Gus Young civil rights and civic leader. He was born on March 10, 1909 to the union of the late Gustav Young, Sr., and Sarah Davis Young, in Zachary, Louisiana, in East Baton Rouge Parish. After the passing of his father, he was adopted and reared by his uncle and aunt, the late Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Carter, at the age of nine months old.

Young was educated in the segregated black schools of East Baton Rouge Parish. He obtained a high school equivalency certificate by attending classes in the Adult Education Program, while working at Humble Oil and Refining Company (now Exxon-Mobile). In the early forties, he moved to the Eden Park Community, and married Miss Victoria Louding. There were no children born to this union.

As a prominent civil rights leader in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1932, Young began voter registration drives among blacks in East Baton Rouge Parish, prior to which, he was one of only three blacks in East Baton Rouge Parish to have been allowed to register to vote. In 1938, he founded the First Ward Voters League, which was not chartered until 1953. He was ward leader for the League, which put him in charge not only of getting more blacks to vote, but also aided in his work to obtain street and sanitation improvements for black sections of Baton Rouge.

He accepted Christ at an early age and became a longtime member of the New St. John Missionary Baptist Church, in Baton Rouge. A very dedicated and active member, he served as a layman along with being a member of the Deacon Board and the Brotherhood.

In 1966 Young retired with thirty years of service at Exxon.

Service to his community was exemplified by his numerous and diverse affiliations. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; member of East Baton Rouge Parish Bi-Racial Committee; officer and member of James A. Taylor Masonic Lodge No. 78; Ward Leader, First Ward Voters’ League; active in numerous other political organizations.

Gus Young died on March 19, 1969 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His remains are interred in Gilbert Memorial Cemetery in Baton Rouge.

To pay homage and celebrate his grassroots accomplishments, and as a reminder of how “The Park” area progressed from its humble beginnings to what it became, the street formerly known as Capitol Avenue, located in the heart of the Eden Park community in Baton Rouge, Gus Young Avenue, is named in his honor.