



Zachary Richard Podkul

April 19, 1995 - May 14, 2020

Zachary R. Podkul was born April 19, 1995 and went to eternal peace on Thursday, May 14, 2020. Zachary graduated with Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Michigan Technological University. Beloved son of Richard and Catherine and Loving brother of Gabrielle. Dear grandson of Frank (the late Grace) Castronova and Josephine Bannhard and the late Walter and Nellie Podkul. Dearest godson of Carl and Linda Daleo and nephew of Maria Castronova, Darrell and Pam Harrison, Dolores Missovich, Loretta Francis and the late Paul Podkul. Dear cousin of Robert and David Missovich, Natalie Makowski, Candice and Jewel Grimski and Kristopher and Matthew Harrison and pet companion Buddy.

Zachary shared the loved of cooking, outdoors, nature, writing and poetry. He had a curiosity for discovering how objects worked. His intelligence will inspire us to never stop learning. He had a passion for knowledge that was enriched through his journey with Christ. His laughter, wittiness, and courage will give us peace in moments of sorrow. We all have beautiful memories that we will cherish closely in our hearts forever.

In lieu of flowers, an Education Scholarship fund will be honored in Zachary's name so his memory will not be forgotten. If your wishes desire flowers, please send to Wasik Funeral Home, Shelby Twp., MI.

Following funeral services on Saturday there will be a funeral procession to Resurrection Cemetery for a Committal service and entombment. A celebration of Zach's life will be scheduled at a future date.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **22**. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Fellowship Church
12875 14 Mile Road
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Instate

MAY **23**. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Fellowship Church
12875 14 Mile Road
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Outdoor Funeral Service

MAY **23**. 10:30 AM (ET)

Fellowship Church
12875 14 Mile Road
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Tribute Wall

“ ZRP Memorial Scholarship Challenge: Candy Mold Design- April 19, 2023

For the Third Annual Zachary Richard Podkul (ZRP) Memorial Scholarship Challenge, Mechanical Engineering Technology (MET) students honored their fellow Husky's fondness for Michigan Tech, machine design, cooking—and of course, chocolate!

Six MET students in the Department of Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering Technology rose to the challenge to design custom chocolates.

The students began their thought process on what to design late last year when the contest was announced at the end of fall semester 2022.

They started out by creating a 3D CAD model of their design. Each chocolate could be no larger than 2"x2"x1". Next, a 3D print of the model was created in the MMET Department's Additive Manufacturing facility, using the Stratasys Fortus 400 MC, which uses Fused Deposition Modeling (FDM) to extrude plastic filament.

The students then each built a flask from poster board strips. The flask held their 3D printed patterns (the positive). Food-safe silicone was poured over the top to cast a silicone mold (the negative).

Once set, students removed their silicone mold from the flask, filled the new mold with melted chocolate, chilled it all to delicious perfection, then popped out their chocolate confections to enjoy—and also to be judged as part of the challenge.

MMET faculty members judged the entries by the following criteria:

3D CAD Model—Utilizes sketches fully constrained with parametric features

Originality—Unique and innovative design representative of

Michigan Tech

Quality—Uniformity, strength and surface finish

Manufacturability—Ability for chocolate to be easily formed in mold

Detail—The chocolate conforms to the mold intended design

the winner are...

1st Place - Michael Havens \$1,000 scholarship

2nd Place - Justin Hannah \$ 500 scholarship

3rd Place - David Watkins \$ 250 scholarship

According to the Podkul's, everyone was a winner!

They also gave gift certificates to the other three MET student who submitted entries: Beaumont Ujlaky, Teresa Hoving, and RJ Slater.

The Podkuls were able to meet all of the students in person who participated. "We were amazed at their designs and the level of detail," said Cathy. "And we especially enjoyed hearing the thought process that went into their designs."

During the Challenge award presentation, Zachary's mom, Cathy shared a bit more about her late son, Zachary, who was born eight weeks premature and fought for his health his entire life. He was diagnosed with Crohn's disease at the young age of 10, and spent the next 15 years of his life battling the disease.

"From the beginning Zachary had a mechanical mindset," she said. "As a young boy, he was always inquisitive and curious about how things worked."

With this passion for knowledge he enrolled in Michigan Tech and graduated in 2018 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology.

Cathy describes Zachary as quiet, conservative, intelligent, original, sensitive, and witty, with a great sense of humor. At times, he was strong-willed and determined, too, which of course made him all the

more lovable.

“We miss Zachary so much. It’s such a rewarding feeling to support this and to be able to present the awards on his birthday (April 19). My husband and I are grateful to Dr. Irwin, Bryant Weathers, and the MMET faculty and staff for their time and dedication to making these challenges successful for three years in a row.”

Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 04:04 PM

CP

“ 30 files added to the album ZRP Memorial Scholarship Challenge: Candy Mold Design- April 19, 2023



Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 03:50 PM

“ ZRP Memorial Scholarship Challenge: Cookie Cutter Contest - April 19, 2022

The second annual Zachary Richard Podkul Memorial Scholarship Challenge at Michigan Tech has come to its (delicious) completion.

Students in the Department of Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering Technology set out to design a cookie cutter, one that the department could send out to prospective students, employers and alumni. Students were also required to provide an NX CAD assembly model of the process used to manufacture the cookie cutter.

If you ever wondered how cookie cutters are made? This serve as the inspiration for the challenge. The sponsors, Richard and Cathy Podkul, wanted to honor their late son Zachary with a design contest that incorporated his passions for both cooking and machine design. The contest was announced in late fall semester, and students began their thought process on what to design.

During the spring semester, sophomore mechanical engineering technology (MET) students enroll in a parametric 3D CAD modeling course that teaches how to use Siemens NX CAD modeling software. Many of the students enrolled in this parametric modeling course submitted entries for the cookie cutter contest.

To help get them started, students were provided with a 3D CAD assembly model as a guide for size and configuration. Later this design was substituted with a wrench shape to use as a prototype—something that could be used by students to test and see how the cookie cutter assembly operates prior to submitting their own entries.

MMET machine shop student workers—with assistance from Master Machinist Scott Meneguzzo and Operations/Facilities Supervisor Nick Hendrickson—produced a working model of the cookie cutter

manufacturing fixture. After two design iterations of the 3D printed pushers connected to the clamps, the first, successful wrench-shaped “test” cookie cutter was produced.

The material used for the cutter is a thin strip of brass, cut to the precise circumference of the cutter outline. It is then formed into a hoop, spot welded together, and tempered for formability. Each clamp is manually operated and each has a 2,500 pound holding force. The cookie cutter form in the center was 3D printed on the Fortus 400MC Stratasys 3D Printer, located in the MMET department’s Polymeric Additive Manufacturing Facility

Many interesting cookie cutters designs were evaluated by the contest judges for the following qualities:

- 1) Parametric—3D CAD model(s) utilizes sketches fully constrained with parametric features and fully constrained parts in the assembly;*
- 2) Originality—a unique and innovative design;*
- 3) Optimized—minimized use of material, while not compromising strength;*
- 4) Manufacturability—the part’s ability to be easily formed in manufacturing fixture; and finally*
- 5) Ease of use—the manufacturing design is ergonomic and simple to use.*

The results? Three students tied for second place in the contest. They were Ben Engle, who designed a gear-shaped cookie cutter; Luz Aparicio, who designed a lightbulb, and Patrick Moeller, who designed a Lift Bridge cookie cutter.

In the end, the contest yielded the first-place winning cookie cutter, Hunter Wilke’s design, also in the shape of the Portage Lift Bridge.

CP

“ *The ZRP MET Design Competition April 19, 2021*

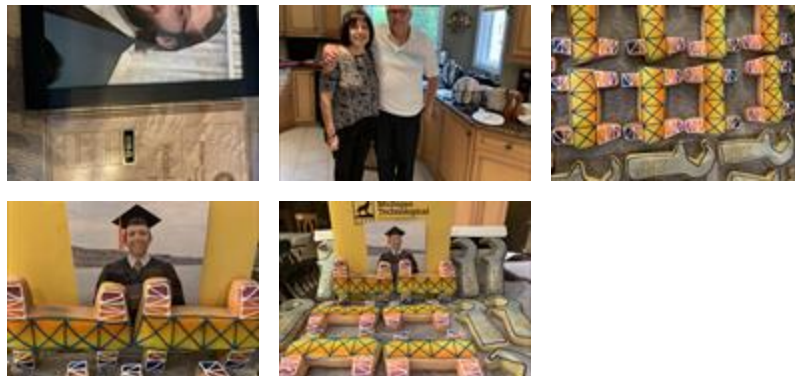
Zachary’s family also supports the annual Zachary Richard Podkul Design Competition. Each year, the contest winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Contest rules stipulate that students must use NX CAD software to design their content submission. Once selected by a panel of judges, the top-rated design is then 3D printed using the Stratasys Fortus 400 MC which uses Fused Deposition Modeling (FDM) process of extruding plastic filament.

The challenge: design an item that can be used to decrease the spread of the COVID-19 virus, something that can be worn, hooked to a backpack or clothing, or easily carried on one’s person. Hunter Wilke was declared the winner in 2021 for his “Door Opening Device.”

Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 03:25 PM

CP

“ *17 files added to the album ZRPI MET Memorial Annual Scholarship and Cookie Design Contest-2022*



Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 03:16 PM

CP

“ *Zachary Richard Podkul Engineering Memorial Scholarship. Dec. 2020*

Richard T. and Catherine F. Podkul established an endowed scholarship in honor of their dear son, Zachary Richard Podkul. This scholarship is intended to ease the financial burden for students who share Zachary's MTU experience and who also live with a chronic health condition. He will always be remembered by his Michigan Tech Family and Alumni.

Zachary shared a love of cooking, the outdoors and nature, writing and poetry. As a young boy, he had a curiosity for discovering how things worked. With this passion for knowledge, he enrolled in Michigan Technological University and graduated in 2018 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology. Zachary loved the Upper Peninsula and his best times were at Michigan Tech. His intelligence inspired others to never stop learning.

You are welcome to support Zachary's endowment scholarship to remember & honor him @ <https://www.mtu.edu/mmet/department/giving/>

Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 02:59 PM

CP

“ 5 files added to the album ZRP Memorial Scholarships at MTU



Catherine Podkul - November 16, 2024 at 02:49 PM

CD

“ Rich..... I'm so sorry to hear of the loss of your son, Zachary. My heart and prayers go out to you, your wife and your family.
Colleen (Agnello) DeMaria



Colleen DeMaria - May 29, 2020 at 12:34 PM

MW

“ 1 file added to the album Zachary's Slide Show



Michael Wasik - May 28, 2020 at 02:43 PM

AA

In God's arms you can gently rest. Rest in peace

Ali Alkafawi - May 29, 2020 at 04:04 PM

GP

“ *In loving Memory of Zachary Podkul*

Gabby Podkul - May 24, 2020 at 02:36 PM

CC

“ *My memories of Zach will have a special place in my heart forever...from "Light On", to his funny response to our question of why college in the UP?... "Alaska didn't make me an offer", to the beautiful dinner he cooked for us that we shared with the whole family - i will never forget that night how clear it was that he deeply loved his little sister!, to some wonderful recent adult Zach conversations...He was kind and loving and quiet and profound...and wicked funny! YOU ARE LOVED ZACHARY PODKUL! And will be remembered...Forever in our hearts...Rest in Peace...xoxo, Aunt Cathy*

Cathy Culhane - May 23, 2020 at 05:29 AM

ML

“ As I learned of the passing of Zach, there just aren't words to express the deep sorrow that resonates from my heart. I met Zach in 5th grade. The first year Beacon Tree Elementary was open. I was the one that was lucky enough to be his teacher. There were so many traits about Zach that made him a wonderful student, respectful, quiet (in a good way), and kind. My favorite memory is during the World in Motion enrichment through GM. Students worked with GM engineers to build a Jet Toy car in teams. I can remember Zach tinkering with his car to make it work better and fix the problems the engineers helped to identify. He never gave up and I think he had fun too. The world will forever be changed by the loss of Zach. When I see all of the memories and pictures of lives that were touched by Zach, it is clear to see the impact just one person can have on so many lives is unmeasurable. May the treasured memories shared with Zach bring some peace to the family. My prayers are with everyone in the Podkul family.
With love, Mrs. Lovell

Marilyn Lovell - May 22, 2020 at 11:58 AM

TS

“ I have watched Zach grow up from tying sailor knots in Mr. Tim's yard to high school moment's (and drama). Moving day at Michigan Tech - winter carnival till our last conversation of his tremendous faith walk with the Lord. I was impressed with his knowledge of scripture and how openly he shared his faith walk. Zach was always polite -kind and very respectful. Rest now in peace. Hurt no more. For you walked through heavens gates and one day will welcome us home.

Theresa Staniszewski - May 22, 2020 at 09:01 AM

JD

“ *My heart is so full of sadness for Zach’s family and close friends. You are each in my heart and prayers and I will hold you there forever. I knew Zach as a student at Bracon Tree. Kind. Honest. Quiet. Three attributes that stand-out to me from so long ago. His smile was wide and his intellect deep. The world is forever changed by his life, and will never be the same by his loss. -Ms. Dobis*

Janice Dobis - May 21, 2020 at 01:39 PM

RC

Very nice Janice. He was a friend of one of my cousins.

richard chouinard - May 21, 2020 at 03:05 PM

CP

“ *1 file added to the album Zachary's Videos*



Cathy Podkul - May 21, 2020 at 12:04 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Zachary Richard Podkul.*



May 21, 2020 at 09:24 AM

PH

“ I will truly miss my dear nephew Zach. He was always a joy to have to our home and cottage. Always respectful and loved to just suck in all the good times and fun. We spent many fun New Years Eves with Zach also. There will be a true emptiness in our lives and in future family events. My heart aches in sadness. We loved you so much.



Pam Harrison - May 20, 2020 at 09:15 PM

GP

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Gabrielle Podkul - May 20, 2020 at 04:30 PM

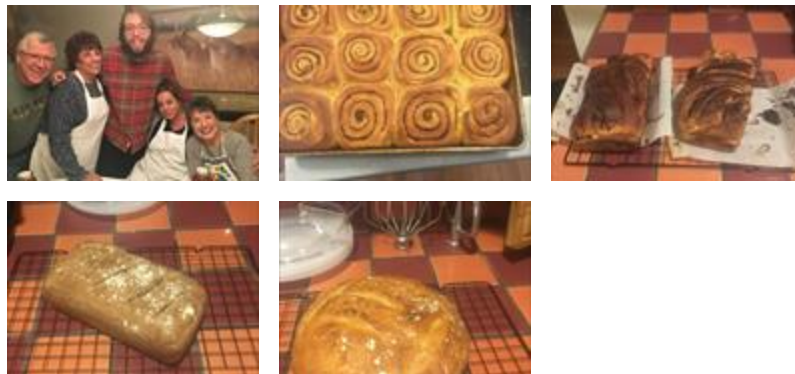
JH

“ *The news of this saddens me first and foremost. My condolences go out to his family and closest of friends with a heavy heart. I knew Zach from work, FCA. He was our summer intern for a few years. In that time, I got to know him, not just professionally, but personally. I found out he loved to fix and tinker around with things, or just plain out working with his hands. He showed me his home furnace set up for his forging hobby and how excited he was about it. He always made sure to ask for the dad joke of the day and regardless how bad they were, he always appreciated them. It was a joy getting to know him outside the workplace as well. I'm glad I was able to have a beer or tow and cheers with him. He will always be Pod"Kewl" with me. Was an inside joke because he was in fact pretty dang cool, just slang and it fit. He will be missed, and the world is a little dimmer without his brightness... May you rest well and keep an eye over all of us. Farewell buddy, try and keep those wings of yours free from oils and soot, because we all know you forged your own halo....*

Joshua Hall - May 20, 2020 at 04:03 PM

CP

“ 104 files added to the album Zachary Memories



Catherine Podkul - May 20, 2020 at 12:45 PM

CP

“ 38 files added to the album Zachary Memories



Catherine Podkul - May 20, 2020 at 11:16 AM

CP

“ 41 files added to the album Zachary Memories



Catherine Podkul - May 20, 2020 at 10:56 AM

RR

“ Zach and I shared some great memories growing up together. We’d ride our bikes around for hours in the summers, we’d play with air soft guns and go explore the woods, we’d play red alert 2 on his computer and eat pizza. I will remember Zach for his strong character, his integrity, and his sense of humor. He was a great and trusted friend, and an exemplary son and brother. My prayers are with the Podkul family.

Ryan Rozwadowski - May 20, 2020 at 12:56 AM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Zachary Richard Podkul.



May 19, 2020 at 11:33 PM

MB

“ I met Zach earlier in my college career, unfortunately I did not get to spend as much time with him as I would like to have. Through the short time I knew him his kind soul was easily recognized. He was always a welcome addition to our club activities and made us laugh when he would come over and play games. I enjoyed when I’d end up running into him on campus and find out what he’s been up to, he somehow made the conversation feel important even if we were just chatting some small talk.

I hope you rest easy Zach, I will cherish the fond memories I have of you and we'll catch up again someday.

Matthew Bugajski - May 19, 2020 at 10:27 PM

CB

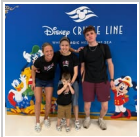
“ I will always hold onto the fond memories that I, and many others I'm certain, have of Zach. We met in our first year of college and immediately I found how kind, funny, and relaxed Zach was. He was the person you could easily strike up a meaningful conversation with on nearly any subject, and he was sure to make you laugh. We shared a love of the outdoors, and his heart beat with the pulse of the upper peninsula. His memory will live on, rest easy Zach.

Cade Bowman - May 19, 2020 at 08:33 PM



“ I met Zach my last semester at Michigan Tech. He was a housemate to my boyfriend and we shared a lot of good, fun memories and laughs during his time in the UP. He loved to cook and always made good pizza. I'm really happy I met him, and I'll cherish the memories we had. Rest In Peace, and fly high Zach. You will be missed dearly.

Katie Draves - May 19, 2020 at 08:21 PM



“ I was so saddened to hear the news today about the passing of Zach. He enlightened me with his conversations with every appointment we had together. I always looked forward to seeing him in my schedule and will truly miss seeing him. Such a great person with a big heart and inspiring mind. Thoughts and prayers for the family!

Sincerely,

Corinne (his hygienist)

Corinne Silvernail - May 19, 2020 at 08:11 PM

KF

“ Zachary was a thoughtful and kind young man. I have many memories of backyard playdates and breakfasts with Santa, and camping on up to well-deserved graduation parties. He was quiet but you could tell his mind was always working. Our hearts are breaking for your loss and just know that grandma is with him and taking care of him. I hope that knowing he is no longer in pain will comfort you during this awful time. Sending prayers to all of you...Much love, The Fallones

karen fallone - May 19, 2020 at 07:12 PM

KH

“ My most cherished memories of Zach are our late night conversations, usually by the bonfire. These would often go on for hours, but felt like a flash. I was always excited to see Zach, because I knew I would learn something and share a great discussion with a deeply caring human being. Zach was such a curious and insightful person with an intense interest in the world. Whether it was blacksmithing, history, politics, philosophy, poetry, or religion, Zach was ready to dig in. He was one of those people that when you talked to him, he was truly present and listening. He made you feel understood. Those talks are something I will always cherish and miss dearly. Hopefully, Zach is having a cigar or two with his heroes, they're in good company. - Kris

Kris Harrison - May 19, 2020 at 03:30 PM

RP

“ Words cannot express the sadness I feel about such a tremendous loss. Zachary was a wonderful and kind young man with a big beautiful smile. Sending many prayers and love to your your entire family. Rose Ann and Vince 🌹

Rose Ann Pittiglio - May 19, 2020 at 07:36 AM

TM

“ So very sad to hear about the loss of your son .I got the privilege to meet him at church he was in my Bible study an we all had lots of laughs with him ,I also got to cook with him in the kitchen he cooked 150 hamburgers that day he did a great job we worked good together,he said he maid one heck of a spaghetti sauce ,he will be missed I pray for your family may u feel God's love an peace at this time as u grieve the loss of your kind caring an generous son 🥺❤️

Tracie monforte - May 18, 2020 at 11:16 PM