asphalt business. Negley had established the Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation to oversee her philanthropic interests. Knowing that Negley adored Kendra, Ann asked, “would you and your family consider supporting the Lighthouse of Broward?” Negley said yes! Many visually impaired kids have been helped by the Foundation’s generosity. The 6 year old girl who inspired a philanthropist to help the Lighthouse has come a long way and so has the program that has been helped so much by The Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation.

Kendra showing off her soccer skills for Olympian Staci Williams.

Kendra Washington with Negley Flinn