

Champion for newborn babies

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Noted Tulane University neonatologist Dr. William Gill received the 2012 Spirit of Charity Award from the Medical Center of Louisiana Foundation on Sept. 28 at a gala at the Westin Canal Place Hotel in New Orleans.



Dr. William Gill, left, receives the Spirit of Charity healing hands crystal award from Dr. Samir El-Dahr of Tulane School of Medicine, Dr. Janis Letourneau of the LSU School of Medicine and Dr. Peter DeBlieux, executive director of the Medical Center of Louisiana Foundation. (Photo by Ecoee Rooney)

Gill was the 13th physician to receive the award presented annually to a physician whose career began or was nurtured in the healing and teaching wards of Charity Hospital and who has made a significant contribution to medicine. The selection of the recipient is guided by the physician's training and dedication to providing exceptional medical care to the community and clinical training to the majority of physicians who have practiced in Louisiana.

At the iconic ["Big Charity" Hospital](#) (which has been shuttered since Hurricane Katrina), Gill helped convert a storage room next to the nursery area into a room for clinical use called "Mother's Inn," a place for new mothers to feed and begin bonding with their newborns. Before the conversion of this room, new mothers had to walk

from the east side of the 10th floor to the west side to look at their newborn babies through a glass window.

Gill's first experiences with Charity Hospital came as a medical student at LSU from 1959 to 1963. When he began his obstetrics rotation in southern California, he was able to show that he had participated in 104 women giving birth at Charity. Upon his retirement as a captain after 20 years of service from the Navy in 1982, Gill returned to New Orleans as the co-director of the Charity Neonatal Intensive Care Unit/Nursery for the Tulane service, serving until its closure.

Since 1982, Gill has been on the full-time faculty at the Tulane School of Medicine where he is currently a professor of clinical pediatrics in the neonatology section.

Proceeds from the gala event are designated for the Spirit of Charity Trauma Center at the LSU Interim Public Hospital.