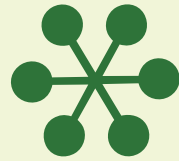




# **GORDIE CENTER**

**FALL 2022**



# Learn. Connect. Act.

## Learn

### What is the Gordie Center?

The Gordie Center is a national non-profit at the University of Virginia. Our mission is to end hazing and substance misuse among college and high school students. Our goal is to provide quality education to prevent hazing and alcohol overdose to students, families, and communities.

## Connect

### How does the Gordie Center's work relate to you?

Hazing can happen to anyone. 47% of college students report having been hazed in high school. Hazing happens in all kinds of groups: fraternities, sororities, athletic teams, marching bands, and even religious and leadership organizations. Alcohol overdose is the most common cause of death in hazing fatalities.

## Act

### How can you help?

Read the stories included in this publication to learn more about the work of the Gordie Center and the tragic impact of hazing. Visit [gordie.org](https://www.gordie.org), share our posts on social media, and talk with the students in your life about hazing and the PUBS signs of alcohol overdose. Turn your concern into action — provide lifesaving education by donating to the Gordie Center today!



Leslie and Michael Lanahan with their daughter and son-in-law, Lily and Johnny DePeters.

As much as I love Fall, this time of year is always a sad one because it is when so many parents help pack up their college kids and send them off, trustingly, into the wild world. Because hazing and alcohol overdose continue to claim student lives, for some parents, this is the last time they will ever see their child again.

This is not supposed to happen. And we work hard every day to make sure this does not happen to other families as it did to ours on September 17, 2004. This year marks the 18th year of Gordie's absence from our lives, matching the 18 years we had with him on this earth. We thought we had prepared him for what he would face in college, but sadly, we hadn't.

The Gordie Center at the University of Virginia (UVA) develops innovative ways to save young lives. It's at this very important time, when students think they know everything, that our work is crucial. Educating parents and students about the dangers of hazing and alcohol overdose can be the difference between a child coming home from college or not. We're incredibly proud of the wonderful work our team in Charlottesville does. We could not do this without Susie, Jill, Carl, and Anthony. This year coming out of COVID, the Gordie Center at UVA:

1. Created and licensed a 3-part hazing and alcohol overdose education curriculum for colleges and universities to meet the educational requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia's new Adam's Law (see page 4).
2. Launched a new [gordie.org](https://www.gordie.org) website, providing robust and easy to navigate resources on hazing, alcohol overdose, and medical amnesty (see page 5).
3. Partnered with other national organizations, including AliveTek, Favor & Company, The Antonio Tsiaras Leadership Foundation, the Piazza Center for Fraternity and Sorority Research and Reform, and the WITH US Center for Bystander Intervention, to share Gordie's story and create programs to prevent hazing and alcohol overdose (see page 27).
4. Provided in-person education to prevent hazing and alcohol overdose to over 4,500 first-year and transfer students at UVA.

This would not be possible without the generosity of family, friends, and concerned supporters. We are so grateful to the many families we have met along the way who have also lost a child in the past 18 years. We share an unfathomable bond and we find comfort and support in knowing we are not alone in this heavy burden of losing a child, but it's a club you do not want to belong to. In honor of and in memory of all of our children who were so senselessly lost, we thank you for your continued support. It is through education, leadership, and kindness, that we will eliminate hazing.

Sincerely,

Leslie and Michael Lanahan, Gordie Bailey's mother and stepfather

# Adam's Law Education

*Hazing prevention programs to keep Virginia students safe*

On July 1, a new law went into effect in the Commonwealth of Virginia requiring in-person hazing education at all Virginia colleges, in addition to other campus hazing prevention policies, reporting procedures, and communication strategies. The law is named after Virginia Commonwealth University student Adam Oakes, who died of a hazing-related alcohol overdose in February 2021. Adam's Law joins a host of laws in other states named after students lost to hazing including Collin's Law in Ohio, Sam's Law in Washington, the Timothy J. Piazza Anti Hazing Law in Pennsylvania, and the Max Gruver Act in both Georgia and Louisiana. We applaud the families who worked with legislators to enact these laws, and only wish their passage wasn't prompted by the tragic, preventable losses of these young men.

Institutions of higher education in Virginia began reaching out to the Gordie Center as

*"Working with the Gordie Center to complete our obligations to Adam's Law has been a great experience! We have already seen positive changes related to reports we have received that we believe are a direct result of the presentation content provided to us by the Gordie Center. We are incredibly pleased and thankful for this partnership."*

—Jennifer Grossman Leopard,  
Director of Student Life, James Madison University

soon as the law was passed in March, asking for advice and support on implementing the law's educational requirements. In response to these inquiries and the high demand for a program that schools could implement for multiple student audiences, the Gordie Center developed a series of three interactive, evidence-informed hazing and alcohol overdose prevention programs for potential and new student organization members, current members, and group advisors. Fourteen Virginia schools licensed our programs, and we provided facilitator training to over 50 higher education professionals across the state. Gordie Center staff delivered these programs to students at UVA (reaching over 4,500 first-year and transfer students through 28 summer orientation sessions), and trained UVA staff to deliver them as well. We are incredibly proud of the programs we created (and how quickly we were able to roll them out), and that students throughout Virginia are receiving our educational content. ❁

*"The hazing prevention education curriculum designed and presented by the Gordie Center is second to none. The Gordie Center staff provided my colleagues and I with everything we needed to successfully implement the curriculum at Randolph-Macon College and remain valuable partners as we continue to present to different student populations. I do not know where our institution would be in our hazing prevention education efforts without the remarkable work of the Gordie Center and its staff."*

—T.J. Horan, Director of Student Life, Randolph-Macon College

## Reimagined Website

The Gordie Center launched an updated website in 2022! [Gordie.org](https://www.gordie.org) got an overhaul in design and content — our new site is easy to navigate with robust educational content about alcohol and hazing, and provides the tools you need in just a few clicks. The site is organized in 3 main sections:

**Learn:** Visit this section to discover comprehensive educational content on alcohol, hazing, and medical amnesty; information on our *HAZE* documentary and APPLE Athletics resources; and our searchable Prevention Toolkit, where you can easily find and download all of our free tools!

**Connect:** Here you can read the memorials of students lost to hazing and/or alcohol

overdose as well as inspiring stories from families and Gordie Center supporters, and also connect with our social media.

**Act:** Visit this section to find our Gordie Center store, take the Pledge to Check, raise awareness via our campaigns, and support our mission through your generous donations.

You can find more information about the Gordie Center, including our mission and history, staff profiles, partnerships, and past years' publications, in the About section of the site. We hope you love it as much as we do — the site wouldn't have been possible without you! The new design was funded by our donors and a grant from the University of Virginia's Parents Fund. Thank you! ❁





## Still Danny

*Hazing's impact on the Santulli family*

Danny Santulli is the youngest of Mary Pat and Tom Santulli's three children. The family lives in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Danny had a very active childhood in which sports featured heavily, and the family created a lot of memories watching Danny play. Every summer growing up, Danny's family went to South Carolina to spend time with extended family — Danny loved being out on the water. When COVID hit during Danny's junior year of high school, he worked in the Kids Club at his local gym to stay active. During his senior year of high school, he managed his school's varsity hockey team with two good friends, and the team won the state high school hockey championship that year (a big deal in Minnesota)! "Danny had his moments, like all kids do, but he was a good kid growing up and had a good group of friends," says Mary Pat. Danny graduated from Eden Prairie High School in June 2021 and chose to attend the University of Missouri that fall. His older brother Nick was a Mizzou graduate, and his older sister Meredith is a Mizzou student. Danny has a great relationship with both of his siblings and enjoys a special bond with Meredith because they are close in age. None of Danny's high school friends were going to Mizzou, so it was important to Danny that Meredith would be at school with him. He was interested in pursuing a business degree like Nick and was excited for the freedom and

independence of college. Danny wanted to carve his own space at Mizzou — Nick had joined Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and had a good experience with his fraternity, so Danny thought joining a fraternity would help him meet new friends.

Danny decided to pledge Phi Gamma Delta fraternity (Fiji), and very quickly felt the pressures of pledging. "Danny talked with Tom and me about the demands of the pledging process because he was really struggling, and we told him we didn't care if he quit — but he didn't want to," Mary Pat recalls of conversations she and Tom had with Danny. The demands increased as the new member process unfolded for Danny — the fraternity drained his bank account by having him purchase items for fraternity members, and for weeks, Mary Pat and Tom couldn't even reach Danny on the phone because he was always required to be at the fraternity house. In mid-September 2021, Mary Pat and Tom were at Mizzou for the university's Family Weekend, and while they were there, they talked with Danny's friends about their concerns and asked them to look out for Danny — everyone they talked to said they had Danny's back.

On October 19, 2021, Danny received a text that told him to show up at the Fiji house that night. He had no idea a hazing event was planned. The fraternity house had cameras

Left: Danny Santulli. Photo credit: Shari Fleming Photography.



throughout, so much of what happened that evening was filmed. The night started in the basement, where there were no cameras, but the upstairs footage shows pledges blindfolded and shirtless. Danny is seen being given a bottle of vodka, drinking from that bottle, and having that bottle taped to his hand after he attempts to give it back 3 times — Danny was trying to stop drinking, but was pressured to finish the bottle, as well as drink from a beer bong. He passed out in a courtyard outside the house, and some of the Fiji brothers carried him inside to a couch. Danny fell partially off the couch and struggled to move before laying still with the upper half of his body on the floor. After an hour, a brother discovered Danny falling off the couch, put him back on the couch, and evaluated his condition — Danny’s skin was turning blue, and his lips were pale. The brothers decided Danny needed help, but they didn’t call 911 — instead, they carried him out to one of their cars to drive him to the hospital. The footage shows that while carrying Danny through the fraternity house, Danny’s limp body slid from a fraternity member’s grasp, and his head hit the tile floor.

Mary Pat and Tom were at home in Minnesota, unaware of what was happening to their son at Mizzou. That day, the news reported the hazing death of Lofton Hazelwood at the University of Kentucky on October 18th, and Mary Pat remembers reading about what happened to Lofton. “You never think it’s going to happen to your son, or to your family,” she says. The very next day, she and Tom got the call that Danny was in the hospital. “We thought Danny would get his stomach pumped and go home,” says Mary Pat. “The reality of what we found when we got to the hospital was so much worse than I ever imagined.” Danny had suffered brain damage from the lack of oxygen to his brain due to alcohol overdose, and he went into cardiac arrest while in the car on the way to the hospital. He wasn’t breathing when he arrived at the hospital, and his blood alcohol content was .486. “They knew he was in distress, and nobody called 911,” Mary Pat reiterates.

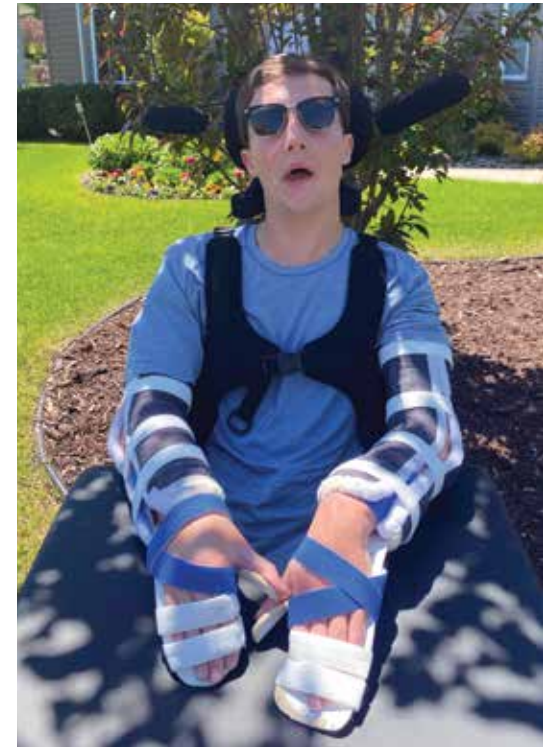
Danny spent 6 weeks in the ICU in Missouri before he was sent to a rehab hospital in Denver, CO, where he stayed for 6 months before finally returning home to Minnesota.

Although he is home, Danny will need care for the rest of his life — the brain damage caused blindness, robbed him of the ability to talk, walk, or feed himself, and confined him to a wheelchair. Mary Pat resigned from her job in April to be Danny’s full-time caregiver. Nick also lives at home now to help his parents with Danny’s care, along with caregivers that come to the house. “We hope that Danny will someday be able to communicate with us. We hope he continues to progress with new therapies,” Mary Pat says. “I miss him saying ‘Mom!’ and talking to me. There are a lot of little things I miss about Danny, but there are a lot of things I still see in Danny that make me smile.”

Meredith struggled to return to Mizzou for her own classes after what happened to her brother. She did all her classes online while Danny was hospitalized and has returned to campus for the 2022–2023 school year. “I was very excited to go to school with Danny,” Meredith remembers. Instead of enjoying school with her brother, she runs into the fraternity members who harmed her brother on campus. “When I think about what happened to my brother, I feel disgusted. They changed his life forever. My brother said ‘no’ several times, and no means no.”

*“They knew he was in distress, and nobody called 911.”*

The Santullis don’t know what their and Danny’s life will bring in the future — for now, they just focus on Danny. “We want to do everything we can to make his life better. We hope that he will always feel our unending love and dedication to him,” Mary Pat says. “My heart aches for him because he was so full of life and had so much going for him.” Tom adds, “We will get through it, and we will continue to fight for justice for Danny.” Nick chimes in, “At the end of the day, it’s still Danny. We are going to love Danny forever, and we’ll always be by his side no matter what.” The Santullis



Danny is now being cared for at home.

want to share their family’s story to create awareness that hazing is real, and it can happen to anyone. They want to educate young adults on what to do when someone is in trouble and make them aware of what hazing can do not only to the person being hazed, but to the family. “Our experience has made us realize that life is very fragile — it can change in an instant. We don’t take anything for granted anymore,” says Mary Pat. “This experience had made our family bond even stronger — I have been absolutely amazed watching my kids cope with this situation with strength and maturity. I’m so proud of them.”

When thinking about what their family has lost because of the hazing that so injured their son and placed their family in this nightmare, Mary Pat says, “It’s very difficult, but every day I get up for Danny because I love him and he’s my son. It’s also rewarding that I can take care of him, and I can hug him, and I can talk to him...and that he’s still with us. I’m just so thankful for that.” ❀



Family photo of Meredith, Nick, Danny, Mary Pat, and Tom prior to Danny being hazed.



# Save a Life. Make the Call.

Gordie Bailey was 18 years old when he was hazed by a fraternity and died from alcohol overdose. This year marks 18 years since his passing — his family and friends have been missing him for as long as they were able to know him in his far-too-short life. His death was entirely preventable, as are all hazing and alcohol overdose deaths. Gordie's story has saved countless lives with the simple message: **Save a Life. Make the Call.** Every young person's hazing and alcohol overdose death leaves a lasting impact, rippling endlessly across families and communities, just like Gordie's.

The Gordie Center partners with families who have experienced a similar loss, and we honor several of them here. We share their stories with you to illustrate that **our work is not done.** Even one student hazing and alcohol overdose death is one too many. The Gordie Center's outreach is critical to ending hazing, recognizing the signs of alcohol overdose, and preventing tragedies. ❀



## NOLAN BURCH

11/07/1996 – 11/14/2014

West Virginia University,  
Kappa Sigma hazing

Nolan Burch was an 18-year-old freshman at West Virginia University when he died on November 14, 2014, from alcohol overdose after being hazed during “big brother night” for Kappa Sigma fraternity. Nolan grew up in Williamsville, NY as the only son of Kim and TJ Burch and best friend to his younger sister Alex. “Nolan was very outgoing and willing to meet

new people anywhere he was,” said Kim and TJ. “Simply put, Nolan saw the best in everyone and brought people together.” Nolan graduated from Canisius High School, where he was a very good student, played hockey and baseball, and was surrounded by his large circle of friends.

Nolan chose West Virginia University because it felt like home to him, and despite his full course load and part-time job, he wanted to get more involved on campus. He chose to pledge Kappa Sigma, and spent the 3-month pledging process enduring all that was asked of him. His final night of pledging was November 12, 2014, when he met his “big brother” in the fraternity. Nolan's big brother gave him a 750 ml bottle of 100 proof whiskey (21 drinks) and told Nolan to finish it within an hour. Security cameras at the fraternity house show Nolan's limp body being carried back into the house an hour and a half after the event began. He was laid down on a stage, and despite more than 50 people in attendance at the party, no one noticed Nolan's dire condition until it was too late. Nolan was on life support for 2 days before he succumbed to alcohol overdose — his BAC was .493 when he died. Nolan was able to save four lives in his death through the miracle of organ donation.

Nolan's family started the NMB Foundation to prevent tragedy from happening to another young man or woman and their families. The documentary film *Breathe, Nolan, Breathe* shares Nolan's story. “He truly loved his friends, and he loved life itself. Nolan was always there when his friends needed someone to talk to,” his family says. “Any number of decisions could have been made that night that would have resulted in Nolan still being here. It is impossible to describe — we miss him every second.” ❀



## STONE FOLTZ

11/21/2000 – 03/07/2021

Bowling Green State University,  
Pi Kappa Alpha hazing

Stone Foltz was a 20-year-old sophomore at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) when he died on March 7, 2021, after being hazed while pledging Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity (PIKE). Stone grew up in Delaware, OH, as the oldest son of Shari and Cory Foltz, and he cherished his role as a loving big brother to brother AJ and sister Jersee. Stone graduated from Buckeye Valley High School, where he played baseball, basketball, and lacrosse. Stone dreamed of owning a fashion business, and he was working toward a business degree at BGSU. “Stone was an amazing kid,” Shari remembers. “He was a kind individual, he was

a good listener — just the most loving, caring person.” Cory concurs: “As a dad, I was proud. He was growing up to be an independent young man.”

When Stone was a freshman at BGSU, he thought about joining a fraternity, but after researching the organizations, he didn't feel the groups aligned with his values and decided to focus on his schoolwork. That changed in the spring of his sophomore year, when Stone told his parents he was pledging PIKE. Shari and Cory describe what happened to Stone during the pledging process as “grooming” — hazing that escalated in risk over the pledge period. The day before PIKE's “big/little night,” Stone reached out to his mom, telling her that the last thing he needed to do to get into the fraternity was drink a lot of alcohol. Shari told him he didn't have to do that, and Stone said, “No, we do. Everyone has to drink.” Shari told Stone that no one has to drink or do something they don't want to — she said it was stupid and that he needed to be smart with his decisions. She expressed her concerns to Stone, but she did not know how much alcohol was “a lot” — she had no idea that Stone would be given an individual bottle of hard liquor, and that he would be required to consume that bottle as fast as possible. Stone didn't know how much alcohol would be involved, either — in the investigation after his death, it was discovered that the week of the event, Stone googled “how to drink large amounts of alcohol,” hoping to find tips to help him get through the night. At the final pledge event on March 4, 2021, Stone was blindfolded, yelled at, and coerced by PIKE members to drink an entire liter of bourbon, which he finished in 18 minutes. Stone passed out at the fraternity house, and PIKE members drove him back to his apartment, where they left him alone on his couch. Later that night, Stone's roommate found him unresponsive, and he and Stone's girlfriend called 911. After 3 days in the hospital, surrounded by his family and friends, Stone was pronounced dead and fulfilled his vow to be an organ donor, saving over 100 lives.

Shari says, “When we first saw Stone in the ICU with all the tubes coming from his body, the first thing I told him was how sorry I was — and then I promised him we would fight to put an end to hazing. We told him we would never stop fighting.” The Foltz family created the iamstonefoltz FOUNDATION to give back in Stone’s memory, and Shari and Cory travel to colleges and high schools presenting their Never Leave Anyone Behind program. Shari reflects, “To know Stone was to know his smile, his kind heart, and his peace sign,” the latter of which is the FOUNDATION logo. “Each of our lives are forever changed. We think of Stone from the minute we wake up to the time we fall asleep. Every day is a struggle. There will be no closure for our family until hazing is permanently eradicated on college campuses.” ❀



## THOMAS LOFTON HAZELWOOD

06/08/2003 – 10/18/2021

*University of Kentucky, FarmHouse Fraternity hazing*

Lofton Hazelwood was an 18-year-old freshman at the University of Kentucky (UK) when he died of alcohol overdose on October 18, 2021, after enduring 5 weeks of hazing while pledging the FarmHouse Fraternity at the University of Kentucky. Lofton grew up in Henderson, KY, and enjoyed playing golf,

hunting, fishing, going to the lake, and boating. He was the youngest child and only son of Tracey and Kirk Hazelwood, and the absolutely doted on baby brother of his sisters Logan, Sydney, and Preston. “Lofton was an old soul. He loved everybody,” Tracey says. Lofton graduated from Henderson County High School and was studying Agricultural Economics at UK after falling in love with farming.

Because COVID forced at-home learning in 2020, Lofton and his older sister Preston left for college at the same time in 2021, both at UK, where their older sisters had already graduated. “I told my husband that our lives were changed forever,” Tracey remembers of when their two youngest children left for college, “but I never dreamed of the change that would take place.” Lofton began fraternity rush as soon as he arrived on campus. “We all encouraged him to go through rush. We believed it would be a good thing.” Several times during pledging, Lofton told his parents he wanted to quit. “We had no clue what he was going through. We told him it was almost over,” Tracey says. On the day Lofton died, Tracey spoke with him that morning before class. After class, Lofton met Preston for lunch before doing homework in his dorm. He then went to a 4pm meeting at the FarmHouse. Fraternity tradition called for the pledges to consume Wild Turkey 101 prior to the planned event that evening, serenading sorority houses, and by 4:50pm, Lofton was so intoxicated he could barely walk. The fraternity members took him to a bedroom and left to serenade. Around 6pm, a fraternity member returned to find Lofton unresponsive — emergency responders tried to revive him, but it was too late. His BAC was .354 at the time of his death.

Lofton’s family is pushing for “Lofton’s Law,” a felony anti-hazing law in Kentucky since the state has no laws pertaining to hazing. “Our family has been ripped apart, and no family should ever have to go through what we are dealing with,” says Tracey. “We beg of everyone in a situation like Lofton’s to please call for help and don’t ever leave anyone. You might just save someone’s life.” ❀



## 10 YEARS: MISSING ROBERT EUGENE TIPTON, JR.

2022 marks 10 years since Robert Tipton, Jr. died while a student at High Point University in NC. Robert, his mother Deborah, and his sister Mary were an inseparable trio — Robert was Deborah’s miracle baby after years of infertility, and Mary was Robert’s best friend. They enjoyed traveling together and spending time with their extended family and friends. In the early months of 2012, 22-year-old Robert was severely hazed during the fraternity pledging process. He confided to Mary that he was worried the brothers were going to punish him for revealing a fraternity secret, but asked her not to tell their mom and called High Point’s emergency line 22 times looking for support for what he was going through. On March 26, 2012, Robert was found unresponsive in the apartment of one of the fraternity members. An autopsy report listed blunt force injuries on his head, neck, and knees, and hemorrhages on his left eye.

Deborah and Mary have endured ten years without Robert, and the pain of losing him remains constant. “I live daily with the guilt of not having understood enough about the situation to save my son. Not a day goes by that I don’t wake up thinking about Robert,” says Deborah.

In 2019, Deborah established the Robert Tipton, Jr. Hazing Prevention Fund at the Gordie Center to transform their tragedy into a force for good. Robert’s Fund enhances the Gordie Center’s national hazing prevention efforts by endowing the Robert Tipton, Jr. Hazing Prevention Coordinator position.

Donations to Robert’s Fund honor Robert’s memory by providing lifesaving education to teach students how to end hazing in their organizations and be compassionate, active bystanders in hazing situations. ❀



# The Gordie Club

*The power of peer-to-peer education*

The Gordie Center values student voices and believes in the power of peer education, and now there's a new student club at the University of Virginia (UVA) working to end hazing and alcohol overdose on Grounds: the Gordie Club. Founded last year, the Gordie Club aims to end hazing and substance misuse among UVA students through peer education, open conversations, and fundraising for the Gordie Center. We caught up with the founder of the Club, 2022 UVA graduate Aven Parker, to learn more about her and how the Club came into existence.

Aven grew up in Norfolk, VA, and graduated from Norfolk Academy. She spent much of her childhood at the beach or on the river with her parents and two younger sisters, and visiting her grandparents in Charlottesville, VA, where her grandfather was a professor at UVA. When it came time to choose a college, Aven felt it was only natural for her to become a "UVA Wahoo." She joined Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, and during her 2nd year at UVA, her sorority invited the Gordie Center to give a hazing prevention presentation. "I remember walking away from that presentation with a new mindset," Aven recalls. "As a member of Greek life, I witnessed first-hand incidents of hazing and alcohol misuse on multiple occasions — these incidents involved me as well as many of my close friends. Without realizing it

at the time, I was passively allowing dangerous, life-or-death situations to occur without a second thought. Once I learned about Gordie's story, I realized that his fate could have been a reality for me or any of my friends. The very minute I walked out of the Gordie Center presentation, I vowed to myself that I would no longer tolerate hazing of any kind. I felt a strong personal calling to spread Gordie's story so that other students could understand the realities of hazing."

*"I felt a strong personal calling to spread Gordie's story so that other students could understand the realities of hazing."*

Aven made personal changes because of that presentation, and then a class assignment provided her the opportunity to think bigger. "In the months following the Gordie Center's presentation to my sorority, I made a personal effort to be an active bystander, but it was not until the spring of my third year that I sat down to consider how I could make a large-scale, tangible difference for my peers on Grounds. A class project tasked me with creating a 'business proposal' for a new UVA organization or to build upon an existing UVA organization — it felt natural that I chose to incorporate the Gordie Center into this project

Left: Aven Parker.



since it was an organization that I held close to my heart.” Aven made a call to Gordie Center director Susie Bruce to learn more about how the Gordie Center operates at UVA. “Upon our first interaction, I knew Susie was someone I wanted to work closely with in the future. She was open-minded, enthusiastic, and supportive of my ideas from the get-go. From there, she provided resources for me to use in my project and I eventually produced a seventeen-page business strategy that proposed the chartering of the ‘Gordie Club’ at UVA.” Susie was equally excited that Aven reached out to her. “I always love to hear from students, and I’m so grateful Aven took the next step to email me,” Susie says. “She has so much energy around educating her peers about alcohol overdose and hazing and brought so many other students along with her. Connecting with students is truly at the heart of what we do at the Gordie Center. Our work would not be possible without passionate students like Aven!”

Aven sees the Gordie Club filling an important need for students at UVA. “Alcohol consumption is a common activity for college students. Whether a student uses alcohol in a casual setting with a few friends or a more social setting, it can be extremely harmful if not consumed safely and appropriately,” she says. “Not only does UVA have a diverse party scene, but it also has strong-knit groups that are deeply rooted in tradition. Although these student groups are expected to comply with university regulations regarding alcohol, it is evident that more can be done to prevent unsafe alcohol use



Aven giving hugs and Kindness Cards on Gordie's birthday last year.

on Grounds. The Gordie Club is the only student group that exists to prevent hazing and alcohol overdose at UVA, meaning its student members have the unique ability to educate and influence the wide range of students who partake in alcohol consumption at UVA. I valued what my peers had to say; their words always carried more weight than what I heard from professors, advisors, and my parents. Sharing thoughts, knowledge, and opinions with peers can result in extremely positive outcomes for the overall health and well-being of friends, classmates, and teammates.”

The Gordie Center was thrilled to support Aven's passion for educating her peers on the dangers of hazing and alcohol overdose, and encouraged her to apply for the Harrison Kowiak Scholarship to attend the 2021 *HazingPrevention.Org* Hazing Prevention Institute. Aven earned the scholarship and attended the Institute with Gordie Center staff and other members of the UVA team. “The HPO Institute was a particularly special opportunity for me. Hearing from parents who lost children due to hazing-related incidents was eye-opening, to say the least. Seeing the despair in their eyes as they reflected on their children's lives made me want to work even harder to spread Gordie's story.” In the fall of her 4th year at UVA, Aven served as the sole student representative on the working group that reviewed and updated the UVA hazing policy and reporting procedures.

Since Aven graduated only a year after forming the Gordie Club, she left the University with hopes for the Club's future. “My main hope for this club is that it extends far beyond the Greek community and engages students of all ages. It is especially important to me that the Gordie Club targets freshman students, intramural sports teams, and other tight-knit clubs where hazing is likely to occur.” Aven's goals for the Club extend beyond the UVA community: “In the future, I hope UVA's Gordie Club sets an example for other universities across the nation to form their own Gordie Clubs so that their students are exposed to Gordie's story.



Gordie Club president Teegan Howell and current members creating Kindness Card bags with candy for National GORDIEday 2022.

Working with the Gordie Center throughout college was without a doubt the most fulfilling endeavor of mine. I will forever feel tied to their mission knowing that future students are working to grow the small community that I built.” Aven worked hard to leave the Gordie Club in good hands upon her graduation. UVA 3rd year student Teegan Howell stepped up and took over as Club president for this academic year. “I hope we can bring awareness to the issues of substance misuse and hazing while meeting students where they are,” Teegan says. “Discussion surrounding hazing and the use of alcohol or other substances is often viewed as a taboo or ‘hush-hush,’ so my goal is to create a space on Grounds where students can freely discuss and share their experiences with these issues, as well as collaborate on ways that we can better educate students on bystander intervention and misuse prevention tactics.”

After her UVA graduation this past spring, Aven moved to Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, and now works as a Program Manager for Amazon. She remains passionate about the work of the Gordie Center: “Learning about Gordie's story single-handedly changed my perspective on hazing and what being an active bystander looks like. If the Gordie Center had

not presented to my sorority that day, there is a chance my sorority sisters and I could have wound up in dangerous situations where we did not have the proper tools and knowledge to intervene and proceed safely. Any of us could have found ourselves in a situation like Gordie or been the bystander who neglected to call for help. The learning tools that the Gordie Center provides for students nationwide have great potential to prevent senseless incidents that are a matter of life or death.”

Reflecting on her experience founding the Gordie Club at UVA, Aven encourages all students to get involved on their campuses — perhaps even to partner with their Student Health or Wellness Office to start their own Gordie Club! “My biggest piece of advice to college students is to explore all the resources that are readily available to you. Reach out to people who are doing things that you care about. The Gordie Club began after I reached out to Susie. I incorporated my passions into my learning and was able to create something truly meaningful out of that. Not only will you find fulfillment this way, knowing you are making a positive change, but you will also make lifelong friends and fond memories that will stick with you far beyond graduation.” ❁



# APPLE Athletics

*Promoting student-athlete wellness and substance misuse prevention*

The Gordie Center’s APPLE Training Institutes are the leading national strategic training program for substance misuse prevention and health promotion for student-athletes and athletics departments. Over the course of a weekend, student-athletes and administrators work as teams to apply the Gordie Center’s comprehensive APPLE Model to their campus environment to create an institution-specific action plan. The National Collegiate Athletics Association has funded the APPLE Training Institutes since 1992, and over 60% of all NCAA-member schools have attended APPLE at least once!

In September 2021, we hosted an APPLE Training Institute in Orlando, Florida for NCAA Division II schools. We were thrilled to welcome 24 schools with 127 student-athletes and administrators. 100% of team contacts who attended our Division II Training Institute believe that APPLE and subsequent meetings made an impact in their athletics department.

We held our first-ever virtual APPLE Training Institute in May 2022, with 23 schools and 145 attendees. Although we missed meeting student-athletes and administrators in person, participants still found the APPLE experience to be valuable to help change the campus



Susie, Jill, and Holly running a successful in-person APPLE during the pandemic.



Division II APPLE participants team build while building kids' bikes for charity.



2022 Virtual APPLE team from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

culture. We’re excited to host APPLE in person in March 2023 in Charlottesville, VA. Here’s what our participants had to say:

“APPLE is amazing — it’s simple and I love that it’s action-oriented. Not just ‘hey learn some stuff and see ya later.’ You actually leave with something to implement!”

“I found the content to be insightful and critical. I believe this training served me in a fantastic way! Thank you all so much for your hard work dedication to student-athlete success.”

“A great resource for making positive change. It’s so obvious how much you all care.”

“I’ve never attended a conference where I have learned as much.” ✨

## Staff Transitions

In August and November, we said goodbye to our Associate Director, Holly Deering, and our longtime APPLE Planner, Debra Reed. Holly’s leadership contributed to the success of our Student-Athlete Mentor (SAM) program at UVA, and both Holly and Debra were integral parts of our national APPLE Training Institutes. Holly spent 11 years with the Gordie Center, and Debra was with us since our founding as the Institute for Substance Abuse Studies in 1987. We miss them both and are grateful they remain connected to us and our work.

In September, we welcomed Anthony Hall as our new Program Coordinator for the APPLE Training Institutes and SAM program. Anthony is a former football and track and field collegiate athlete who mentored student-athletes across multiple sports programs as a UCLA police officer. His work with athletic teams focused on substance misuse and hazing education, and we are thrilled to add Anthony to our Gordie Center family.



Anthony Hall



# Love Remains

*Living with the grief caused by hazing*

When her son Lofton died of alcohol overdose after being hazed at the University of Kentucky last year, Tracey Hazelwood began posting daily notes to Lofton on her social media. Her notes have included silly memories, little glimpses into who Lofton was, fun family times, and regular days with friends — so simple, yet profoundly illustrating all that her family and their community have lost. Gordie Center staff member Jill follows Tracey's social media, and was so moved reading her notes to Lofton every day that the idea for the next few pages was born: notes from families to the loved ones they have lost. For some families, it has been many years since they have been able to talk with son, brother, or cousin; for others, the loss is more recent. No matter the length of time, the impact of hazing on their lives continues to ripple — missing graduations, weddings, the birth of nieces and nephews — the life that continues to march on despite tremendous grief. Several families shared how therapeutic it was to compose their note — we are honored to share these notes with you and appreciate the openness and vulnerability of each author. ❁



**LOFTON HAZELWOOD**  
06/08/2003 – 10/18/2021

## CARSON STARKEY

04/17/1990 – 12/02/2008

### Hey Carson,

I've missed talking to you, but I'm thankful I can still find time to "be together" in other ways. It's September now and fall is starting to come in — cooler temps, trees turning red, and the sun moving farther south. All to say, it's nice to have the seasons transition.

The cooler temps make for that perfect exercise weather. You would be on some long runs for sure. Laura and I were talking about y'all running together. She's worried you would be too fast. I told her it's no big deal because **you always just stuck with me even though you could go faster and further at every activity.** I'm more worried about the tag team dynamic y'all would have poking fun at me.

Mom and Dad were just in town and it was great all being together — we missed you, of course. They came to meet James, who is now 6 weeks old. Madeline and Eli are the best big sister and brother. They have so much fun with James, and they really enjoy just being together whether it's goofing off, playing, or riding their bikes. They are both awesome at riding too, and you would love to go with them. I've been riding more as well, especially on some new trails Dad and I found earlier this summer. You would love it — I attached a picture below. Gravel bikes are the best here because you enjoy that single track flow but can also move quickly on the road to the next dirt spot.

I was thinking about the last time we rode together the other day. The Viva la Vida album came on — do you remember how we listened to that with the windows down? We were on our way to ride from Kenosha Pass to Georgia Pass. **That album is still hard for me. Joy and grief intermixed, just like my memories of that day.** What a ride it was, still the best I've ever been on. Thanks for always waiting up for me at the top of the climbs too. And for the burgers afterward.

I was in Austin two weeks ago and stopped by P. Terry's. Don't worry, I grabbed a chocolate shake and left some for you. I also drove by our old house while I was in town. There's a new family there, I saw a stroller on the front porch. Can you believe all the fun we had on Cherry Lane? I was thinking about the bike ramps we made in the driveway, playing hide and seek between the fences in the backyard, and all the late night rough-housing. **Thanks for being my best friend, it made our childhood so fun.** It's so great to see Madeline and Eli developing the same kind of relationship, too. I can't wait for James to join in soon.

Well I'm off to go chase these kids around. They ask about you often and it's fun to teach them more and more about Uncle Carson. Miss you and love you.

Hayden



**ANTONIO TSIALAS**  
08/04/2001 – 10/24/2019

**Dear Antonio,**

I love you very much and miss seeing you every single day. I miss your smile, your hugs and hearing you say, "I love you." **You know how much I think of you.** Since you were born you brought so much beauty to my life. You may not even know how many people were touched by your amazing smile and your compassionate heart.

You wanted to be number 1 in school and on the field. I know how much you wanted to both lead and to serve those around you. I was always so proud of you. You filled our house with many awards and trophies. We still have them. They are reminders of how hard you always worked and all the ways you would lead with love and compassion. Your dad has always admired the way you were always there for your friends and teammates, protecting and supporting them. It breaks our hearts that no one was there to protect you the night of your passing.

You knew you were in this world for a mission; you were never here just to fit in. Even after your passing, you continue to bring light to a very dark issue affecting the lives of many college students. Please know that through the Foundation that carries your name you are inspiring many, and you are saving lives every day.

You have motivated many people to start courageous conversations about the dangers of hazing with their loved ones. **When people share stories about how your story moved them to spread hazing awareness or become a compassionate leader, it feels like a special gift from you.** Your sister and brother have been sharing the power of compassionate leadership with their schools and friends. You would be so proud of how brave they are! It takes a lot of courage because they miss your physical presence so much.

**My dear Antonio, your life was beautiful.** Your legacy is so powerful that it continues to bring your positive, compassionate spirit to our lives and to the lives of those whose hearts you touched during your short stay in this world.

My faith is so profound. I know that we are always together. I believe the best way to honor you is by aspiring to become the compassionate leader you were. You taught me so much about how to love unconditionally that my love for you transcends the physical space. **As long as I am living, I will try to honor your life and legacy as best as I can.** Thank you for being one of my best teachers and role models. I love you so much and will miss you deeply forever.

Till we meet again.

Mami



Family photo of Christopher, Antonio, John, Flavia, and Athena.

**NOLAN BURCH**  
11/07/1996 – 11/14/2014

**Nolan,**

On November 14th it will be eight years without you. We all still think you are going to come walking in the door with your huge smile and infectious giggle! We love and miss you more than anything. **Your sister would love to have her best friend to talk to.** Your friends talk about you all the time. We have met three of the beautiful people that received your gift of life, and they are eternally grateful. We love you Nolan. **You being gone has become a new reality for us. Not necessarily easier, just different.** We know you are with us, and we feel you around us. We just would love to hug and kiss and smell you again! Keep checking in.

With all our love,  
Mom, Dad, and Alex



**SAMUEL MARTINEZ**  
10/03/2000 – 11/12/2019

**Dear Sam,**

In November it will have been three years since you passed away. They say that time heals all wounds, but that is a lie. **I have come to the realization that this is a wound that will always be with me, a hole in my heart that has become my new reality.**

Little things remind me of you each and every day, and I wish I could tell you about them so I could hear your goofy laugh and see your amazing smile. **There are so many things I wish you could have been a part of in the past three years.** For one, I moved to L.A. which was a big change. Second, I adopted two cats, who I know you would love because you were the ultimate "cat dad." Third, and the biggest thing that has happened since you passed away, was my wedding. That day was amazing and perfect in every way except that it was missing you. It was hard knowing you should have been there but your presence was felt in every aspect of the wedding and I know you were celebrating right alongside me.

**At the end of the day, I just miss you more than words can ever express.** I know you are with me in everything that I do, and that brings me comfort. All I can do is try my best everyday to make you proud.

Love always,  
Your big sister, Ariana





**STONE FOLTZ**  
11/21/2000 – 03/07/2021

**Stone,**

There is not a minute of the day that goes by I don't think of you. I go to bed thinking of you and the minute I open my eyes. ***It continues to feel like a nightmare I am waiting to wake up from.*** I wait for you to come home from college and come through the door with that contagious smile on your face, asking what is there to eat. You would do anything for those in need, and you were always there for others. I will never understand and stop asking the question, why this had to happen to you.

It never seems real, yet it feels real. My mind struggles to accept it. ***I feel like I am losing my breath and I will never be able to catch it.*** It is a forever panic attack as I wait to see you again. The world keeps moving forward, while I feel like I am stuck, living those horrible days over and over. I want to give you a huge hug and a kiss on the cheek, reminding you how much I love you. ***I can wipe the tears away from my eyes but the ache in my heart will always stay.*** Give me one more day to hold you tight and tell you how much I love you and how proud I am to be your mother.

Everyone is quick to tell me how strong and tough I am. ***But no one has a choice to survive grief, it's not an option.*** I cry in the shower, sob into my pillow, and pray I can make it through the day. We all take life for granted but life is the most precious thing there is. You unfortunately learned this at a young age when you lost your best friend. We all learned how precious life was even at the lowest time of our lives. I continue to remind people life is short and not to take it for granted. I know this is the message you would want us to share and remind those to love unconditionally.

I stay as busy as I can because if I don't, I sit and think of you and cry. ***I know this is grieving and I need to grieve but I also don't want to accept you are gone.*** The one thing I can do is keep my promise to you. We will continue to spread our message and story to help educate others about what hazing is and to put an end to it. We don't want anyone else to suffer the way you did. Stone, the one thing I can do is to never stop fighting for you. Saving lives is what you would want, and teaching kindness to others. ***We will save lives because of you.*** I love you always and forever.

Mom



**ADAM OAKES**  
10/06/2001 – 02/27/2021

**Dear Adam,**

***In October you would've been 21, but we can only imagine what that milestone in your life would've been like without you here.***

I can still remember when your mom told me she was pregnant with you. I screamed with absolute joy and excitement. Your mom and dad would finally have their dreams come true, and I would get a baby cousin to snuggle, love, and spoil. We were all grateful for the news of you but truly enamored when you finally arrived. Growing up with you was so much fun and truly taught me and everyone else what unconditional love was. I loved coming home from school and spending time with you. I seized every opportunity to watch and spend time with you. You were the little brother Joe and I didn't know we needed but were grateful to have. You grew up so fast though and there was never a dull moment; watching you play soccer, football, and baseball, trips to the beach, streaming your graduation, and more.

***It is painful to think we will never see you graduate college, get married, and have kids. That was all taken from you and from us.*** Each day, I am faced with a huge amount of guilt, regret, sadness, and a little bit of anger thinking about the things I wish you knew. So, the rest of this letter is the 21 things I wish you knew.

*I Wish*

1. I wish you were here.
2. I wish you knew how proud I was of you. You were one of a kind and your big heart made a lasting impression on so many people.
3. I wish you knew how much I love you. I'm sorry everyday that I didn't say it enough. I will always cherish the last text message you sent me with "I love you."
4. ***I wish you knew how much your family and friends miss you. Our hearts are completely broken and our lives shattered.***
5. I wish you knew how much your little cousins looked up to you. I wish Carson had more time with you.
6. I wish I could hear you call me "Cookie" one more time like you did when you were little. Luckily, your mama still does.
7. I wish you knew that not a day goes by where I don't think about you and everything I should've said but didn't.
8. I wish you knew the hole you left in our family will never heal. You and Paw Paw made us whole and we will never be the same without you two.
9. I wish you knew that Paw Paw died a month after you. His heart broke when you died and he gave up his fight against cancer. You know he never wanted to be far from us or for us to be alone. As we held his hand while he took his last breath, we told him to let go and be with you. I hope that's just what he did.



# Leading the Way

*Creating safer fraternities and sororities*

10. I wish you knew how much we have pulled together as a family to honor your memory and make change for all kids in Virginia so what happened to you will never happen to anyone else.
11. I wish you knew we created a nonprofit in your name, the Love Like Adam Foundation, to educate students in high schools and universities on the dangers of hazing.
12. I wish you knew there is a Virginia law in your name, Adam's Law. It was created to protect other kids like you from hazing. **Your legacy will live on forever and we will never let you be forgotten.**
13. I wish you knew that you had a place where you belonged and it was right here with us.
14. I wish you knew the history of destructive behaviors of Delta Chi including sexual assaults, hazing, providing alcohol to minors, and their multiple suspensions from campus.
15. I wish you knew that the brothers of Delta Chi weren't brothers at all.
16. I wish you knew that the Delta Chi brothers didn't care about you, didn't protect you, and didn't get you the help you needed that night.
17. I wish you had received hazing prevention training.
18. I wish you knew you were being hazed.
19. I wish I was there that night to protect you and take care of you as a big cousin should. I'm so sorry that I wasn't. I'm even more sorry that you died alone and that will forever be too hard for me to bear.
20. I wish every day and every night that you weren't there that night on February 26th, 2021 at 138 W. Clay Street in Richmond.
21. I wish you were still here.

Our family will forever fight to dismantle the toxic culture of hazing for you and all the other kids in our state. I will try to live my life the way you would have and remind myself and others to Love Like Adam. **You are forever in my heart, Adam!** I love and miss you so much.

Love,  
"Cookie"  
Courtney White, Cousin of Adam Oakes



The Gordie Center, the Piazza Center at Pennsylvania State University, and the WITH US Center for Bystander Intervention at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo created a research-to-practice study to identify effective hazing and substance misuse prevention and intervention strategies in fraternity and sorority communities. Six institutions are part of the inaugural three-year Community of Practice which launched this summer: Baylor University, James Madison University, Louisiana State University, Penn State, Washington State University, and West Virginia University.

The study examines which programs, policies, and practices create safer organizations and campus communities, with an emphasis on hazardous drinking, hazing, and other resulting behaviors. Our goal is to measure chapter-level and campus cultural change to learn which factors contribute to healthier behaviors. The three Centers are hopeful that this project will be the breakthrough needed to reframe campus prevention strategies in student groups, fraternities, and sororities.

The Centers, along with more than a dozen prevention and intervention experts, will work with the six campuses and their students to co-develop and evaluate custom strategies to reduce hazardous behaviors. The study hopes to create research that can inform professional practice to counter the life-threatening traditions that exist in too many campus communities, fraternities, and sororities.

The Gordie Center adapted our APPLE Model of substance misuse prevention for

college athletics to focus on fraternity and sorority policies, programs, and advising practices that can impact hazing and substance misuse. We adapted our APPLE campus assessment survey for the project and are providing our expertise in coaching schools in creating effective, student-focused prevention programs. "The Gordie Center is proud of our role in this project and the focus on student engagement to identify and evaluate substance misuse and hazing prevention interventions. The collaborative process ensures prevention plans are customized to campus needs and the strong evaluation component will identify promising practices that can transform unhealthy environments," says Gordie Center director Susie Bruce. ✨



Timothy J. Piazza  
Center for Fraternity  
and Sorority Research  
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**GORDIE CENTER**



**WITH US**  
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The Gordie Center would not exist without our donors. To showcase the incredible loyalty of our supporters, we have listed this year's 189 donors by their total number of giving years since 2010. Whether you are one of our 74 new donors this year or have given for 10+ years, we value you. Thank you!

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We love our supporters, and wanted to give a special shout-out to **Marianne and Lee Hark** this year! Marianne and Lee are loyal donors who live in Dallas with their 3 children. Marianne was a health educator at the Gordie Center in the early 2000's and we remain in close contact. Lee is Head of Greenhill School.

*"We've supported the work of the Gordie Center since I worked there as a young professional. However, its mission is especially personal to us this year as our oldest child begins his college experience. We are incredibly grateful to those doing the complex work on college campuses to help our young adults make healthy choices that protect their future."*

—Marianne Hark

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Robert Tipton, Jr.  
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You receive this publication because the Gordie Center's mission to end hazing and substance misuse among high school and college students is meaningful to you. We are so grateful.

Our donors give for a variety of reasons, including:



They lost a family member or friend to alcohol overdose and/or hazing, and feel driven to transform their tragedy into positive action that saves lives.



They or someone they know personally experienced hazing or substance misuse, and they want to prevent it from happening to others.



They saw an article or news story about families impacted by hazing and alcohol overdose, and responded compassionately.



They are the parent of a high school or college student and are aware that hazing and alcohol overdose can happen to anyone, so they want to support lifesaving education to keep students safe.

With your backing, the Gordie Center has reached tens of thousands of students and families just this year — the impact of your generosity is far-reaching. Countless families have been spared the tragic impact of hazing and alcohol overdose because of you.

From our family to yours, we thank you again for joining us in this lifesaving work.

Gordie Center staff





Gordie Bailey with his sister, Lily.

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