

# The Quad

Monday, April 26, 2010

## SECTIONS

Front Page

News

Op-Ed

Features

Entertainment

Sports

## ONLINE EXTRAS

RSS Feeds

Blogs

Classified Ads

Music Calendar

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Login

Letter to the Editor

Message Board

Events Calendar

## INFORMATION

About The Quad

Meet Our Staff

Publication Schedule

Advertising

Back Issues

Search

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Home &gt; News

## Phi Sigma Pi raises awareness for safe driving

Sarah Grugal

Issue date: 3/22/10 Section: News

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Page 1 of 2 next &gt;

Casey Feldman, a twenty-one year old student from Fordham University and an award winning journalist, was killed by a distracted driver while walking across a crosswalk on July 17, 2009 in Ocean City, NJ. Casey is now an example of how detrimental distracted driving can be, and she has been the focus of attention for members of Phi Sigma Pi at West Chester University for a great deal of time now.



Phi Sigma Pi President, Amber Staska, was a good friend of Casey's, and wanted to honor her life. In order to honor Casey, Phi Sigma Pi ran with an idea presented by Staska and set out to raise awareness about distracted driving and pedestrian safety, as well as to raise money in honor of Casey. Although Casey was not a West Chester University student, several of her friends and her brother's friends attend the University, making the event something that hits close to home for several students.

"We wanted to give back to the community, get our name out there and celebrate Casey's life," Staska said. "We want people to know Casey's story and that those types of accidents are preventable."

In their efforts, Phi Sigma Pi campaigned throughout the week at the crosswalks in front of Sykes Student Union for pedestrians to use the sidewalks as well as for those driving through the heavy traffic area to slow down and pay attention.

"The response from people on campus was fantastic," Phi Sigma Pi members Denise Cavanaugh and Lindsay Schruhl commented. "People were sharing similar stories with us, asking more about the cause, and wanted us to donate ideas on how to make the campus a safer place."

On Saturday, March 20, Phi Sigma Pi held a benefit concert in the ballrooms of Sykes Student Union in honor of Casey Feldman. Admission was a five dollar donation at the door and once inside, concert goers could enjoy live music from artists The Hint, Chris D'Esposito and DNA, as

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well as snacks and refreshments. Those who attended also had the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets, t-shirts, bracelets and bumper magnets.

At the beginning of the concert, Casey's parents, Denise Anderson-Feldman and Joel Feldman, said a few words to celebrate Casey's life, and to thank all of those who helped put the event together and raise awareness.

Mrs. Anderson-Feldman commented that Casey was an average college student, just like the majority in attendance, and continued the thought by saying "We could be gone in a matter of minutes because of someone being distracted. It could have been anyone." What Mrs. Anderson Feldman also made a point to mention was that the main goal was to raise awareness and remember everything that was so great about Casey, including her big heart and commitment to service.

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- Advertising
- Back Issues
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Mr. Feldman took his opportunity to give thanks, as well as to educate the audience about a campaign taking place on March 31 that goes from Newark, NJ through Cherry Hill, NJ and ends in Ocean City, NJ. The campaign, which promotes the new pedestrian law in the state of New Jersey, will use Casey Feldman's story as its advertisement. The law that it promotes, starting April 1, is that the driver of a vehicle must stop and remain stopped at the crosswalk.

"Before this happened, I'd check my cell phone while driving," Mr. Feldman admitted. "I've done those things, but I don't anymore."

Because of the love Casey had for community service and the involvement Phi Sigma Pi has with community service, those in attendance had the opportunity to sign up to participate in future service activities around their community. People were able to sign up to be placed on a mailing list to do service in conjunction with Phi Sigma Pi, and were also able to sign the No Phone Zone Pledge, helping to put an end to distracted driving. Phi Sigma Pi plans on sending the signatures and a video of the event to Oprah Winfrey due to her promotion of the No Phone Zone Pledge.

"I'm truly touched," Staska said of the night. "Everything turned out great."

The money raised from admissions, in conjunction with the items available once inside the concert, enabled Phi Sigma Pi to raise a total of approximately \$1200 to be equally distributed between the Main Line Animal Rescue, the Partnership for Safe Driving and the Sarnelli House, all services which Casey herself would have supported.

There is a constant effort to do things in memory of Casey Feldman. There is currently a Casey Feldman Network established to share experiences and make plans to honor her memory. The Casey Feldman Memorial Foundation has been established to help other's realize their dreams. For more information about how you could get involved and help the cause, please visit [www.caseyfeldman.com](http://www.caseyfeldman.com), and ask yourself: "Because of Casey, what will you do?"

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