

Jason Gillihan, M.D., was chair of the class of 2006.

Thanks to his class' donation, future students will have a new place to study.



Class gift

Even though students are working hard in classes, clerkships and interviews, they still give back to the School with a class gift.

The Class of 2006 donated \$1,500 from its account to purchase a study table to be placed in the future building of the SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute.

Each class works hard to raise money in their student account, selling items such as

candy bars and clothing. Much of that money is used for fun activities, including an annual 5K run in the spring, the year-book production, and events for senior week.

For his class' senior week, Jason Gillihan, M.D., class of '06, recalls a trip to a baseball game in Peoria, a picnic and a cocktail party. Even after all the fun, money still was left in the class account. "We wanted to give something to the

School that hadn't been given before," Dr. Gillihan says. And the class wanted to give something to benefit future students.

"Plus," he says, "We wanted to give something that will be here when we come back for our reunion.

"Most of our class knows somebody that has cancer. Giving to the cancer institute seemed like the right thing to do."

Annual Fund

Along with the contributions from alumni, the School of Medicine needs your financial help, too. Staff members, faculty, community members and businesses, please consider a charitable contribution to the 2006-07 Southern Illinois University Annual Fund.

Areas to give to include: the Student Resource Fund, which assists students with needed items and extra activities; the Dean's Excellence fund, which allows Dr. Dorsey to allocate

money to areas of the greatest need, such as research support, new equipment or the SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute. Any department at the School also welcomes contributions for endowments and projects.

Dr. Dorsey kicked off the 2006-07 annual alumni fund drive by sending an inspiring letter to all alumni. "To those who continually support the School, I thank you for your commitment and your generosity," says Dr. Dorsey. "If

this is your first time to make an annual gift, I appreciate your making this important decision on behalf of the school." The drive continues throughout the spring.

To contribute, use the attached envelope, donate online at www.siumed.edu/foundation or call Lisa McKennedy, director of annual giving, at 217-545-9402.

Gift of a lifetime

Donor posthumously shares the fruits of years of hard work

Bernie Eskridge was a hard worker. He had numerous jobs, from working for Sangamo Electric and Pillsbury Mills, to working for a caterer and being a seasonal employee at U.S. Postal Service.* Attorney Dwight H. O'Keefe, III met Bernie when Bernie was a night officer at Springfield City Hall, and the two became friends. "Bernie wrote his own epitaph," O'Keefe told *ASPECTS*. "He wrote that to those who asked him why he worked so hard, he would say, 'It's hell to be poor.'"

Bernie was unique, O'Keefe says warmly. "He was always immaculately dressed and courteous. But there were boundaries you didn't cross. He was always in charge. ... He was always friendly and had a million friends."

Mr. Eskridge passed away on Jan. 10, 2004, at the age of 92. His wife of 54 years, Annie, had

passed away 11 years earlier. They had no children.*

Like many grateful patients, Mr. Eskridge had arranged to leave money to medical institutions.

The surprise is, his lifetime of hard work and investing made Mr. Eskridge a millionaire.

Mr. Eskridge left \$450,000 to SIU School of Medicine and an equal amount to Friends of St. John's Hospital, Prairie Cardiovascular Center's Education and Research Cooperative received \$50,000.*

"Bernie believed Dr. James Dove saved his life," O'Keefe recalls. Dr. Dove, now retired from Prairie Cardiovascular, was a clinical professor of medicine at SIU.

"There's a great appreciation throughout the community for the School of Medicine,"

O'Keefe says. "I believe the average person feels a kinship to SIU. That's probably what

Bernie felt."

SIU School of Medicine's portion will go toward heart disease research.

"SIU School of Medicine is grateful for this donation," says Phillip Davis, Ph.D., interim director of the SIU Foundation. "It's hard-working people like Mr. Eskridge who are making the difference by donating to medical research."

While Mr. Eskridge's jobs weren't high paying or high profile, his legacy is proof that through hard work and dedication, anybody can make a difference.

"He was just a great guy," O'Keefe says of his friend. "I feel better having known him."

Contact the SIU School of Medicine Foundation to plan your gift.

**Additional Source:*

The State Journal-Register

Fun events raise funds for CMN

The Second Annual Fantastic Basket Raffle, held in October, was indeed fantastic, netting \$6,000 for Children's Miracle Network.

The raffle, coordinated by the SIU Fundraising committee, featured 44 baskets donated by the creative minds of SIU employees and community groups.

Basket themes included a pajama party basket, a tailgating basket, and a spa basket. The School of Medicine's Financial Affairs/OMB/OOTC Purchasing departments won the most creative basket award for their "Redneck Evening at Home" theme.

CMN received another \$800 from a holiday bus trip to Chicago, also coordinated by the SIU Fundraising Committee.

Dozens braved the cold December morning in the Windy City, with the option of visiting the King Tut exhibit at the Field Museum, eyeing the fish and mammals at the Shedd Aquarium, or taking in some Christmas shopping along Michigan Avenue.

Everyone enjoyed the sights of Chicago. Said one shopper, "It was a great way to kick off the holiday season, and it put me in the Christmas spirit."

For any Foundation question, credit card gifts, or comments about the School of Medicine, call our toll-free number:

1-877-HELPSOM (Help School of Medicine) / 1-877-435-7766.

www.siumed.edu/foundation.