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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Record-breaking \$338k+ Raised at Current/Sherman Group of Merrill Lynch Champions For Children Gala

Jacksonville, Fla. (October 23, 2023) — The Current/Sherman Group of Merrill Lynch Champions For Children Gala held on October 19, 2023, at the Florida Blue Conference Center, marked a historic milestone, raising an unprecedented \$338,561 in a single night in support of the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation (MWYF).

This remarkable achievement underscores the unwavering commitment of the Jacksonville community to MWYF's mission of building champions in classrooms, on tennis courts, and throughout communities. These funds will play a pivotal role in sustaining and expanding the foundation's impactful programs.

"We are immensely grateful for the outpouring of support from our community at the Current/Sherman Group of Merrill Lynch Champions For Children Gala," said MaliVai Washington. "The record-breaking funds raised will enable us to expand our programs and impact even more young lives, empowering them to become champions both on and off the court."

Notable moments of the evening included the crowd favorite Heads or Tails Event, which captivated attendees with its high stakes and light-hearted fun. Guests who purchased a rubber bracelet had the opportunity to play heads or tails with the last standing player winning a Swarovski Tennis Bracelet. The gala featured many of MWYF's students through honoring scholarship recipients and testimonials of the impact MWYF has proven to make on young people in its programs. Lonnie Marts Jr., former NFL Player and Jaguar, shared his experience in the NFL and encouraging words to the students as the Guest Speaker.

"Seeing our Jacksonville community come together to 'Be The Hope' of our students' futures was incredible," said Terri Florio, MWYF Executive Director. "These funds provide crucial support to keep our programs running and our students in a safe place where they can excel through academics, tennis and social and emotional skills."

This gala's resounding success speaks volumes about the compassion and generosity of the Jacksonville community, highlighting the pivotal role our community plays in building champions.

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About MWYF - The MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation is an after-school and summer youth development program in Jacksonville's Urban Core that promotes academic achievement and positive life skills. To learn more, please visit malwashington.com. You can also find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



Caleb Owens- MWYF Student Athlete of the Year



Lonnie Marts Jr. Q&A with MC Curtis Dvorak



Pat Geraghty (FL Blue Pres.) & Student Athlete of the Year



MWYF Students Being Honored



MWYF Board Members Frank Morreale & Bill Hendrich Chat 7th Grade Student Kameron Neal



MWYF Board of Directors



MWYF Students and MaliVai pose



MaliVai Washington & Merrill Lynch (Title Sponsor) table



MWYF Student 11th Grader Ashley Williams



Heads or Tails Event

For more pictures please visit: malwashinton.com/gala-2023