The Paul André Hermansen Memorial Scholarship Endowment was established in 1997 by his parents, Bjørg and Bjørnar R. Hermansen. Paul's brothers, John and Tom Hermansen, join in their parents' tribute to this beloved brother and son.

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Paul André Hermansen

Paul André Hermansen was born on January 1, 1976 in Miami, Florida, where he lived until his family moved back to their native Norway in 1978. In 1983, the family returned to the United States, residing in Brevard County, Florida. Paul attended first Sea Park and then Surfside Elementary Schools. After attending DeLaura Junior High in Satellite Beach, Paul went to high school at Saint Edward’s School in Vero Beach, Florida, from which he graduated in 1994. He then attended Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, from which he graduated in 1995.

Following summer studies in 1995 at the University of Aix-en-Provence in France, Paul enrolled in Hofstra University, Long Island, New York, where he was a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity. He spent a second summer, 1996, in Europe, studying at the International Summer School of the University of Oslo in Norway.

Paul died on September 23, 1996 as a result of a tragic accident.

Personal Interests

Paul had wide-ranging interests in sports and hobbies. He played soccer and football and was an avid scuba diver and skier. With family members and friends, he enjoyed tennis, golf, skeet shooting, hunting and fly fishing. He was widely traveled, having made trips throughout the United States and the countries of Europe, as well as to Kenya, Tanzania, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Israel and many of the Caribbean Islands.

Philosophy

Paul was most loved by his family and friends for his warm, compassionate nature, his innate kindness, his sense of purpose, his good humor and his commitment to living a life that helped others. His faith was in the essential goodness of life, and he saw his mission as the giving of his significant talents, of his time and, indeed, of himself to alleviate the suffering he found in the world and to enrich the quality of others’ lives. His love brought joy to his family and friends. His generosity and friendship were often extended to those in circumstances of need.

He early developed a plan for his career as a teacher or as a professional in an international aid organization where he could work to advance justice and well-being for all. His interest in ecology was consistent with his faith in a more benevolent future. He saw ecology as central to establishing a wise and sustainable balance between humankind and the earth we jointly inhabit.

In making friends and helping others, Paul recognized absolutely no barriers of race, color, creed, religion or social status. Paul’s friendships were many and varied because he was open to all. His pleasure was greatest when he was sharing his love and his time. He believed he had received much and, in a sense, he recognized an obligation, as the renowned German writer Goethe once said, “to earn his inheritance.”

Paul was a big man not only in his physical stature (he was 6’8-1/2” tall) but in his heart. A fraternity brother characterized him as “a gentle giant of a man.” A Cushing Academy friend, commenting on his great sensitivity, referred to him as immortal, “not because of his stature but because of his heart.”

In creating the Paul André Hermansen Memorial Scholarship, Paul’s family immortalizes his loving spirit and his devotion to helping others.

Scholarship Program

The program provides several scholarships of $5,000 a year to assist undergraduate students at Florida Institute of Technology with tuition, fees, room and board.

Scholarship recipients will be selected through the university’s Office of Financial Aid. Awards will be made based on need and merit to students who share Paul’s qualities such as kindness, thoughtfulness and a desire to help others without prejudice, with preference given to Brevard County students. The requisite qualities normally best can be determined through personal interviews, letters of reference submitted by high school guidance counselors, teachers, clergy and others. Personal essays submitted by students as a part of the university’s admission process also will be considered.

Award recipients may continue to receive the scholarship each year until they graduate or leave the university. While no specific grade point average is required, an award recipient must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress toward a degree. The decision of the university’s Vice President for Academic Affairs ultimately will determine satisfactory academic progress.