Dakota Best, or Kody as his friends and family know him, was traumatically injured in August of 2008 following an ATV accident that left him near death. His mother and grandparents credit saving the life of then 13-year-old Kody to the surgeons and clinical team at The Trauma Center at Holmes Regional Medical Center where he was treated. Kody, who lives in Palm Bay, does not remember his four-wheeler accident or the Jeep that crushed him and hurled him 300-feet away. Though he was unconscious, his family remembers the long ambulance ride from Vero Beach where the accident occurred to The Trauma Center because the winds were too strong for him to be transported by helicopter. He suffered a ruptured spleen, a fractured skull, a collapsed lung, respiratory failure, numerous broken bones, and a crushed leg that resulted in a partial leg amputation. Kody and his family do remember the compassionate physicians and nurses who became his caretakers and extended family for his month-long stay at the hospital. Though Kody now walks with a prosthesis, he excels at Florida Air Academy where he attends school, is an active bugle corps member, a baseball player, a junior umpire, and a very positive young man. He now visits the hospital waiting room to share his experience with other families going through similar situations.

“Our family is so thankful and humbled by the care that the trauma team gave Kody after his ATV accident,” said Careen Best, Kody’s mother. “From the person who emptied the trash can in his room, to the nurse who wrapped her arms around him to warm his body temperature, to the surgeons who miraculously brought him back from the brink of death, we can’t express the gratitude we feel for the entire Trauma Center team. They saved Kody’s life.”