

The Craig Zolotorow Memorial Scholarship has been established to keep the memory of Craig living with a \$500.00 per year scholarship to a non-paid student currently involved in the student newspaper THE HCC TIMES, who is planning to continue in the journalism/communications area after leaving Howard Community College*. The student must have completed 2 semesters; financial need is preferred.

**(rated among the top 4 community colleges in the U.S. by the Washington Post, Wed, Aug 30, 2016).*

Checks should be made payable to:

Howard Community College Educational Foundation, Inc.

In the memo line designate

The Craig Zolotorow Memorial Scholarship

Howard Community College Educational Foundation, Inc

10901 Little Patuxent Parkway

Columbia, Maryland 21044

A donation in any amount is greatly appreciated. All donations are tax deductible.

Craig Justin Zolotorow had been a humanitarian all his life using his gifts of speaking and writing to help those in need. He was a Journalism major and a featured writer on the college newspaper, *The HCC Times*, when his health allowed. Craig took a day off from classes in 2008 to testify before Congress in the House of Representatives as a patient speaker on health issues.

Craig was the original "Come Back Kid" having proven to be a strong fighter and winner over illnesses throughout his life. At his death on January 12, 2015 Craig was a 20 year cancer survivor. He survived an accidental medication induced heart attack, acute renal failure and respiratory distress when a nurse gave him a quadruple dose of another patient's very dangerous medication in 2005 and recovered from meningitis three years later. Craig's diagnoses started at age 2 with Common Variable Immunodeficiency requiring monthly infusions of Gammaglobulin for his lifetime. At age 10 during chemo, Endocrine diagnoses were added. During a bout of pneumonia, intestinal infection and severe sepsis his kidneys permanently shut down. Dialysis had been considered by his doctors as *not the best option* for him. The original goal: Transplant before dialysis would be necessary. Unfortunately, Dialysis became necessary first and Craig didn't make it to transplant. He valiantly fought sepsis eight times from April 2004 until his organs failed in January 2015.

As a teenager, Craig was the main fundraising speaker for the Johns Hopkins Children's Center. He was the keynote patient speaker before 2000 attendees at the 2001 Rite Aid National Convention. We were told donations to children's hospitals rose 30% after his speech at that year's convention. He appeared for years on the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Radiothons and Telethons. (Craig served as the CMN's 2002 National Ambassador from Maryland.)

As Maryland's Ambassador to the CMN we went to Washington and Disney World with the 49 other state Ambassadors. There was one little girl who was unable to walk or talk and

mostly ignored by the other kids. As we were walking by the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial, we noticed her parents wheeling her in her wheel chair. Craig went over to her, kneeled down and told her she was a hero and asked if he could shake her hand. She smiled excitedly as she gladly gave him her shaking hand. My son had empathy for all disabled children and adults.

On December 10, 2013 we lost the love and unwavering emotional support of our cherished father/husband, Mike Zolotorow, who passed away after 8 years of disabling heart disease. Mike walked into the den, said I feel dizzy, sat down and died. I was in shock, but my **“super hero”** Craig jumped up, punched Mike’s chest several times and started breathing into his mouth, trying to save his Dad’s life! Craig and Mike were father and son and best friends.

After his father’s funeral, Craig’s health rapidly declined. By April, he was on Kidney dialysis. He went to dialysis every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for 3-4 hour treatments. Dialysis caused him to be exhausted and have attacks of itching that drove him crazy! Because of his immune deficiency he kept getting sepsis infections from the site of the tube in his chest. The tube had to be changed surgically, either inpatient or outpatient, six times. He would end up in the hospital for several weeks, then home for one or two weeks, then back in the hospital with sepsis again and again.

In September 2014, Craig had seizures lasting 3 days and was transferred from HCGH to Hopkins where he was unconscious for two weeks. He was seen by most of the specialties at Hopkins and I was given very little hope. I went home and cried every night. While Craig was still unconscious, I said “Craig, Please fight, you’re all I’ve got, I need you.” And he miraculously shook his head! He heard me! I had hope. Within a few days he could say his name and lift his legs about 8” off the bed. His cardiologist who witnessed it thought that was amazing considering his condition. I asked everyone on my email list and Facebook page to send positive energy or pray for Craig. Within a week my “Come Back Kid” walked out of the hospital with me!

On January 7, two days after I was discharged from the hospital for chemotherapy treatment of breast cancer I received a call from the Intensive Care doctor. She told me she didn’t like to say this to a mother over the phone, but there was now no hope and I needed to come to the hospital and room in with Craig. He was able to have a short conversation, but he was in pain and needed doses of painkillers every 2-3 hours. The next 2 days, he was only able to say a couple of words at a time. Several friends came to the hospital every day. My friend sang Craig’s favorite Beatles songs to him while he silently, but with all the energy he had left, drummed along. The following two days he was just staring! But he kept reaching up as if to grab something, then his arm would fall to his side from exhaustion. I believe he saw his father and was reaching out for him! On Sunday afternoon, the fifth day, I held his hand and told Craig, “I am ok and I will be ok. You can go to your Dad anytime you want”. At 4:00a.m. Monday, January 12, he was gone. My “Come Back Kid” would not be coming back this time. He was laid to rest next to his father on January 16, 2015.

Phyllis Zolotorow