"Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ’What are you doing for others?’”  - Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.

Greetings:

As we wrap up the first month of 2016, AKA Sweet ‘16, I am humbled to lead and serve an organization whose mission is to enhance the lives of our youths and families county-wide. In 2015, Miami Bridge celebrated its 30th year of serving this community, and we believe the best years of service is yet to come! In April, 2016, Miami Bridge will host our annual gala, utilizing the theme, Galactic Nights: Launching Into the Future. This timely theme introduces our brand new efforts to expand our services for growth that will positively affect the youth, families, and stakeholders of this vibrant community. Many thanks to our board members, donors, and funders for your on-going support.

Remember: Life is about choices. Choose to make a positive declaration over your life every day. Have a great February. God bless!

Stop Human Trafficking!
Florida is third in the nation for human trafficking incidents! Additionally, according to the Department of Homeland Security, "Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery involving the illegal trade of people for exploitation or commercial gain." Anyone can be a victim of this modern form of slavery: men, women and children (some as young as 11 years of age.) Human trafficking is becoming an increasingly prevalent problem on the local, national and global levels!

IF YOU NOTICE SOMEONE WHO MAY BE A VICTIM, REPORT IT TO THE AUTHORITIES IMMEDIATELY.

The Honorable State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle, Florida National University President/CEO Dr. Maria Cristina Regueiro, Dr. Jose Regueiro Foundation And the POWERHOUSE Human Trafficking Planning Steering Committee hosted the First Annual "Stop Human Trafficking" Walk on January 29, 2016. Five of our youth and six of our staff, Ashley Grave de Peralta, Edgar Rondon, Lina Aguirre, Tonya Dopson, Taryn Lightbourne, and Sandra Boyd participated in the walk to stop Human Sex Trafficking.

Braman Tech Lab

The Braman Family Foundation graciously donated the very first Tech Lab of its kind to the Miami Bridge shelters in both Miami and Homestead. This tech lab is a great value-added feature for Miami Bridge, allowing each youth to learn new skills and bridge educational gaps.

THANK YOU BRAMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION!

Special thank you also to our partners Board Member, Peggy Fucci, from OneWorld Properties, Sync System Technologies, Elias Reyes, E & R Total Improvement, AA Finished Carpentry and Candice Boza for your amazing help making this project possible.

YMCA of Homestead

Welcome to our newest board member, Dr. Todd Giardina, PhD. We are grateful for your commitment to Miami Bridge. Dr. Giardina is a licensed psychologist trained in pain management services. His practice is located in Coral Gables and he is also a staff consultant at University of Miami Hospital.

We are elated to have him on board.

WE CONTINUE TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FOR BOARD MEMBER POSITIONS.

THANK YOU!!!!

Thank you to 93rd Street Community Baptist Church for all the individual gifts you gave our Miami Bridge youth.

A special thank you to Pastor Esther Laverne and Sister Shannon Rosales. The youth were truly blessed by your words of encouragement and all the love they were given by your church.

January Donors

Student Government Association @ MDC-InterAmerican Campus
Alexis Ziering
Toshiba Business Solution - Bryon Andrews
Peter Forand - Fidelity Charitable
Joseph Cantrell
Anton Steinhart
Angela Spaneas
Greenpoon Marder
Michael Ehrenstein
Pastor Esther Laverne
New Birth Baptist Church - Jake Haslam & Jeannette Fields
Angie Gonzalez
Thank you so much to the YMCA of Homestead and Director, Lourdes Bedoya, for allowing our youth the opportunity to practice fitness wellness in a safe environment on a daily basis with other youth.

Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus

Youth of Miami Bridge were delighted to attend a night at the circus! This was a first time experience for each of them and they watched in awe on the edge of their seats!

Miami Bridge is always looking for adventures and opportunities to expose our youth to refreshing, educational and soul-enriching experiences. Send us ideas and/or donations to spread the fun. Contact us at info@miamibridge.org

Cooking with Eduardo

Volunteer of the Month!

Stephanie Ekey decided to volunteer her time at Miami Bridge during her Winter Break/Vacation from Georgia State University, where she is a Neuroscience major. We really appreciate her time spent helping the Admissions Department. She could have been laying on the beach - but she chose to be here.

THANK YOU STEPHANIE - YOU ROCK!

Volunteer Opportunities

We encourage our community to volunteer and participate with our youth. Any assistance can make a difference in a child’s life.

Here are ways you can help:

- Data entry (up to 10 hours per week)
- Become a mentor through our Mentoring Program
- Tutor our youth
- Give a youth job training
- Plan an activity for our children and teens

Volunteer Event:

Dinner is an opportunity to dine and fellowship with the Bridge Family. We are looking for individuals, families, or groups to
Eduardo Prada, one of our very own Youth Activity Workers, has a tremendous heart for our kids. He treats them as his own children, even in the kitchen! Eduardo led the youth on a culinary adventure, teaching them how to prepare one of his traditional dishes: “Pechugas al horno en salsa, angel rice y ensalada.” The youth worked as a team and had a blast learning a new skill that he hopes they will take home someday and use for fellowship & relationship building.

An Evening at Bird Bowl

Miami Bridge youth had a lot of fun bowling and as a surprise bonus, they had the opportunity to meet NFL Star, Mike Pouncey!

Martin Luther King Day with FIU Students

Students from FIU joined the youth at Miami Bridge for a day of service and even played some volleyball!

If your school, business or neighborhood group is looking for opportunities to serve our community, please, think of us. Miami Bridge children and teens like to make new friends and see that people care about them.

Peace Rally Jam at Second Baptist Church

Shelter Needs

Evidence has shown that music therapy can address people’s physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs by creating, singing, dancing and listening to music. A recent study conducted at Queen’s University, Belfast has revealed that music therapy can effectively treat depression in adolescents dealing with emotional, developmental, and behavioral problems. Follow-ups conducted after the study concluded that the positive result of music therapy had long-term effects. It is our hope that by utilizing digital technology to our toolbox of treatments, we can add another layer of inexpensive therapy that provides a long-term, positive effect.

The Miami Bridge would welcome your support in procuring 30 low cost mini tablets (about $60.00 each) to enable our youth to access music content online.

For more information about donating to Miami Bridge contact: info@miamibridge.org.

Upcoming Events!

Feb 4 - Rock the Bike Nutrition Event
Feb 7 - Motown The Musical
Feb 10 - PAMM Art
Feb 20 - Alvin Ailey Dance Theater @ Adrienne Arsht Center
Feb 26 - Black History Program
TBD - OneWorld Properties Office Tour & Lunch
Miami Bridge Youth attended the Peace Rally Jam at Second Baptist Church, where they joined other youth in reflection towards violence in the community and how to change their paths from negative to positive outcomes.

West Side Story

Youth of Miami Bridge were invited to experience their very first Broadway musical, which included a live orchestra! It was a great experience for all who attended!

Our kids love the arts and we thank all our donors whose contributions make this type of activity possible.

Carnival Arts at Barry University
Carnival Arts is an arts learning program that promotes the carnival traditions of drumming, dance and mask making of the Caribbean and Latin America. Since 2007, Carnival Arts has introduced these traditions to hundreds of young people living in youth crisis shelters across Florida. The workshops are directed by professional artists. Miami Bridge’s youth always have a blast learning new traditions. Learning about other cultures helps us get closer to each other.

Yoga Gangsters

Yoga Gangsters is a Miami-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to empower youth by addressing the symptoms of trauma and poverty such as limited education, addiction, violence, incarceration, teen pregnancy, homelessness and more. This nonprofit uses the practice of yoga to deliver messages of empowerment around self-respect, self-control and self-awareness. A special thank you to Jenny Cannon, Alan Rodriguez and Sofia Bustillos for volunteering their time. You can find more information by visiting their [website](#).

iCount Media Coverage

WLRN stopped by Miami Bridge and spoke with our CEO about the iCount program. You can read all about it [here](#).
Miami Bridge was featured on Telemundo's segment on iCount, which you can watch here.

Thank you Galleria Farms!

As we announced previously, Miami Bridge won the Galleria Farms' $15,000 grant! The funds will help us create a music therapy program to help our youth focus their emotions as they cope with homelessness, abuse, abandonment and crisis. THANK YOU GALLERIA FARMS!

If you know of grant opportunities for nonprofits seeking to improve the lives of kids who don't have a place to call home, please, let us know!!

Miami Bridge Board of Directors

We are accepting candidates for the Board of Directors. For more information please email mjohnson@miamibridge.org or call (305) 636-3520.

Adrian Delancy- President
Attorney, Markowitz, Ringel, Trusty & Hartog

Jahan Islami- Vice President
Attorney, Cozen O'Connor

Beatriz Martin- Treasurer
Partner, Vizcaino Zomerfeld, LLP

Alexander Lian- Secretary
Attorney, Lian & Associates

Michael Alvarez
Partner, BenTrust Financial

Joseph Cantrell
Staff Supervisor, SMGG Law

María Carvalho
Owner, Miami Chic, LLC

Mayling Exposito
Senior Vice President, Great Florida Bank

Dee Dee Fischer
Partner, Akerman LLP

Peggy Fucci
President & CEO, One World Properties

Alfred Karram, Jr.
Owner & Chief Designer, AKJ Design Concepts LLC

Monique Mosley
Co-Founder, Always Believing Foundation

Dr. Todd Giardina
Licensed Psychologist - Coral Gables Counseling Center

Patrick Erin Murphy
U.S. Congressman, FL 18th District

Michelle Palacio
Vice President of Governmental Relations, FIU

Marlene Quintana
Shareholder, GrayRobinson P.A.

George White
Pastor, Mission Church

Province "Boo" Zamek
President, JustAskBoo, LLC

Judy Reinach- Director Emeritus