



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Isabelle Pike
305-442-8306 x1002
ipike@branchesfl.org

**Branches Partners with the Ocean Reef Community Foundation
to Help At-Risk Youth Succeed**

Branches, Inc. has been partnering with the Ocean Reef Community Foundation for over nine years, and has received more than \$375,000 in grant funding. The majority of these dollars have also been matched by Trish and Dan Bell, more than doubling the investment that the Foundation has made.

Most recently, Branches was awarded a grant by the Foundation of \$25,000 to support both its Grow & Climb children and youth program at Branches Florida City. This grant is designated for the Grow & Climb Guide Program which will train, equip and employ several Branches youth from low-income families as Grow Guides and Summer Shade Camp Guides at the Florida City location. The Grow Guides work with elementary students after school during the school year, and the Summer Shade Guides serve as camp counselors and lead summer programming, along with staff. The Grow & Climb Guide Program makes a huge impact in the lives of these youth since it offers work-based learning opportunities that not only offer employment but also prepare participants for success in post-secondary education and careers.

Branches is a local non-profit organization based in Miami and provides life-changing opportunities for working families and their children so they may break the cycle of generational poverty. Its Grow Program serves elementary students, preparing them for lifelong success through enrichment of their minds, bodies and hearts. The Climb Program serves middle and high school students, focusing on the development of their individual assets in order to maximize opportunities to become better students and better people. Branches' Achieve Programs target the well-being of the entire community through services fostering financial stability and long term success. Services include personal financial coaching, the ASSETS small business solutions program, the Ways to Work car loan program for working families, free VITA tax preparation and hunger relief. Branches is also proud to house and operate the United Way Center for Financial Stability (UWCFS).

"We are honored to partner with the Ocean Reef Community Foundation. The Foundation is truly making an incredible impact in our South Dade community," said Brent McLaughlin, Executive Director of Branches. "We are excited to bring impactful programming and services to the children, youth and families in our communities and to help them succeed in the long-term."

About Branches

For over 40 years, Branches has made a positive impact in the community by delivering on its mission to serve, educate and inspire people through student, family and financial stability services. Branches provides long-term, holistic services for motivated individuals and families. We help people grow deeper and climb higher in life by building a foundation through education so they can achieve their goals and fulfill their potential. For additional information about Branches, please call 305.442.8306 or visit <http://www.branchesfl.org>.

About the Ocean Reef Community Foundation

The Ocean Reef Community Foundation facilitates philanthropy by North Key Largo, Florida's Ocean Reef Club community. ORCF's primary annual grants program has contributed more than \$10 million to nonprofit organizations in neighboring areas of Northern Monroe and Southern Miami-Dade Counties where the thousands employed in the private-club community live and raise their families. In the wake of Hurricane Irma,

ORCF is in the process of donating more than \$2 million in disaster relief in those areas and all throughout the Florida Keys. ORCF's numerous charitable funds have collectively granted more than \$80 million since it was established in 1994. For more information, visit orfound.org or contact Executive Director Yurianna Mikolay at 305-367-4707 or foundation@oceanreef.com.

#