



Annual Report | 2023



Branches
Trish & Dan Bell Family
Empowerment Centers

Our History



Branches Florida City, circa 2000



The Trish and Dan Bell Family Branches Center - Florida City Campus which opened in the Fall of 2014



The new playground, eagerly awaited by the Florida City students, was constructed in May of 2015. The Shade System was added in early 2018

Branches, formerly Miami Urban Ministries, was established in 1973 as the urban and social justice agency of what is now the South East District of the United Methodist Church. Up until 1999, Branches focused on grassroots organizing, advocacy and working with community members who were disadvantaged and/or experiencing social injustice. During this time, Branches focused resources in the areas of social crisis, immigration, housing, hospice care and hurricane relief, among others.

In 2000 when Mr. Brent McLaughlin moved from being a volunteer to President & CEO, Branches embarked on developing and implementing programs that addressed the root causes of poverty and immediate and critical needs. Headquartered in a small office in Coconut Grove, Branches focused on its economic development programs by launching the ASSETS Small Business Development program and Thanksgiving meal deliveries. Branches was then introduced to a wonderful children's program being run out of the Florida City United Methodist Mission by Mrs. Kim Torres. Mrs. Torres came to Florida City as a missionary after Hurricane Andrew, now 29 years ago, and was providing afterschool and youth development services. Mr. McLaughlin was so impressed with her program that he offered to take it in under Branches and help secure more funding to support it.

In 2004, Branches was awarded its first contract from The Children's Trust to serve 100 students at Branches Florida City. In 2005, Trish and Dan Bell made an initial \$400,000 matching grant commitment which proved to be transformational for Branches.

A couple years later, Branches South Miami also began serving children and youth. In 2009, Branches was selected to house and operate the United Way Center for Financial Stability at its new HQ location in North Miami, also known as Branches Lakeview, to provide high quality financial wellness services. In 2013, Branches Lakeview expanded to also serve children and youth from that surrounding neighborhood.

Today in 2024, Branches serves over 14,000 individuals per year, in particular, providing in-depth services for nearly 500 students and their families at all 3 of its locations. Thanks to the Bell's long term philanthropic support, numerous generous donors, and many partners, Branches is able to provide truly life-changing opportunities to hardworking families and their children to help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Here's to many more years of changing lives!

To learn more about Branches' History, please visit branchesfl.org/50th-anniversary



Students completing their homework, circa 2009



Branches

Trish & Dan Bell Family
Empowerment Centers



At The Heart of Our Mission

Dear Friends of Branches,

Branches is a place where children, youth and families are valued and are given the opportunity to discover their gifts and talents and realize their God-given potential.

We are grateful for another year of service and are excited to report that in 2023 Branches hit numerous milestones, all of which reflect the enduring impact we have on people's lives. Thanks to YOUR support we have been able to achieve the following :

- Branches Florida City celebrated 29 years of continuous service.
- We provided 44 Climb Higher scholarships to Branches students valued at \$76,606.
- We served 398 students each day at our 3 Branches sites, plus 47 college students.
- We served 12,196 individuals through financial wellness services, providing 422 participants with one-on-one personal financial coaching sessions.
- Our Micro-Business Team provided 34 business trainings and coaching sessions to 469 small businesses.
- With the help of our partners, the VITA Tax Prep coalition, Miami Tax Pros, prepared over 7,776 free filings, securing over \$9 million in refunds.
- Branches and 1,000+ volunteers delivered over 5,150 hot Thanksgiving meals and educational resources, and so much more...

We could not begin to have such an incredible impact without the support and partnership of hundreds of donors including individuals, churches, businesses, and private foundations, especially Trish & Dan Bell, United Way of Miami-Dade, The Children's Trust, and Volunteer Florida. Thanks to each of you for partnering with Branches as together we create life-changing opportunities for children and families.

Grateful for your partnership,

Rodney H. Bell
Board Chair

Brent McLaughlin
President & CEO

Community Impact Report 2023



Branches
Trish & Dan Bell Family
Empowerment Centers

1,461 Volunteers	 8,152 Hours Served	 \$252,712 Volunteers' Value
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Grow, Climb & Climb Higher Programs

Build loving, personal relationships with our students and their families. We prepare our children and youth for lifelong success through the enrichment of their minds, bodies and hearts.

194 Grow (elementary) students learning and thriving.	204 Climb (middle & high school) students realizing their potential.	47 Climb Higher Students currently attending post-secondary school.
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 345 Summer Shade Day Camp participants.	 101,060 Snacks and Meals provided to our students.	 1,094 Toys purchased by parents in our Under the Tree Shops.	 \$76,606 In Branches Scholarships awarded to our college students.	 84% Student retention rate year over year.
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- 88% of Miami-Dade students graduate from High School.
- 100% of Branches students graduate from High School.
- 48% of low-income students pursue a post-secondary education.
- 90% of Branches students pursue a post-secondary education.
- 13% of low-income students complete a college education within 6 years.
- 50% of Branches students complete a college education within 6 years.
- The average debt of a college student is approx. \$30,000.
- 76% of Branches college students graduate debt free. 24% graduate with less than \$2,500 of debt.

Community Impact Report 2023



Branches
Trish & Dan Bell Family
Empowerment Centers



Achieve Programs

Target the well-being of the entire community through services fostering financial wellness and long-term success in life.

Branches also houses and operates the **United Way Center for Financial Stability of North Dade & South Dade.**

12,196

Participants served through financial wellness services.

422

Participants received one-on-one financial coaching sessions.



VITA
FREE TAX PREP

7,776

Taxpayers provided with free VITA tax prep services through Branches-led coalition Miami Tax Pros.

\$9,068,316

Tax refunds secured for the community.



MICRO-BUSINESS
INCUBATOR & E-LAB

469

Participants received one-on-one business coaching sessions.

1,851

Business owners attended 34 business training events.

Branches launched the Be One website and app, resulting in over 2,000 connections made by local entrepreneurs.



BASIC
NEEDS

\$31,090

Disbursed to help families overcome rent, utilities, food, transportation and medical emergencies.

5,150

Thanksgiving meals delivered and served.



FINANCIAL
EDUCATION

445

Children and Youth received financial education.

2,027

Participants that received a Miami-Dade Community ID.



- Branches' financial coaching participants saved an average of \$881 each year.
- Participants reduced their debt by an average of \$2,601 in one year.
- Participants working with a Financial Coach and using credit building FinTech products have raised their credit score by an average of 10%.
- Of the 2,267 families that received tax prep services through Branches VITA sites, 18% saved a portion of their refund to invest in their financial goals.
- Provided 327 laptops to Achieve program participants and Micro-Business entrepreneurs.



Branches' Student Deniya as Cheerleading Captain at her high school's football game, Deniya serving as a Branches' Summer Shade Guide, Deniya in 4th Grade, Deniya as a Senior today at Coral Reef HS.

Empowering Growth: Deniya's 10-Year Odyssey with Branches

Deniya, a student at Branches South Miami, embarked on a transformative journey that spans a decade within our program. Her story reflects not only personal growth but also the profound impact that Branches has had on her life. Entering Branches South Miami in 3rd Grade alongside her younger brother, DJ, Deniya was initially reserved and described herself as "introverted." She faced academic challenges, particularly in math, and often found herself overwhelmed by the demands of homework. In those early years, she tearfully expressed her struggles to our staff.

Branches responded with empathy and guidance, explaining the significance of academic pursuits and instilling in Deniya the resilience needed to overcome challenges. Through this support, she began to cultivate a growth mindset, realizing that difficulties were temporary, and with effort, she could conquer them. As Deniya progressed through elementary, middle, and high school, she embraced the philosophy of perseverance. In 2021, she applied to be a Branches' Summer Shade Camp Guide, acknowledging her fear of being in front of people.

Despite initial apprehension, she emerged from the experience not only leading festivities but also discovering a newfound confidence in her abilities. She continued as a Summer Shade Guide in 2022, reinforcing her leadership skills. Now in her senior year, Deniya has translated these experiences into becoming a cheerleading team leader at Coral Reef High School.

Deniya's journey also highlights her realization that seeking help is a strength. In high school, she confronted the challenges of geometry, recognizing that she controlled her future. Branches' staff mobilized resources, arranged Zoom sessions with former teachers, and provided tutoring beyond program hours to ensure Deniya had the support she needed.

This commitment bore fruit, as Deniya now boasts a 3.75 GPA and is on track to graduate in 2024 and begin her college journey at her first choice, FAU. Deniya shares "Got in! Just wanted to say thank you Branches for the endless help and support! Also, Pastor Tony's tutoring sessions (Test Prep at Branches) were WORTH IT!"



Clockwise: Director of Branches' Business Incubator & E-Lab, Steve Arman, Branches' Micro-Business program participant, Luisa Paladino, with Branches' President & CEO, Brent McLaughlin, Luisa at Micro-Business workshop, Macaron made by Luisa.

Making A Small Business Owner's Dreams Come True!

Luisa Paladino's journey to success began with a simple passion for baking, particularly in creating macarons, a sweet meringue-based confection. What started as a hobby soon blossomed into a thriving business, Macaron Dreams Catering, known for its wide array of uniquely flavored macarons.

Before turning her passion into a profession, Luisa dedicated time to perfecting her craft. She developed a variety of macaron flavors, each a testament to her creativity and skill in baking. To gauge the potential success of her products, Luisa began by catering to local church events and family gatherings. The feedback from these events was overwhelmingly positive, encouraging her to take the next step.

The turning point in Luisa's journey came when she joined Branches as a BE ONE member. This small business platform provided her with invaluable resources that were instrumental in scaling her business. She received a micro-grant that eased the financial burden of starting and expanding her business.

Furthermore, Branches offered workshops that honed her business acumen, covering aspects like marketing, financial management, and strategic planning. In December 2023 Luisa won the 1st place prize for being the business owner who accumulated the most activity and community interaction points within the BE ONE community platform. At that time, the community had generated over 1.5 million points with Luisa accounting for just over 4% of the community's total.

This accolade not only acknowledged her entrepreneurial spirit but also brought Macaron Dreams Catering into the limelight, attracting new customers and opportunities.

Today, Macaron Dreams Catering is not just a business; it is a symbol of how a hobby, fueled by passion and supported by the right resources, can evolve into a successful enterprise. Luisa's story is an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs, proving that with dedication, hard work, and the right support, any dream can be turned into reality.



Clockwise: Gala Chairs, Karla & Scott Richey, with Philanthropic Chairs, Trish & Dan Bell, and Branches' President & CEO, Brent McLaughlin - Mrs. and Mr. Reyes, Board Member Carl Lee, Matthew and Hannah Stewart - Eddie Miller, Victoria Randolph, Marco Tiné, Jason Randolph, and Marianne Kircher - Diana Milton, Ana VeigaMilton, Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, and Gala Chair, Karla Richey.

Branches Celebrates 50 Years at the Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala and Auction

On Saturday, April 29th, Branches celebrated its 50th Anniversary at the 2023 Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala and Online Auction. Guests enjoyed a fun and philanthropic night under neon lights at the J.W. Marriott Marquis Miami, where they had the opportunity to play various games like Mario Kart, corn hole, foosball, and more with their guests as well as Branches youth.

This year's Gala was made possible thanks to Philanthropic Chairs Trish and Dan Bell, Gala Chairs Karla and Scott Richey, Master of Ceremonies, Ron Magill of Zoo Miami, and countless supporters and partners. Trish and Dan Bell also provided a generous dollar for dollar Matching Grant for all gifts made to the evening's appeal. The Gala program featured games, a performance by opera singer and Branches Financial Coach Ray Gonzalez, plus an Online Auction. The event also honored Ana VeigaMilton and Cecil Milton of The José Milton Foundation with The 2023 Trish & Dan Bell

Community Empowerment Award for their dedicated support of the South Florida community. Over 500 guests including local philanthropists and corporate partners attended the Gala and raised a record \$650,000 for Branches' programs which provide life-changing opportunities for families to help them break the cycle of generational poverty.

Thank you to our top sponsors Trish & Dan Bell, Himan Brown Charitable Trust, Aetna, Kathy & Scott Howard, Kate Inman & Daniel Haines, and Truist. Gold Sponsors included Jesse & Filipe Viera da Rocha, Rodney H. Bell, Victoria & Jason Randolph, Jesse & Filipe Vieira da Rocha, City National Bank, The Huizenga Family Foundation, and many more. Thank you to all our supporters for making this event another success!

Please visit branchesfl.org/2023gala and watch our fun Gala Recap Video!

Our Events



Branches' MLK Day of Service

In partnership with AmeriCorps, Branches once again honored Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday, January 16th, 2023 through a day of community service at all three of our sites, Branches Florida City, Branches South Miami and Branches Lakeview in North Miami. Thank you to our many volunteers who came out to serve, in particular Repair the World, Mandarin United Methodist Church, First United Methodist Church of Miami and Spring Arbor University.

Branches Florida City celebrated its 13th Annual "Florida City, Love Yourself" MLK Day of Service as dozens of volunteers, staff, AmeriCorps members, and several youth came together to beautify the Florida City community. The team beautified a local family's home, cleaned up Fasulo Park, and enhanced the grounds of Florida City Elementary and Branches. Branches South Miami assisted Gail Alexander with painting a mural at the Gibson-Bethel Community Center and also beautified the All-America Park. Branches Lakeview in North Miami hosted its 5th Annual "United We Stand" MLK Day of Service. The project involved some tree planting at Lakeview Elementary School across the street, and staff, AmeriCorps members and volunteers also participated in cleaning and painting different areas of our Branches Lakeview site. It was another fantastic day of service!

Branches' Back to School Bash

On the evening of August 9th, the University of Miami's Newman Alumni Center buzzed with excitement as over 150 guests gathered for Branches' 7th Annual Back to School Bash. Our attendees enjoyed refreshing drinks, delectable appetizers, and mouth-watering desserts – all generously donated by our amazing restaurant partners. Guests actively participated in filling new backpacks with necessary school supplies, accompanied by the energetic tunes curated by DJ Mayner. Adding a personal touch, attendees wrote encouraging notes for Branches students, making sure the backpacks carried both supplies and uplifting words.

The Bash was made possible thanks to our Top Sponsors Aetna Better Health of Florida, The Templeton Family Foundation, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan and many other sponsors and in-kind donors. Branches also honored the University of Miami School of Nursing and the Beta Tau Chapter of SIGMA Nursing Honor Society with the 2023 Herbert C. Parlato Volunteer Award to commemorate their incredible support of Branches' children and families.

Please visit
branchesfl.org/2023back2schoolbash
to learn more.



Our Events



Branches' Thanksgiving Meal Delivery

Thanks to our incredible donors and volunteers, Branches set out to have another significant impact during last year's Thanksgiving Season. Together, we provided more than 5,150 nourishing meals to individuals facing hardship. We're grateful for our enthusiastic team of over 1,000 volunteers who poured their hearts into cooking, packaging, and delivering these meals on Thanksgiving morning through Miami-Dade and Broward Counties from our 7 sites.

Thank You to our Premier Thanksgiving Day Sponsors: Alan Goldfarb P.A., Unity on the Bay, Annie & Tom Tannehill, Ashcroft, The Batchelor Foundation, Catalyst Pharmaceuticals, City National Bank, The Kirk Foundation, Publix Charities, The Templeton Family Foundation, United Healthcare Community Plan, VITAS Healthcare, and many other sponsors as well. Thank you also to our in-kind donors such as Palmer Trinity Private School, Palmetto Bay Academy, Shops at Merrick Park, Peace UMC, Redlands UMC, GOYA Foods of Florida, United Way Miami, and many others for their dedicated support. Thank you to all who helped make Thanksgiving another huge success!

Please visit

branchesfl.org/2023thanksgivingmealdelivery
to learn more.



Branches' Under the Tree Toy Shops

Branches takes pride in organizing its annual Under the Tree Toy Shops! Nearly a decade ago, we made the decision to establish on-site Toy Shops, providing an opportunity for parents of our students to choose brand-new toys for their children at remarkably discounted prices—up to 90% off! Amidst the festive atmosphere filled with holiday music and treats, parents can joyfully shop for their little ones. To add to the experience, each selected present is expertly wrapped by the dedicated volunteers and staff at Branches. These Toy Shops play a vital role in empowering parents, fostering a sense of pride and joy as they personally select and gift these treasures to their kids on Christmas morning.

A mother of three, shared, "I have 3 kids, and this has been such a blessing to me. The fact that the volunteers and Branches staff took the time to do this—it has been a blessing not just for me but for the kids. Times are tough, and we still want to give our kids a good Christmas. Thank you so much Branches!" Thank you to our premier sponsors The Alvarez Family, The Batchelor Foundation, The Lopez Family, The Templeton Family Foundation, and many others for another amazing holiday season!

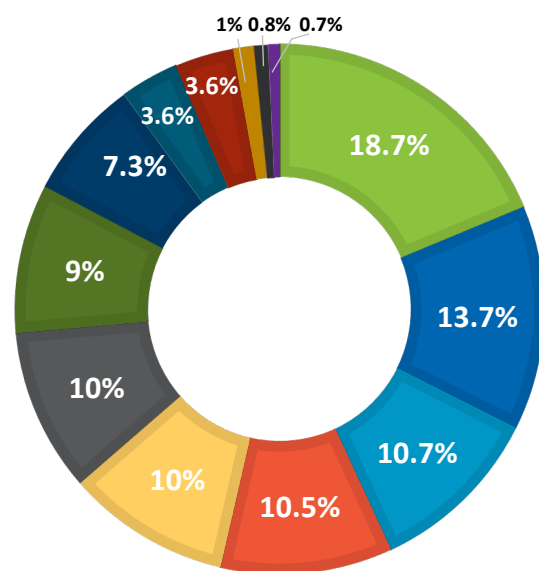
Please visit

branchesfl.org/2023toyshops
and to learn more.



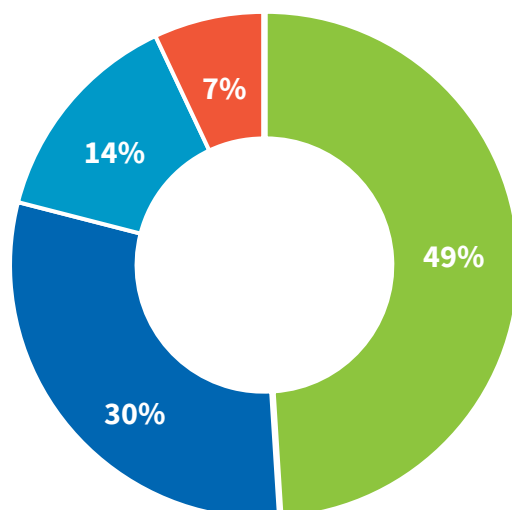
Revenue Breakdown

REVENUE CATEGORY	FYE 2023	% OF TOTAL
Foundations	\$1,141,421	18.7%
The Children's Trust	\$834,797	13.7%
Government Agency Grants	\$654,225	10.7%
United Way Miami	\$640,475	10.5%
Corporate	\$613,662	10.0%
Special Events	\$610,551	10.0%
Individual Donations	\$554,483	9.1%
Faith-Based Contributions	\$444,873	7.3%
Volunteer Florida	\$221,842	3.6%
In-Kind Contributions	\$217,256	3.6%
Program Revenue	\$81,504	1.3%
Interest Income	\$49,259	0.8%
Rental Income	\$44,436	0.7%
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$6,108,784	100%



Expenses Breakdown

EXPENSE CATEGORY	FYE 20223	% OF TOTAL
Student & Family Services	\$2,774,978	49%
Financial Wellness Services	\$1,677,543	30%
Fundraising	\$823,063	14%
Management & General	\$409,024	7%
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$5,684,608	100%

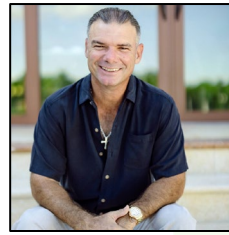


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Branches, Inc.



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Congregational Mission*



Branches

Trish & Dan Bell Family
Empowerment Centers

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July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

\$100,000 AND ABOVE

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BETWEEN \$30,000 AND \$99,999

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Agape
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BETWEEN \$10,000 AND \$29,999

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Publix Super Markets, Inc.
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VITAS Healthcare

BETWEEN \$1,000 AND \$4,999

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Gordon Family Foundation
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Hanai Sablich
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Homestead Hospital

Continued

BETWEEN \$1,000 AND \$4,999

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BETWEEN \$500 AND \$999

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 Burger King Foundation
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 Coral Gables Community Foundation
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 Debbie & Robert Onsgard
 Desiree Fernandez & Spencer Winlaw
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 Hon Judge Migna Sanchez-Llorens
 Jackson Health Foundation
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 Miralys Solsona
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 Noel & James Daluise
 Plantation UMC Women
 Raquel Soto
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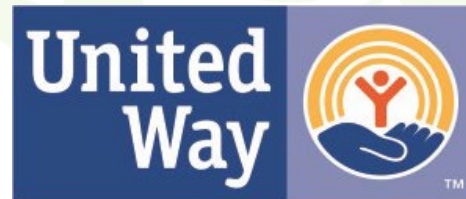
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