

City of Gainesville, Florida  
Office of Mayor Harvey L. Ward, Jr.

# Proclamation

WHEREAS, on November 7, 2020, Matthew Benavidez was hit on his motorcycle by a SUV and was officially declared dead after suffering an abundance of catastrophic injuries; and

WHEREAS, Gainesville Fire Rescue arrived quickly and immediately implemented critical lifesaving measures but was met with a challenge due to massive head trauma. This left them with one last resort as Matthews' pulse became nonexistent and airway was critically needed; and

WHEREAS, a paramedic would need to establish an airway by performing a surgical cricothyrotomy, a procedure only done during emergency circumstances. Paramedic Johnny Kalaf was that person to execute the procedure. A vertical incision was made in Matthews's neck. It immediately became evident that he had been choking and now drowning in his own blood from the external and internal injuries suffered. After the airway was established, and a faint pulse appeared, Matthew, was alive; and

WHEREAS, although this was Johnny's first cricothyrotomy, he used his tactile training, critical thinking, competence, and courage to perform this life-saving procedure. If it had not been for Johnny and his team, Matthew would have succumbed to his injuries.

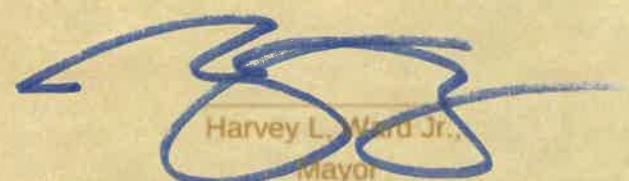
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harvey L. Ward, Jr., by the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim December 3, as

## Johnny Kalaf Day

in the City of Gainesville and invite all our neighbors to join me in thanking Johnny and letting him know that we will forever be grateful for his act of heroism.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of the City of Gainesville, Florida, this 9th day of April 2024.



  
Harvey L. Ward, Jr.  
Mayor