



Sister's Legacy Lives on through Scholarship Fund

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When Jamie Patino was 18 years old, she was preparing to pursue a degree in engineering, following in the footsteps of her older brother and two sisters.

But weeks before she was to enter college at the University of Missouri, Jamie was tragically killed in a car accident.

After her death, her family made the decision to support other students displaying the same character and values for which Jamie was known. The Jamie K. Patino Math and Science Scholarship Fund was created through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln with funds designated for students at Jamie's alma mater, Southeast High School, who are pursuing degrees in fields related to math and science.

"Southeast High School is a great school; my sisters and I had gone to high school there and wanted to support the school," said Rob Patino, Jamie's brother. "We also wanted to encourage students to study math and science because we believe these degrees lead to many opportunities down the road.

"So Jamie's fund became a combination of honoring the goal to support math and science degrees — which could be anything from nursing to teaching math to engineering — as well as helping Southeast and recognizing some of the attributes that made Jamie beautiful, such as sticking up for less fortunate students or overcoming difficult situations."

Patino now serves as chair of his sister's scholarship fund and feels honored to have the opportunity to remember Jamie in such a positive way as he and a group of friends and family select each year's recipient.

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"It gives us an opportunity to reflect on our memories of her," Patino said. "As rewarding as it has been for me, it's been great to meet up with family and friends who knew Jamie well, and we get the honor of going over applications and trying to pair the award with someone who embodies the best of Jamie's spirit, which doesn't necessarily mean the highest ranked student in the class."

The Patino family hopes to continue to grow the fund to serve more students and possibly extend the scholarship to a renewable two-year award rather than its current state of a one-time scholarship.

Patino enjoys meeting the student recipients of his sister's scholarship and seeing firsthand how grateful they are to receive the award.

"I think by stating the memorial scholarship is for 'math and science,' it gives students something to put on their resumes in the future to show they were recognized in this field," he said. "Southeast High School has also been extremely appreciative, and they have a plaque they update every year when a new scholarship award is handed out."

The Jamie Patino Math and Science Scholarship Fund is one of many scholarships available for students across the area through the Community Foundation. Applications are available on the foundation's website at CFL.org under "Apply for Funds" until March 1.

— For more information about establishing a fund at the Community Foundation, visit CFL.org or contact 789-4431 or info@CFL.org