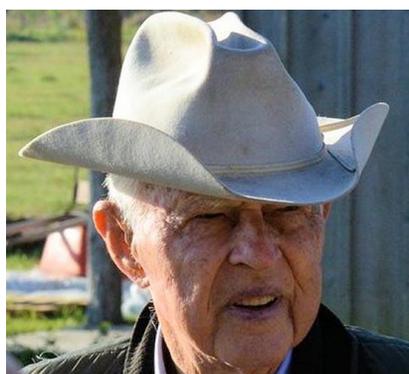




**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Alto “Bud” Adams honored with Economic Development Council of St. Lucie  
County Pete Hegener Leadership Award**

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Port St. Lucie, Fla. – Rancher, conservationist and photographer Alto “Bud” Adams Jr. was presented with the prestigious Pete Hegener Leadership Award by the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) at its 5<sup>th</sup> annual leadership dinner on April 27.

The award is presented annually to a dedicated business leader who has made significant contributions to St. Lucie County’s economy and quality of life. The annual dinner and celebration, held at Harbour Ridge Yacht & Country Club and attended by more than 200 guests, was sponsored by Florida Power & Light Company.

Last year’s Hegener Award recipient, attorney Michael Minton, presented the award to Adams.

“It is hard to imagine the Florida cattle industry without thinking of Bud Adams and his pioneer spirit in developing the Braford cattle as one of the premier breeds adapted for Florida’s climate and terrain,” said Minton. “Mr. Adams means so much more to St. Lucie County! He is a leader in promoting sustainable stewardship of land and an advocate on behalf of the Indian River Lagoon. He captures Florida’s nature and wildlife with his camera and protects and preserves it through his land stewardship. He has also been a difference-maker for education, serving on the Indian River State College Foundation Board and as co-chair of the Treasure Coast University Task Force in the 1990s.”

Adams was born in Fort Pierce in 1926 and lived here most of his life, with the exception of his high school years in Tallahassee when his father was a justice on the Florida Supreme Court and while he

served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Returning in 1948, he rebuilt Adams Ranch after the ravages of the 1947 hurricanes. Using a textbook on genetics, Adams set out to breed a type of cattle that would thrive in Florida's climate and, after thousands of matings, developed the Braford breed that is now raised from Argentina to California, Texas and throughout the south, as are a more recent Adams crossbreed, ABEEF.

Adams has been involved in far more than ranching, however. He purchased and preserved the P.P. Cobb building in downtown Fort Pierce, has been a key supporter of Indian River State College Foundation, the Backus Gallery, Heathcote Botanical Gardens, Historical Society Museum and the United Way of St. Lucie County. Adams was also instrumental in bringing another of this year's Hegener Award nominees, Mike Brown Sr., to St. Lucie County and had a hand in promoting previous winner Dr. Ed Massey of IRSC.

One of the largest ranches in Florida, the 14,000-acre Adams Ranch, along with Adams-owned acreage in Osceola County, is ranked the 15<sup>th</sup> largest cow-calf operation in the United States. They produce 1,000 ABEEF cows every six months. Between 5,000-10,000 people come from all over the world each year to tour Adams Ranch.

The EDC leadership selection committee interviewed six semi-finalist nominees, voted to choose three final candidates, and then unanimously selected Adams as the nominee who most embodies the leadership and community mindfulness of the award's namesake, Pete Hegener.

"Each year it seems to get more difficult to choose a winner from the very impressive group of nominees for this award," said Pete Tesch, president of the EDC. "Each nominee's accomplishments and positive impacts on the community are outstanding. And, choosing between three finalists who have all done so much for St. Lucie County made the final selection an extremely difficult one." The other finalists were Mike Brown Sr., Harbor Community Bank, and Kathryn Hensley, School Board of St. Lucie County.

Other 2017 nominees were Terissa Aronson, St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce; Judith Cruz, Treasure Coast Food Bank; Wayne Gent, St. Lucie Public Schools; Robert Gluckman, Treasure Coast Urgent & Family Care; Harbor Community Bank Senior Executives Mike Brown Sr., Hal Roberts, Randy Ezell and Mike Brown Jr.; Leslie Kristof, Keiser University; Kathy Post, Post Insurance & Financial; Tammy Roncaglione, CenterState Bank; and Maddie Williams, Treasure Coast Builders Association.

In addition to FP&L's presenting sponsorship, other leadership dinner award sponsors were PGA Golf Club, Adams Ranch, Bank of America, Dean Mead Minton & Zwemer, FAU's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Hilton Garden Inn, Indian River State College, Jungle TV, Keiser University, Martin Health System, St. Lucie Public Schools, Tradition Land Company and Treasure Coast Urgent & Family Care.

### **About the award**

The recipient of the Pete Hegener Leadership Award exemplifies the qualities of a visionary, a trusted role model and leader whose inspiration and achievements impact the quality of job creation, economic vitality and small business growth.

Pete Hegener, the man whose actions inspired this award, was a founding member and integral partner of the EDC, served on the Board of Directors, and was an Executive Committee member. Pete was a pillar of the St. Lucie County community, having played a key role in the development of western St. Lucie County and Tradition. Friends and colleagues described him as "honest, visionary, and caring." He passed away in March 2012, but his legacy is recognized through this award.

### **About the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County**

The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting economic vitality in St. Lucie County through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the community. The EDC works in partnership with local governments and the private sector to advance its goals of creating more and better-paying jobs for residents, broadening the tax base and improving St. Lucie County's economic quality of life. Contact the EDC at 772.336.6250, [ptesch@youredc.com](mailto:ptesch@youredc.com) or [www.youredc.com](http://www.youredc.com).