

Center for Children and Families receives Beacon Council's Life Sciences & Healthcare Award

Posted by [Ayleen Barbel Fattal](#) × 05/05/2016 at 1:23 pm

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FIU's **Center for Children and Families (CCF)** was honored with the **Life Sciences & Healthcare Award** at the **14th Annual Beacon Council Awards** May 4, at the Hilton Miami Downtown.

This award recognizes leadership and growth within local sciences and health care industry sectors.



From left to right: Ernie Diaz, regional president for TD Bank in Florida; William E. Pelham Jr., director of CCF, Nelson Lazo, CEO of Doctors Hospital; Larry K. Williams, president and CEO of the Beacon Council.

“We are incredibly grateful to receive this exceptional recognition that reflects our commitment to the thousands of families we serve in the Miami-Dade County community and beyond,”

said CCF Director **William E. Pelham Jr.** “I am thankful for an extraordinary team of faculty, staff, professionals, trainees and volunteers that work hard each day to empower children and their families with the right tools and resources they desperately need to live a happy, healthy life.”

Research is at the core of CCF’s mission — to combat child mental health disorders. The evidence-based treatments developed through the center’s programs have the potential to benefit millions around the world.

Nationwide, 20 percent of children suffer from a mental health disorder. In Miami-Dade County alone, 1 in 4 children live in poverty and are two to three times more likely to develop mental health problems. Ninety percent of the families serviced by CCF reside in Miami-Dade County, which has the third highest number of uninsured children in America.

Since its founding at FIU in 2010, the center has helped nearly 7,000 families. Its researchers have secured more than \$70 million in grant funding for cutting-edge research, primarily from federal sources including the National Institutes of Health, Institute of Education Sciences as well as foundations and local government sources.

Across the center, more than 40 faculty associates, more than 80 staff members, and hundreds of volunteers and interns are working to advance the science behind treatment programs for ADHD, autism, anxiety and other behavioral disorders. CCF also offers training and learning opportunities for more than 25 undergraduate interns and 100 trainees annually in doctoral and professional programs who study child and adolescent mental health and wellness.

In addition, the center’s team has established partnerships with nearly 400 schools and trained more than 6,000 Miami-Dade County Public Schools teachers and staff.

The Beacon Awards honor Miami-Dade businesses for their significant contributions in the areas of job creation, business expansion, corporate citizenship and leadership. The Beacon Awards are a component of **One Community One Goal**, a targeted industry strategic plan launched by **The Beacon Council Foundation** to encourage investment and support job creation, while competitively positioning Miami-Dade in the global economy.

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