



### Winter 2026

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#### MISSION STATEMENT:

Branches partners with families to build educational and financial assets, community and hope.

#### 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  
Follow us @branchesfl



Brent McLaughlin, Dan & Trish Bell, Dr. Jose L. Dotres at Branches South Miami Open House in October 2025.



Branches' youth excited about their new merch: hoodies!!

## A Message from the CEO

### Touching Lives by Creating Community

Dear Friends,

We recently hosted two dozen executives from Capital One for a site visit at our Branches Lakeview campus. They were a very receptive group and fully engaged in our presentation. We took them by surprise however when we had some of our K and 1 students show up to hand out Valentine treats to say how much we loved and appreciated them. They were blown away and there were even some tears!

In those moments, I feel a great sense of gratitude and even awe that we get to serve in such a way that brings people together and deeply touches lives. As we closed out 2025, Branches created so much community and touched so many people in ways that this space does not allow the telling of all the stories.

We celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thanksgiving Meals with more than 1,100 volunteers preparing and delivering nearly 6,500 meals across the community. Wow! And then in December, we held our 10th year of Under the Tree Toy Shops, where the parents of our students purchase steeply discounted new toys for their children to have a joyous Christmas together.

If you have experienced any of this, you understand. If not, you are invited to come and be part of what's next. Together, we are overcoming that which divides people by building life-affirming relationships where all are valued and loved. Thank YOU for being a part of the Branches family!

With Hope & Gratitude,

**Brent McLaughlin**  
President & CEO



Branches' college students at their annual Climb Higher Christmas Party.



Branches' Micro-Business Holiday Party and the 2025 BE ONE Awardees alongside Branches' President & CEO.

# Branches' 25th Annual Thanksgiving Meal Delivery

Branches celebrates 25 years of delivering Thanksgiving meals to the community!

Thank you to our Premier Thanksgiving Day Sponsors  
for their generous support and for making this special day possible:

## Darrell Windle & Dave Samber

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OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sponsors Darrell Windle & Dave Samber, CEO Brent McLaughlin and Rev. Juan del Hierro.



Volunteers at Branches Florida City.



Volunteers packing Thanksgiving meals at Coral Gables Congregational United Church of Christ.

This Thanksgiving marked a meaningful milestone for Branches as we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of our Thanksgiving Meal Delivery program. With the support of more than 1,100 volunteers, we operated out of 7 sites across Miami-Dade and Broward Counties to prepare and deliver nearly 6,500 complete Thanksgiving meals to individuals and families in our community.

The day reflected both growth and continuity. Many volunteers have been part of this program for decades, including several who have served since the very first Thanksgiving Meal Delivery 25 years ago. Their continued commitment, alongside new volunteers experiencing the program for the first time, created an atmosphere of pride, purpose, and shared responsibility.

This milestone year also drew attention beyond our sites. Local news outlets joined us throughout the day to document the scope of the program and highlight the volunteers who make it possible, helping bring greater awareness to the ongoing needs within our community.



Scan the QR code to check out the fun photos and recap video!

[branchesfl.org/2025thanksgiving](https://branchesfl.org/2025thanksgiving)

At Branches, Thanksgiving is an opportunity to provide more than a meal, it is a chance to offer consistency, care, and dignity to our neighbors. We are grateful to the volunteers, donors, and partners who made this anniversary year possible. As we look ahead, we remain committed to serving our community with the same dedication that has defined this program for 25 years.

**Thank You to Banesco Bank, Baptist Health, Humana, LUXE Properties, The Redland Company, The Tonkinson Foundation & UnitedHealthcare for serving as Thanksgiving Site Sponsors. Thank you also to Aramark, David Smith, Intercredit Bank and Regions who served as Thanksgiving Sponsors. Many thanks to our in-kind donors Branches United Methodist Church, GOYA Foods of Florida, Peace United Methodist Church (UMC), Redland Community UMC, and United Way Miami for their dedicated support. We are so thankful to all our partners for making this truly impactful Meal Delivery a reality!**

## A special THANK YOU to our incredible Food Drive Partners!

Palmer Trinity Private School, Aramark, Beta Tau UM, BNY Wealth, City National Bank of Florida, Cornerstone Church, Florida City Elementary School, First United Methodist Church (UMC) of Coral Gables, First Church Miami, JPMorganChase, Kendall UMC Preschool, Kia Central and South America, Pradere Designer Workspaces, Regions Bank, Shops at Merrick Park, Somerset Academy South Homestead, St John's on the Lake, UnitedHealthcare and Weber Gallagher.

# Branches' 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Under The Tree Toy Shops

YOU helped over 200 Branches families make Christmas possible for their children and loved ones.

This holiday season, Branches celebrated a special milestone as our Under the Tree Toy Shops marked 10 years of spreading joy and supporting families. What began nearly a decade ago as a simple idea has grown into a beloved holiday tradition, giving parents of our students the opportunity to purchase brand-new toys at more than 90% off, allowing them to choose meaningful gifts for their children.

Hosted across all three Branches sites, this year's Toy Shops were especially memorable as we welcomed families into our new South Miami location for the very first time. This new home allowed us to expand the experience while maintaining the warm, welcoming atmosphere families have come to know. With festive music, holiday treats, and volunteers on hand to wrap gifts, parents were able to shop with confidence and pride as they prepared for Christmas morning.

In total, 227 families were served and over 2,000 toys filled the shelves across our sites. In addition to toys, our youth received Branches-branded merchandise they enjoy wearing throughout the year, along with gift cards to some of their favorite stores.

Celebrating 10 years of the Under the Tree Toy Shops was a meaningful reminder of how far this program has come. We are deeply grateful to the donors and volunteers who make this tradition possible and continue to support families during the holiday season. Visit [branchesfl.org/2025toyshops/](https://branchesfl.org/2025toyshops/) to relive the Christmas magic and watch our recap video!

## A special THANK YOU to our Toy Drive Partners!

Annie & Tom Tannehill, Bristol Towers, City National Bank of Florida, Emily & Kristopher Aungst, First Church Miami, First UMC of Coral Gables & The Growing Place Early Childhood Center, Herbert Ammons Middle School, HOPE worldwide Miami, Kendall United Methodist Church, Kia Center Central & South America, Miami Community Charter School, Miami Kids Magazine, Pacific National Bank, Palmer Trinity Private School, Patti & Rick Morgan, PDC Technologies, Pradere Designer Workspaces, Regions Bank, Somerset City Arts Conservatory, Texas Roadhouse, The Dan Le Batard Show with Stugotz, United Way Miami, The Randolph Family-Victoria, Jason, Jack & Luke, as well as Weber Gallagher Simpson Stapleton Fires & Newby.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

**Branches**  
Trish & Dan Bell Family  
Empowerment Centers

**UNDER THE TREE TOY SHOPS**  
DECEMBER 16-18, 2025

**Angel Sponsors**  
**The Alvarez Family The Lopez Family**

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**Elf Sponsors**  
aramark, David Smith, FPL, Intercredit, ORTEGA, REGIONS

**Candy Cane Sponsors**  
JUNEAU, Robert Ladner

*Thank you!*



## THANK YOU to all our generous donors for supporting Branches' programs!

All other donors from the current Fiscal Year (9/21/25 - 1/16/2026) are listed at [branchesfl.org/our-stories](https://branchesfl.org/our-stories) under Newsletters

Trish & Dan Bell • JPMorgan Chase Foundation • The Children's Trust • The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation • United Way Miami • Volunteer Florida • Comcast NBCUniversal • Dade County Federal Credit Union • Awilda & Jorge Lopez • Bradesco Bank • The Caravetta Heaven Helpers Foundation • Denise & Charles Gonzalez • JASAM Foundation • Jocelyn Watkins • Kelly Foundation • Linda Corey

# Thank You, Branches Donors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by Branches from September 21, 2025 to January 16, 2026. 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.

## **\$100,000 and up**

**Trish & Dan Bell**

**JPMorgan Chase Foundation**

**The Children's Trust**

**The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation**

**United Way Miami**

**Volunteer Florida**

## **Between \$30,000 and \$99,999**

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## **Between \$10,000 and \$29,999**

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Denise & Charles Gonzalez

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The Darrell R. Windle Charitable Fund

The Templeton Family Foundation

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

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Amanda Ashby Huggins

Amber & Joseph Bowden

Amy Smith

Ana Gonzalez

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## **Up to \$199 continued**

Ana Jerez  
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Willis Mui  
Yaneyry Rincon  
Yaninna Aldana  
Yardhouse  
Yesenia Franqui  
Yolany Yamilet Sagastume Sabillon

## **Gifts in Honor of**

- Brianna, Sean, and Addie from Jared Kircher
- Carine Olson from Cathy P. Moore
- Charles Zale from James Diener
- Citlali Ayala from Willis Mui
- Ed Deppman from James Robinson
- Jim & Norrie Merritt from Patsy & Al Merritt
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- Roland & Sandy Robinson from Sam Skogstad III
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- Tomy & Jack Edwards from Molly & Charles Bumberger
- Trish & Dan Bell from The Wilder Foundation
- Tyler, Justin, Austin, Bella, Michael, Marris from Paul & Cathy Barry

## **Gifts in Memorial of**

- Leo from Alice Pirchesky
- David Shoaf from Amanda Ashby Huggins
- Nancy C. Sawallis from Nancy & Thomas Sawallis



# Branches

Trish & Dan Bell Family  
Empowerment Centers

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

 **Branches**  
Trish & Dan Bell Family  
Empowerment Centers

**BLACK TIE  
&  
BLUE JEANS  
GALA**

In the heart of an enchanted forest  
an evening of impact awaits.

**Saturday, May 2, 2026 | 6PM**  
JW Marriott Marquis Miami

Scan here  
for tickets



[branchesfl.org/2026gala](http://branchesfl.org/2026gala)