

Who John was...

John Paul Gustafson was born to Ray and Jane on February 19, 1985 in Omaha, Nebraska. As the youngest brother of Kay, Joe, Raymond, and Annie; John completed the family. He would do anything to make you smile and laugh; he had a warm heart full of love for everyone he knew. John was special to all who knew him, especially to those who knew him well, but also to all of his acquaintances because of the consistent kindness he showed to others.

John was the best little brother, son, friend, and especially grandson. During his whole life, John spent a lot of time with his Grandma. And when she was sick with Parkinson's disease, he took care of her; stopping by her house everyday to help her during his high school years. He mowed the lawn for her, bought groceries or would just spend time playing cards with her. Few high school students develop such a close and important relationship with a grandparent. This giving and caring quality in John made him very special to Grandma and his family; and unique and outstanding person to all who knew him.

Not only was John a caring and good person, he was very passionate about being successful and he always followed through when given the opportunity to help someone or create value somehow. John demonstrated dedication to his schools, community, and church. He worked to make a difference in this world, cared about his future and wanted to be as successful as he could. He would ask himself what he wanted out of life, set his goals and then strive to accomplish them. He took the words "carpe diem" to heart and tried to make the most out of his limited youth. And he did.

John had a future full of feasible entrepreneurial ideas and success. Outside of school, John's official hobbies included exploring new technologies, studying how the economy impacts the financial markets, and rigorously exercising nearly everyday by lifting weights and running. And with regards to studying how the economy impacts the financial markets, John was more knowledgeable about the financial markets than most adults in the United States. He enjoyed attending Berkshire Hathaway's annual shareholder meetings. And he found innovative ways to understand the volatility and potential value in the equities markets specifically, but was interested and knowledgeable about the U.S. financial markets and its components overall.

John was an entrepreneur at heart and in action. When he was very little he grew a garden and sold his tomatoes, peppers, lettuce and peaches to his Grandma and the neighbors. As he grew up he mowed lawns, shovelled snow, and painted addresses on street curbs, averaging \$18/hr. During his high school years and freshman year of college, John started numerous little businesses and had many creative and potentially profitable ideas. John would have been a very successful entrepreneur by his mid to late 20s. Eventually he would have liked to take his acquired knowledge and experience and help our country by holding a public office in hopes to better his community and improve some of society's problems. John would have made a difference in our great country.

John was ranked 9th out of 401 graduating seniors in the North High class of 2003. One of John's favorite activities at North was the Student Council because he was able to bond with the other students and build lasting friendships from this experience. He also ran Varsity Track his freshman and sophomore years, and for North's Varsity Cross Country team all four years at North. He was on the Principal's Honor Roll, Principal's Advisory Board, was President of Future Business Leaders of America, along with many other clubs and activities. Important to John his senior year, was the *Academy of Finance* Music Video that he created/wrote/directed and edited, and its rap about the AOF and its students. He thought that mixing popular culture with business would not only be fun, but get more students interested in the important world of business.

Upon graduation from North, John chose to attend Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, and was one of twenty national winners of Citigroup's \$20,000 AOF scholarship. He knew he wanted to go to California for school and John enjoyed his freshman year at Loyola. He made a number of wonderful friends, and had many good times that year. He loved the weather in California, the palm trees, and decided to stay the summer because he felt the opportunities in the business world there were broader and more challenging than those in Omaha. John had just finished his freshman year at Loyola and he had begun working at Wells Fargo Bank. This bank had hired him into a highly selective program, which would have involved taking the Series 7 and Series 66 exams to become certified to be a securities broker.

On the evening of May 17, 2004, John was simply driving his motorcycle down a city boulevard in Los Angeles, when a woman going the other direction made an illegal left turn in front of him. She took his life. John is why traffic laws exist, and why it is important to obey them. Please remember John every time you get in your car to drive, and just follow the rules. Please.

There is nothing those care for John can do to change the woman's illegal actions on that night. We started this scholarship simply to remember John and to help another young person working to achieve their goals and dreams, since John will not be able to. This scholarship will help us to forever remember the wonderful, successful, caring person John was.