

## William Didn't Want to Leave

When eight-year-old William was diagnosed with a rare form of liver cancer he couldn't have imagined that his next few years would consist of months of chemo, a liver transplant, and more than 100 nights in the hospital. The toll left William's family in desperate need of some happy memories. They found those happy times at Give Kids The World Village in Kissimmee, Florida.

[Give Kids The World Village](#) is an 89-acre, whimsical nonprofit resort, that provides week-long, cost-free wish vacations to critically ill children and their families from around the world who want to visit Central Florida. Families that visit Give Kids The World must be referred by one of more than 250 wish-granting organizations or foundations, such as [Make-A-Wish Foundation](#).



A stay at the Village is much more than a weeklong vacation; it's a chance for these families to laugh together, play together, and create unforgettable memories away from hospital stays and medical treatments.

"GKTW gave us more happy memories than we could have ever imagined," William's mom told us. "The village is filled with the kindest people who would do anything to make those staying there happy. Our favorite part was the nightly parties. The dance party at the playground was extra fun and left William smiling and laughing - something we had not seen in over a year." She says that her other three children loved the Village so much, "especially the limitless pizza and ice cream! We even had Mayor Clayton tuck in our kids at bedtime one night. Mayor Clayton spent some of his tuck-in time doing a little sword fighting with William with the Disney light sabers we had gotten from the parks. William loved that!" William had not been allowed in a pool until this trip. His mom says William loved swimming in the Village pool. "Our last day we swam for hours and he just didn't want to leave! Disney and the parks were of course lots of fun for all of us, but GKTW

holds a very special place in our hearts. It was there for us when we desperately needed some happy moments together and I will forever be thankful for that very very special Village."

Last year, the Village closed to wish families like William's due to the global pandemic, delaying more than 6,000 wishes. Despite the closure, the Village created a unique opportunity last December for visitors and donors to experience – Night of a Million Lights. Night of a Million Lights was designed to raise funds to ensure that the wishes of critically ill children could return bigger and better than ever before once the time was right to reopen. Last year, USA Today named Night of a Million Lights the "Number One Thing To Do in December in Orlando."

It was such a huge success that the Village has decided to do it again this year and the [Workers' Compensation Institute](#) is playing it's part in bringing it back. WCI has organized a Gala event "Winter Wonderland" to be held December 11, 2021 in conjunction with GKTW's second annual Night of a Million Lights. For more information about the WCI-GKTW collaboration, [click here](#).

## WCI & GKTW's 2021 Winter Wonderland Experience



Bring friends and family along to join us for a magical holiday experience Saturday, December 11. Last year, USA Today named GKTW's Night of a Million Lights the "Number One Thing To Do in December in Orlando!"