



Luke Chesmore

GIMS founders Erin Hendricks and Taly Haffar announce winners of door prizes.

GIMS Inspires Giving, Memories

Posted December 10, 2009, 3:08 p.m. by Liz Mackinnon

More than 130 people attended the fifth annual Winter Celebration benefiting the [Gustavo Ipiña Memorial Scholarship](#) fund Dec. 5 at the Bodega Bar.

The event raised \$7,200 from donations and items sold at the silent auction, according to GIMS founders Taly Haffar, an assistant United States attorney, and Erin Hendricks, an assistant district attorney in Dallas County.

A 10-foot Christmas tree brightened the softly lit reception area where guests were treated to a wide variety of holiday delights prepared by the chefs of the Hotel InterContinental.

Wide-screen televisions showed the Big XII Championship game, which pitted the University of Texas against Nebraska in a tense matchup that ended with a winning Texas field goal in the last second.

Woodrow Wilson High School fans focused their attentions on former Wildcat running back and linebacker Sergio Kindle as he played one of his last collegiate games in a Longhorn uniform.

However, the inspiration behind the evening's festivities could be found in the words of a letter, titled "Gustavo's Plans," dated Sept. 11, 2003. A copy was laid out on the tables, for anybody who wanted to read it.

Not many people have had such a clear plan at such a young age. Ipiña wanted to learn English, he wanted to be the first in his family to attend college, and one day he wanted to be an architect.

Ipiña was killed in a road-rage incident in 2004, one week before his senior year.

Taly Haffar was the prosecutor representing the DA's office in the case. Soon after the trial was over, Haffar and Hendricks established the GIMS.

Woodrow English as a second language teacher Marjorie Shaw was there from the beginning of Ipiña's high school days. She was Ipiña's teacher for three years, and remembers well his first day of school.

"Gustavo came to us his freshman year, he was about 13 maybe 14 ... just a baby," Shaw said.

From the first day, she knew he was special.

"He was just the best kid you could imagine, he was honorable and kind, decent and thoughtful ... and very funny," she said, smiling.

Her smile faded and tears welled up in her bright eyes as she described the day she learned of Ipiña's death.

It was devastating, she said, a day filled with denial and despair.

Five years later, she will scan another class of bright young faces, looking for potential candidates who will go on to interview with Haffar and Hendricks for the next Gustavo Ipiña Memorial Scholarship.

But she will never forget where it all began.

"I have a picture of him on my desk at school and I think about him every day."

The GIMS fund has backed scholarships for six Woodrow graduating seniors since its inception in 2005. ■

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Gustavo Ipina
period 4
English II

Woodrow Wilson
September 11, 2003

Gustavo's Plans

My name is Gustavo Ipina. Now I'm living with my family in Dallas, Texas. My family think that my goal is only to learn English and have a simple work for the rest of my life, but they are wrong. My goal is to learn English, study at college and be an architect. I know that that will be hard, but I will.

I know the goal I want is hard, but I will work very hard in summer school to get some money to pay for the college. Also I think that I will get a part time job after college in a restaurant or in a bar, as a bar tender. It will be difficult, but that is the goal what I want to do.

All of my family will be proud of me because I will be the first one in my family that will finish the college. I will feel happy when I ~~will~~ have a job, and I will be more happy when I have my first check. I think that all my dreams will be complete when I am an architect.

I think that others will ^{be proud} pride of me. And some of them will follow my goal.

Luke Chesmore
Ipina's letter



Luke Chesmore

Woodrow class of '76 alum Kyle Rains and ESL teacher Marjorie Shaw pose at GIMS silent auction table behind a signed Tim Brown football. Brown is a Woodrow grad and Hiesman trophy winner.

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