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You Are the Artist of your Life

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When I run, I have developed self-identifiable mental mile markers: the duck house – mile 1, Buddy the white Poodle and Tammy on their front porch – mile 2 ... each mile a point I know, a mile I expect to be in place, a tangible sure. The picnic table by the leaning Elm ... but, last week the Elm fell after our yearly winter blast. One of my expected markers of place, a permanent marker, was simply gone.

Michael Gregorash passed away Jan. 21, 2024. Michael, the primary Student Government Association advisor and director of the Student Activity Fee Advisory Committee (SAFAC), was the Elm I ran to for **Forces** each year, to be renewed, approved for financing “as worthy” of student funds.

SAFAC is a very necessary and worthy vetting for all special activities through the college.

Michael's support was unwavering. He continuously, diligently built panels with students and other college representatives to make sure each year that all SAFAC funded projects were solid, real experiences in multifarious arenas, meeting the rubric for forward-moving student development and enrichment.

Last year I missed the final meeting of my SAFAC funding request. Ironically, I was delivering my own father's eulogy. When I returned, he simply said, “When you are ready, we can meet. Life happens.”

This year, **Forces**, approved and funded by SAFAC – via Michael – is to be unveiled the same week as the total solar eclipse across North Texas. Michael's profound gesture of grace to recognize my father's passing is a sort of acknowledgement of a blacked-out sun, a moment to mourn. However, it is also a “constant” of the college to shine again after the dark – not slighting the contributors, the recorders of our Collin history, by connecting the past with the present and those to come in the chain-linked future.

“Every man's death diminishes me,” English poet John Donne once said. Thus, I dedicate this issue to Michael for being human in a very human moment. He was one piece of a lengthy process. Without his contribution, that piece, the dream of the collective us in the journal and our observations would be lost like grand thoughts in the night, the kind of thoughts we are confident we'll “remember in the morning.” Those are the grand thoughts we lose because we simply don't record them. Thanks to Michael, this year, and those before, have been recorded by a choir of voices and stamped in time as a tangible artifact reminding us “The Sun also Rises.”

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Forces Editor - R. Scott Yarbrough

**You Are the
Artist of your Life**
Kaci French

