



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



## THE GIVING TREE GALA STORY

The Giving Tree Gala came about from the passing of a Jacksonville Leader, W.W. 'Bill' Gay, on Tuesday, March 31 2020. The family was looking for a way to celebrate his life with a series of starts/stops due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The First Coast YMCA (Winston Family YMCA branch) reached out to see if they could assist in any way, because Mr. Gay meant so much to so many on Florida's First Coast during his established career. The Winston Family YMCA in Riverside, near the W.W. Gay HQ worked with the family, employees, community stakeholders and others to celebrate his life virtually on March 23, 2021. His celebration of life can be found by searching YouTube: [Celebration of Life-Remembering Bill Gay](#).

Moving forward, the Y wanted to remember Mr. Gay's legacy centered around faith, family, civic service and philanthropy by creating a gala that would raise funds to help serve our community. The First Coast YMCA prides itself on strengthening the foundations of community through healthy living, youth development and social responsibility. We are rooted in our core values of caring, respect, honesty and responsibility and our mission is to put Christian principles into practice that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. So, we are now going into our third in-person gala celebrating an individual that mirrors the core values of Mr. Gay and the First Coast YMCA.

### PAST RECIPIENTS:

**2021** - The Family of W.W. 'Bill' Gay

**2022** - Hugh Greene - Baptist Health

**2023** - G. John Carey - VanTrust

**2024** - Nathaniel 'Nat' Glover

The proceeds of the event will help scholarship membership and programs for those that need the First Coast YMCA. The First Coast Y never turns anyone away for the inability to pay, so we take great pride in raising funds that will help strengthen our community, make a difference and change the lives of individuals through what we have to offer.

The Y is 'for all', as our mission statement declares. We will make a difference through our programs and initiatives for youth to senior through our 3 pillars of: Healthy Living, Youth Development and Social Responsibility.