

Michael David Greene Memorial Scholarship

Janet and David Greene established the **Michael David Greene Memorial Scholarship** at East Tennessee Foundation in memory of their son.

In the words found on the website about Michael's scholarship, www.mdgscholarship.com, "Michael David Greene entered Farragut High School (FHS) as a freshman in August 1992. He played the trumpet in the FHS Marching Band and Concert Band. He was a member of the FHS Junior Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, FHS Math Team and FHS Swim Team where he earned a Varsity letter. He was an avid sports fan who enjoyed watching all sports and who played baseball and basketball and swam on teams in the Farragut community. He was a member of St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church where he served as a crucifer and was a member of the Youth Group.

On May 20, 1993, at age 14, Michael was diagnosed with a glioblastoma multiforme, a malignant tumor which, because of its location in his brainstem, was inoperable. He began a very difficult course of treatment which included intensive chemotherapy and radiation. For the next 16 months, he underwent endless therapies, tests, and transfusions. He never complained and he never gave up. Michael died at age 16 on September 25, 1994, with his family at his side. He will always inspire us by how he lived his life with quiet courage, fierce determination, and great dignity."

After deciding to honor Michael's life with a scholarship, the Greens met with a personal friend who told them about East Tennessee Foundation (ETF). They decided to establish the scholarship at ETF because they wanted to ensure that it would be on-going. "We won't be here forever, but ETF will," explains Janet.

Beginning with the 1994-95 school year, a scholarship has been presented by the Michael David Greene Fund of the East Tennessee Foundation to a Farragut High School college-bound senior who is or has been a member of the FHS Band, has a minimum GPA of 3.0, and who exhibits Michael's qualities of real and fervent effort, kindness, courage, determination, and dignity.

Janet continues to say, "The scholarship is a legacy to help students who share Michael's qualities to go out into the world and make it a better place, because if Michael were here, the world would be a better place."

When asked to describe the most satisfying part of having a scholarship at ETF, Janet replies, "Honoring Michael and honoring young people like Michael who will do good in the world." By awarding these scholarships the Greens are honoring Michael's memory. The students who receive the scholarship certificates with their own and Michael's name on them, and whose name is engraved on the plaque which hangs on the band room wall, will remember him; FHS band members who attend the annual band banquet at which the scholarships are announced will remember him.

The scholarship recipients are not the only ones to benefit from the Michael David Greene Memorial Scholarship. The FHS community, especially the band students and teachers, are affected by the existence of this scholarship. Band teachers who taught Michael, as well as those who never knew him are moved by his example and by the example of his parents who so generously give back to the community of which Michael was a part. When Janet and David approach the stage to announce the scholarship winners at the band banquet, the previously noisy room of over 200 students, parents and teachers is silent. You can hear a pin drop. Scholarship recipients thank the Greens with tears in their eyes. Because financial need is not one of the scholarship criteria, the students' gratitude is not about the monetary assistance. They and their parents are truly honored to be chosen, and express real respect for Michael and how he lived his life. Perhaps the effect of Michael's scholarship is best expressed by one of the scholarship recipients, "Thank you so much for selecting me as a recipient of the Michael David Greene Memorial Scholarship. I feel proud to know that I am part of a tradition that lets people know what a great person Michael was. I am honored that I was chosen for having some of his remarkable traits...I plan on

remembering his strength and will when I face difficult times.”

The words on the website conclude, “Michael did his best each day he lived. His example has taught many that the question each of us faces in life is not, what would you do if you were going to die, but what would you do if you were going to live?”

The Michael David Greene Memorial Scholarship honors a remarkable young man, provides a legacy of helping future young people to make a difference, and serves as a model for giving back to the community in which we live.