

Pi Kappa Alpha receives excellence award

By: Cate Biggs, Associate News Editor, cbiggs@smu.edu

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SMU's Beta Zeta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity was awarded the "Ryan Gibson Chapter of Excellence" award by the Ryan Gibson Foundation for raising over \$10,000 for the organization through the chapter's various philanthropy events.

This annual award is presented to the Pike chapter that has raised the most funds to assist the Ryan Gibson Foundation with its goal to find a cure for Leukemia.

The Ryan Gibson Foundation was established to honor a former SMU student and Pike member Ryan Gibson, who lost his battle to Leukemia in 2001.

The Foundation was founded with a sole mission: to cure Leukemia. The goal was established by the late Gibson, who remains the inspiration for the foundation.

Dedicated to the mission, and to carry on Ryan's dream of finding a cure for Leukemia, the Foundation gives grants to cancer research institutions and physicians.

During the past year, the Beta Zeta Chapter has held events and fundraisers such as its annual Shrimpfest, Powder-puff Football tournament, Date Auction, Easter Egg Hunt and party collections, to assist the foundation in reaching its goal for a cure.

Former Beta Zeta Chapter President Jack Merriman expressed the honor felt by his chapter in receiving the award.

"The men of the Beta Zeta Chapter of Pike feel a very strong bond to the Gibson foundation," he said.

"It is something that our house has, and will continue to, support for years and years to come. To us it's more than just a foundation, it's a way to support one of our most exemplary brothers," Merriman added.

While attending SMU Gibson's honors were numerous. He graduated SMU with a Bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences and minors in psychology and electrical engineering.

He was named the national outstanding Pike for October 1995. He also received the Engineering School's award for the highest grade point average for a freshman student, was named to the Alpha Lambda Delta honors society, received the Bank of America Joe Martin Excellence Award and was chosen for SMU's highest honor organization, the Robert Hyer Society, as well as the Golden Key Honor Society. Gibson was also named to the Mortar Board list of Top 10 SMU sophomores and graduated Cum Laude.

Junior Pike member Ben Lampert said, "As a chapter we have worked very hard through our many philanthropy events to raise money to honor Ryan Gibson's life and to make Ryan's goal of finding a cure for Leukemia possible."

During his last years at SMU, Gibson battled Leukemia. When Gibson died he was preparing for medical school and working to find a less toxic treatment for the disease.