

BRIDGE BUILDER

Fall 2013

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Capital Campaign Update - Page 2
- Branches Sponsors & Stakeholders - Pages 3-5
- Grow, Climb... - Page 6
- ...Achieve! - Page 7
- Thanksgiving Meal Delivery Program - Page 8



Mission Statement:

To serve, educate and inspire people through student, family and financial stability services in partnership with our communities.

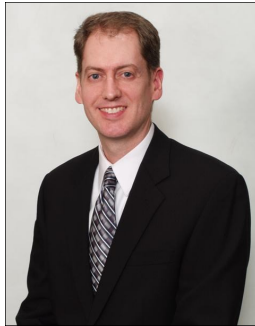
Get Involved:

If you would like to know more about how to donate and/or volunteer, please contact us at:
305-442-8306
info@branchesfl.org
www.branchesfl.org



Branches
Grow Deeper, Climb Higher

From the Desk of the Director



Growing Young Lives

Dear Friends,

We all know it is impossible to predict the future. But at Branches, we believe in the future potential of each and every child and adult who steps through our doors. Back in 1995, a second grader attended Branches in Florida City for the first time. She was an immigrant from Haiti like many of the other children.

Throughout her formative years, Branches became an integral part of her life because it was a place where she was loved and nurtured by caring adults. It was also a place where she was challenged to grow as a student and as a person. Fast forward eighteen years later to 2013, Martine Marcelin is now our Grow Program Manager at the Branches Community Center near North Miami!

On August 19, 2013, we launched the Community Center Grow program with 25 eager students from the nearby Lakeview Elementary School. However, these children and their families already face many challenges in their lives. For example, all but a few of the students are reading below grade level.

Despite the present obstacles, Martine and team believe each of these children has yet undiscovered potential. They are hard at work creating new opportunities for the children to discover their potential, overcome obstacles and succeed in their lives! We are also connecting their families to our financial stability services so that the caregivers can achieve stability when it comes to their income, employment, housing and health.

We are especially grateful to the Batchelor Foundation for providing seed funding and a challenge grant! **Donations designated for the Grow program before the end of the year will be matched 1:1 by the Batchelor Foundation up to a total amount of \$20,000.** I invite you to be part of this vital program through your support. You can donate by using the enclosed envelope or go to our new website at

www.branchesfl.org/donate

With Hope and Gratitude,

Brent McLaughlin
Executive Director



Martine and "her kids".
Another fun afternoon at the Branches Community Center Grow program.

Capital Campaign Update

Capital Projects: The end of one, the beginning of another!

Branches launched its Capital Campaign in January 2010 in order to build a new facility in Florida City and to renovate our new Community Center & Main Office in North Miami. Branches is pleased to report that the renovations at the Community Center are nearly complete and we plan to hold our official Grand Opening in the Spring of 2014.

As Branches continues to serve children and families through student services and financial stability services, there is a need to expand our programs to accommodate the growing needs in our communities. Branches plans to break ground on a new 11,000 square foot building this Fall which will house the Grow, Climb and Achieve programs of Branches Florida City. After a rigorous bidding process, Branches selected Suncon to be its contractor who has committed to completing the building by Fall 2014 so we may be ready to serve our students and families for the new school year.

THANK YOU to the hundreds of individuals and corporations who have helped make the Branches dream of building a new facility in Florida City a reality. An extra special thank you goes out to:

**The Himan Brown Charitable Trust
The Patrick P. Lee Foundation
Helen's Hope Foundation**

Branches is 75% to goal but we are still raising resources for this Capital Campaign!
To make a gift, please contact Isabelle Pike at 305-442-8306 x1002 or ipike@branchesfl.org

THANK YOU!!



Above: The students of Branches Florida City eagerly await construction to begin on, as they call it, their "new Branches home".

Right: The Branches Community Center renovation project is nearly complete! Branches is extremely proud of its new Main Office and the increased number of clients we are able to serve.



growing our **Future**

Thank You, Branches Sponsors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by Branches from January 29, 2013 to September 30, 2013.

If you sent a contribution during this period and do not see your name on the list, please contact us at (305) 442-8306 x1005.

\$20,000 and above

Bell, Trish & Dan
BankUnited
Citi Foundation
Florida Conference UMC
Helen's Hope Foundation
Himan Brown Charitable Trust
Miami - Dade County PHCD
North Dade Medical Fdtn
Ocean Reef Community Foundation
Patrick P Lee Foundation
Peacock Foundation, Inc.
S Florida Regl Transportation Authority
The Batchelor Foundation, Inc.
The Children's Trust of Miami Dade
United Way Miami-Dade
United Way of America
Volunteer Florida

Between \$10,000 and \$19,999

Bell, Sandy & Rodney
Catalyst Miami
Gonzalez, Denise & Charles
Ways to Work

Between \$5,000 and \$9,999

Anonymous
Assurant Foundation
Florida Blue
Hector, Nancy T
St. Luke's UMC at Windermere
The Alvah H & Wylina P Chapman Fdtn

Between \$1,000 and \$4,999

Alger, Richard & Jolayne
Ault, Cindy & Greg
Beauchamp, Monique
Benditte, Gabriele & Reinhard
Bertan, Ivon & Abe
Branches United Methodist Mission
Burdette, Katie
Carrfour Supportive Housing
Carter, BG
City National Bank of Florida
Cummins, Kary
Diaz, Ana & Jorge
Edwards, Jack & Tomy
First UMC Coral Gables
First UMC of Hobe Sound
Fitzpatrick, Liz
Florida Power & Light Company
Florida UM Children's Home
Floridaean Nursing Home, Inc.
Gerson, Preston, Robinson & Co.
Giblin, Sandy & Gene
Goya Foods of Florida
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Hamill, Cathy & Kent (thru D Richard Mead Charitable Fdtn)
Howard, Kathy & Scott
Hudson, Mary Ann & Sherrill
Huizenga, H. Scott
Hursey-McLaughlin, Karen & Brent

Kahn, Laurie & Fabian
Kowalski, Kathleen & Robert
Lowman, Manya & Bob
McCarty, Carol & Gene
Mercantil Commercebank, NA
Milledge, Sandra & Brother
Molina Healthcare of Florida, Inc.
Nivet, Stephen D.
Olnick, Bryan
Onsgard, Debbie & Robert
Pike, Isabelle & Russell
Prothro, Rebecca & Carleton
Pruitt, Jonah & Judy
Redland Company
Regions Financial Corporation
Schild, Kelley
The Darrell R. Windle Charitable Fund
Torres, Kim & Raymundo
TotalBank
Traynor, Christine & W. Byron
Trombino, Joann & Roger
Turner, Selen & Andrew
UPS
Ward, Mary Susan & Philip
Watts, Nancy & Dean
Westring, Carolyn & Claes
Windhaven Insurance

Between \$500 and \$999

Adanac Development & Construction
Akselrad, Julee & Sergio
Allegany Franciscan Ministries
Avondale UMC
Bill Ussery Motors
Bowlby, Rob
Burton, Linda
Cazzolli, Al
Chester UMC
Demos, Stephanie
Dewey, Joel
Eisenberg, Dorothy
First UMC Homestead UMW
Flynt, John
Foshee, Anne & Durwood
Heritage UMC
Hill, Isabelle & Smith, Frank
Lee, Diane & Terry
Mandarin UMC Men
Memorial UMC
Memorial UMC Seekers Sunday School Class
Nitti, Valerie & Louis
Norell, Robin
Perez, Barbara & Deppman, Ed
Reyes, Walter
Roberts, Patricia & Robert
Shank, Meribeth & Arden
The Winter Park Methodist Church
Wert, Georgia & Robert
WHA Design, Inc.
Winkeljohn, Liza & Paul

Yates, Robert L (thru Community Fdtn for Palm Beach & Martin Counties)

Between \$200 and \$499

Arana, Alejandra
Ault, Stephanie Kane
Baurichter, Dalia & Anthony
Beall, Anne & James
Believers Assembly of S Florida
Bennett, Erma
Berounsky, Geri & Edward
Blazer, Bill
Brewster, Rashawn
Bronson-Marcellus, Ashaki
Brown, Pat & Jeffrey
Chapelli Jr, Armando C
Cooper, Donald
Cross, Margaret
Dempsey, Barbara
Deppman, Darlene & Edward
Ehrenhaft, Alexis & Bruce
Evans, Lynn & Chester
First UMC South Miami
Ft. Pierce Haitian Mission
Gaab, Marylen
Gray, Nancy
Griffith, Jane & Mearle
Guardado, Teresa
Hereu, Jorge Luis
Hickey, Raquel & Darryl
Ho, Linda & William
Holy Covenant UMC
Jordan, Juana
Jordan, Sherry & Harry
King, Charles & Diane
Ladner, Sharyn & Robert
Lee, Samantha
Lima, Marjorie
Loring, Jana & Sonberg, Steven
Malvey, Albert
Mandarin UMC
Mang, Marti
Massingill, Amber & Paul
Mehta, Eileen Ball
Merker, Laurie & Paull
Moore, Amanda May
Morgan, Missy & James Emore III
Murff, Kay & William
Myers, Sharon & Michael
Noppenberg, Jane & John
Olnick, Laura
Parlato, Herbert
Prado, Susanmarie
Pramann, Angela & James
Prasad, Prestin
Prasad, Shanty & Jacob
Princeton Auto & Truck Repair, Inc.
Quencer, Christine & Robert
Redland Community UMC
Robinson, James
Robinson, Sandra & Roland
Rodriguez, Fredy

Thank You, Branches Sponsors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by Branches from January 29, 2013 to September 30, 2013.

If you sent a contribution during this period and do not see your name on the list, please contact us at (305) 442-8306 x1005.

Between \$200 and \$499, continued from Page 3

Silver Palm UMC
Simon, Helen M
Smith, Lauren
Strachan, Tim
Tedone, Gisela
Ugarte, Carlos
Whitmyre, Linda
Wimberley Presbyterian Church
Zurfluh, Tatiana & Thomas

Up to \$199

Algaze, Patricia
Allen, Carol & Kendall
Archer, Aaron
Ashworth-Valencia, Wanda
Ballard, Kathleen
Barker, Lisa
Barrett, Joanne & Palmer, Guillermo
Batey, Betty
Beasley, Katrina
Becker, Kathryn Nan
Beddow, Megan
Bell, Cynthia & Cleveland
Benitez, Debbie
Bethel, Harriet
Blitch, Christine
Blitch, Dale & Dianne
Bodin, Carrie & Amory
Bolden, Gail
Borrego, Kristen Michelle
Bostrom, Elizabeth
Bostrom, Shannon
Boyett, Kristine & Christopher
Breedon, Alma
Brine, Priscilla & Lewis
Brown, Shauntae
Browning, Susan
Burke, Marta & Boyd, Dan
Burstein, Melissa & Mark
Callahan, Michele & Tim
Castellon, Patti
Cazzolli, Annette
Cedeno, Jessie
Clair, Verna
Clark, Stephanie M
Clark, Tamre
Cole, Stacey Wadle & Jane
Collie, Michele & Keith
Community of Faith
Cooper, Polly & Thomas
Corke, Kevin
Cowie, Winona
Crismond, Amy
Cruz, Cruz De la
Currie, Elizabeth & Charles
Dobbs, Anne C
Dolbee, Betsey & Larry
Dosssett, Gloria & Edwin
Downs, Angela Marshall
Dumornay, Gail
Duncan, Deborah

Eligon, Janille
Elisma, Delna
Ellison, Amy Carol
Estivaine, Jeannise
Ewing, Joanne & E Keith
Fazenbaker, Ednelor
Ferguson, Mary
Finn, Mary
First UMC Homestead
Ford, Sally Ann & Herb
Forman, Robin
Frie, Jennifer & Levine, Alan
Gair, Janice & Stephen
Gaspard, Yvon
Gilbert, Colleen & Johnny
Gilling, Katya
Goodman, Sandy
Gordon, Jessica
Greenaway, Lynette
Greist, Douglas
Gutierrez, Diane & Luis
Handal, Audra & Charles
Hargray, Vanessa
Henry, Audrey
Herring, Carolyn
Hoffman, Carol
Homestead Mennonite Church
Hopps, Deborah B.
Horman, Janet
Huggins, Amanda Ashby
Hurst, Barry Lee
Jack, Lleyana
James, Veronica
Jefferson, John
Jemeson, Hilary
Joseph, Emmanuel
Klippel, Deborah & Frederick
Knight, Tracy & Thomas
Laguna, Ana & Miguel
Laing, Lori
LaMarca, Marti & Anthony
Lamela, Natalie
Landis, Carolyn & Wendell
Leavitt, Kim
Lee, Joan & Trevor
Lettsome, Judith
Liddell, Ellis Darren
Lifesong United Methodist Church
Marcellini, Gayle & Eduardo
Mascaro, Maureen
Massey, Paula (Bonnie)
Matkov, Rebecca & Thomas
McAllister, Ann & Eugene
McCormick, Merle & Art
Meinhardt, Mel
Metzker, Peggy
Modia, Teresa
Morelock, Katrina
Mountain, Toni Hambrick
Moure, Almalee & Edwin
Nunez, Lucy
ODay, James
PEACE Community Development

Pearcy, Joanne & Morgan
Perez, Elba
Pierre-Philippe, Karty
Pinnock, Ivy & Lilla
Pirchesky, Alice
Prentice, Lillian & Robert
Providence UMC
Quillian, Sallie & Warren
Raine, Denise
Reams, Pat & David
Reinert, Kay & Bradley
Rhodes, Sierra
Riley, Lola & Michele Melanie
Rios, Rafael
Robert is Here
Robinson, Bruce
Robinson, Carolyn Ruth
Rodriguez, Lourdes & Jose
Romero Roses, Gloria
Salas, Benjamin
Sanchez, Hector B
Sanchez, Milly
Sands, Cornelia & Oswald
Santiago, Esther & Isolina
Schneider, Alexandra
Silver Palm UMC Men
Skogstad III, Sam
Smith, Jacqueline & McGregor
Smith, Michael & Cempbell, Carol
Soto, Jose
South East District of the UMC
Southmost Mennonite Church
Souza, Ann
Spruce, Susan
Stoker, Janet & Richard
Storr, Kettly
Tai, Brittany
Thompson, Moriah
Toussaint, Amanda
Toyawanich, Julie
TriMerge Consulting Group, PA
Tritsch, Janet
Uhle, Thomas
Unity Presbyterian Church
Van Gundy, Cynthia & William
Vandehei, Clara & Donald
Vazquez, Camille
Verizon Employee Gift Match Program
(match to Beth Morgan gift)
Voltaire, Dougouloune & Marc
Warren, Audrey
White, David
Wilhite, Nancy & Lewis
Williams, Diane O'Quinn
Williams, Jill & James
Williams, Jim
Williams, Peggy
Zapletal, Laurie A

Thank You, Branches Sponsors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by Branches from January 29, 2013 to September 30, 2013.

If you sent a contribution during this period and do not see your name on the list, please contact us at (305) 442-8306 x1005.



Gifts in Honor of

- Karen Hegler from Carol & Kendall Allen and Winona Cowie
- Lola Riley from Lola Riley & Michele Melanie
- Martine Marcelin from LiLin Gaab
- Sandy Bell from Stephanie Demos

Gifts through United Way Campaigns

- Albert, Ronald W
- Anonymous
- Bell, Rodney
- Caraballo, Carlos
- Diaz, Ana Teresita
- Lima, Marjorie
- Nivet, Steve D.
- Pardo, Margarita
- Salas, Marisol
- Winkeljohn, Liza

In-Kind Gifts

- Alma - 90 backpacks and school supplies, food and drinks for the Branches Florida City Back to School Fun Day
- BB&T Brickell - 18 tickets to Cirque Du Soleil for Branches students
- Bilzin Sumberg - meeting space for 1 day meeting of the Financial Stability team
- City Furniture - 8x10 area rug for Branches Community Center Grow program
- Cresa - providing backpacks and school supplies for all students at the Branches Community Center Grow program
- Curves of Palmetto Bay - 23 large bags of healthy snacks and non-perishable food for Branches FL City
- First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables - hosted back to school party with backpacks and supplies for 35 students of Branches South Miami
- Gaab, Marylen - \$20 gift card, new 3-pc set of garden trowels, new 3 flower pot/pot tray sets, 6 pairs of gently used women's shoes for the Branches Community Center Grow program
- Gilberts, Lars- refurbished Fuji Film Finepix Digital camera
- Greist, Douglas - 15.6" Dell laptop
- Konica Minolta - free printing of 3,000 Branches brochures.
- Lange, Portia - belly dancing class for 2013 Summer Shade Camp on June 21 by Portia & Narayani
- Miami Marlins Ballpark Buddies - 50 tickets to each to the games on Aug 24, Sept 7 and Sept 28, 2013
- Mohr, Kevin Bowles - drum kit
- Morgan III, James Elmore - 2013 North America 3 MapPoint software
- Plaza Tire & Auto Center - 50+ mini-frisbees for the Branches Grow & Climb programs
- Publix Super Markets Inc. - \$500 Gift Certificate to Publix for the Branches Community Center Grow Program
- Sam Ash Music Corporation & Affiliates - \$25 gift card
- Short Chef - drinks and hors d'oeuvres for the Branches Fulford Summer art and talent showcase
- The Cheesecake Factory - \$50 gift card
- United Methodist Women of Fulford United Methodist Church—school supplies for the Branches Fulford students
- Walmart Supercenter Miami Gardens - 5 bean bag chairs and 2 5x7 rugs for the Branches Community Center
- Winn Dixie Doral - lunch for the Student Ministries team's planning retreat on August 13th
- Winn Dixie Coral Way - lunch for the Financial Stability team's planning retreat on June 14th
- Winn Dixie Lakeview - \$875 Gift Card for 2013 MLK Day at Branches Community Center
- Zinn, Curran - several boxes of women's clothing and children's clothing, several boxes of assorted household items, baby accessories, mobile and more, 3 upscale shower curtains with liners, 1 ergonomic office desk chair.

Thank you to Fritz & Franz for choosing Branches as the 2013 Oktoberfest Charity!

Thank you as well to Carnival Cruise Lines for donating a 7 day cruise for 2 to serve as the grand prize for the Oktoberfest Raffle!

Branches was able to raise thousands of dollars to help fund its many programs.

Thank you to everyone who supported this great event!



Grow, Climb...

Back to School Bashes!

Thanks to the kindness of so many, all the Branches children received new backpacks and school supplies as they returned to school in August 2013. Over 200 students celebrated Back to School at Branches Florida City, Branches South Miami, the Branches Community Center and Branches Fulford.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to our amazing Back to School sponsors:

**Alma * First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables * Cresa
United Methodist Women of Fulford UMC**



The Cresa Team has it all together for Back to School at the Branches Community Center.



Everyone is all smiles at Alma's annual Back to School Bash in Florida City.



Thank you First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables for adopting Branches South Miami another year.

Summer Shade and Warren Willis: Camp Fun Galore!

Going to camp is a wonderful experience that many of us were able to be a part of growing up. However, the children and youth that Branches serves are not as fortunate since their families simply do not have the additional resources to provide this unique opportunity. Fortunately, Branches was able to provide a free, fun and enriching Summer Shade Camp at all of its sites this past summer thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors who make this dream a reality for our students.

A special thank you goes out to Trish and Dan Bell who sponsored 50 scholarships for students from the Grow and Climb programs to have the opportunity to participate in the United Methodist Summer Camp Ministry at Warren Willis in Fruitland Park, FL. Warren Willis is a powerful end to Summer Shade each year and students look forward to going away, leaving their every day surroundings and finding a sense of renewal and encouragement as they are surrounded by new opportunities and activities as well as friends, worship and love.



Molina Healthcare brought their Dr. Cleo's Cooking Club, and Short Chef, to Branches Fulford!



A Branches Florida City youth enjoys his first ever surfing experience, thanks to Molina Healthcare!



A group of middle school girls play a game during free time at Warren Willis Camp.

...Achieve!

The Impact of Financial Coaching



Trudiann Phillips, Financial Coach, meets with a UWCFS client to discuss financial goals.

Financial Coaching is at the heart of Branches' Achieve programs and it highlights all clients' potential to successfully manage their finances with the right tools, knowledge and attitudes. Each person's situation is different and changes through the seasons of life. The United Way Center for Financial Stability (UWCFS), housed and operated by Branches, is just one of our Achieve programs which has helped more than 11,000 unique individuals since it opened in 2009:

- 9,986 have participated in financial trainings on budgeting, homeownership, credit etc.
- 2,391 have received individual financial services to address specific issues like taxes, employment or credit
- 762 families have created financial stability plans to holistically address their specific situation and goals

These trainings and services can help people with straight forward questions and issues they may have, however, the coaching helps clients like Lucille Mellerson pull all the pieces together. In just over a year of coaching Lucille has paid down her debt, cut her car loan

interest rate in half, increased her credit score by 173 points and started saving for a home. This is not about money but peace of mind as Lucille at 64 helps take care of her disabled sister as well as her daughter and granddaughter. Financial coaching helps bring stability and opportunity to people who are seeking true financial peace in their lives.

Ways to Work: Moving Lives Forward

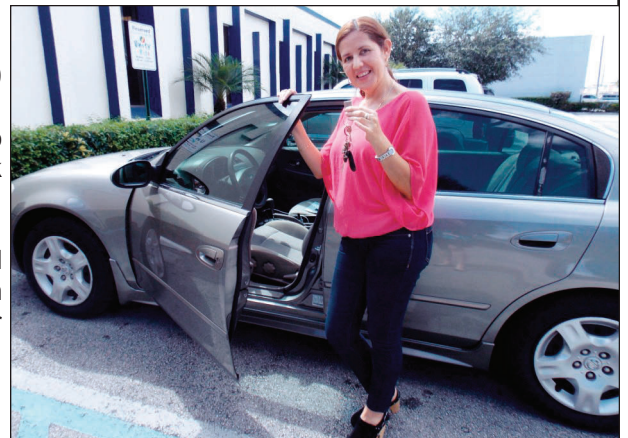


The Branches Ways to Work (WtW) car loan program provides financial education, a low-interest car loan, and support to working families who are committed to repairing their credit and gaining a higher level of financial security.

A recent client of Ways to Work, Mrs. Luz Trejos, says that her new car changed her life and that she is incredibly grateful for this wonderful program. Mrs. Trejos is married with 3 children, ages 2, 7 and 12, and is self-employed in the custom cabinetry business. Her family was in desperate need of a vehicle, yet after the real estate market crash, the Trejos family lost their home and their credit score plummeted. The family did not qualify for any car loans, at least not any with less than a 25% interest rate. Mrs. Trejos has been undergoing financial coaching for several months at Hispanic Unity, who ultimately referred her to Branches.

Since Mrs. Trejos had already undergone more than 2 months of financial coaching and met the program criteria, she was approved for the maximum \$8,000 Branches Ways to Work loan. Branches worked with Rick Case Honda to help Mrs. Trejos find a reliable and fuel efficient car. In October 2013, Mrs. Trejos purchased her 2003 Nissan Altima with less than 42,000 miles for \$8,500.

Thanks to her new car, Mrs. Trejos was able to go back to school and pursue her Master's in Human Resources. Ways to Work helps families Achieve more by helping them increase their income, credit score, educational opportunities and quality of life by helping them secure a reliable vehicle. A family's financial stability and reliable transportation are intrinsically linked. We have already seen how tying increased coaching and loan amounts are benefiting our families.



Mrs. Trejos is overjoyed and incredibly thankful for her new car!

To learn more about Branches' Achieve programs, please visit www.branchesfl.org and click on Programs, Achieve



Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
MIAMI, FL
Permit No. 2893

11500 NW 12th Ave, Miami, Florida 33168

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Branches To Celebrate 13th Thanksgiving Meal Delivery Anniversary Thursday, November 28, 2013

To mark the 13th year of this meal delivery program, we will prepare and deliver meals from 8 sites on Thanksgiving Day throughout Miami-Dade and Broward Counties to feed at least 6,000 community members in need. But we need your support! Some ways you can help:

Be a Premiere Sponsor!

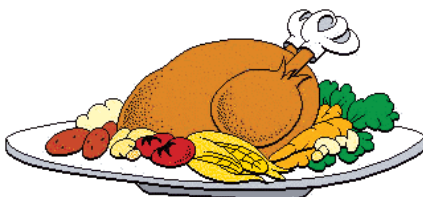
- **\$5,000—Thanksgiving T-Shirt Sponsor**
- **\$2,500 —Thanksgiving Site Sponsor**
(Provides 500 meals)
- **\$1,000 —Thanksgiving Sponsor**
(Provides 200 meals)
- **\$500 — Thanksgiving Supporter**
(Provides 100 meals)

For sponsorship information, please contact:
Isabelle Pike
Phone: 305-442-8306 x1002
Email: ipike@branchesfl.org

Raise Additional Support!

- Help us raise cash and in-kind donations to support the Thanksgiving Day Meal Delivery.
- Organize food drives (workplace, church, school, etc.) to collect non-perishable food items. These food items are distributed by our partner churches' food pantries to community members in need during the year.
- Organize volunteer teams to help with meal prep and delivery on Thanksgiving Day.

**For details, visit www.branchesfl.org
and click on Events, Thanksgiving!**



When this ministry began in 2001, we delivered over 600 meals. In 2012, we delivered over 7,300 meals. THANK YOU again to our supporters and volunteers who faithfully help us each year to provide for those who have little. God Bless!