



In August of 2000 Edie Heideman and her husband Mike took their son Adrian, a healthy 18-year-old, to California State University at Chico. Seven weeks later Adrian returned home in a body bag, a victim of alcohol poisoning at a fraternity initiation event. Adrian wasn't normally a big drinker; he succumbed to peer pressure and a culture of alcohol consumption that is endemic at many universities. Since Adrian's death, Edie has chosen to honor and memorialize her son by speaking out against the epidemic of hazing and binge drinking on college campuses, to help prevent future deaths. She as appeared on the 'Today Show' and testified before the California State Legislature about underage drinking.

Adrian was enthusiastic about rushing his fraternity. He told his parents that this was a fraternity focused on community service. On October 6th, 2000, Adrian was blindfolded and driven by a "brother" to the fraternity house. As part of an initiation ceremony, Adrian drank most of a 750-milliliter bottle of blackberry brandy. Soon after, intoxicated and stumbling, he fell, striking his head and vomiting. He was removed from the safety of the crowd to the isolation of a remote basement room. Some people claim to have checked on Adrian, but strippers had been hired as the evening's entertainment and almost everyone was too inebriated to assess his condition, even if they had checked on him.

It was only after a police officer cited a "minor in possession" on the fraternity house porch that one of the members yelled for everyone to come inside. There, they scattered throughout the home to warn everyone about the police being on the premises. It was then that someone chanced to come upon Adrian, who was blue, not breathing, and covered in vomit. All subsequent attempts at resuscitation failed. Adrian had vomited, which obstructed his airway, causing him to suffocate as the alcohol poisoning suppressed his choking reflex. If Adrian's fraternity brothers had known how to recognize the symptoms of alcohol poisoning and known the appropriate response, or if hazing and binge drinking hadn't been such an integral part of the fraternity initiation process, Adrian would still be alive today.

There are over 1400 alcohol-related student deaths each year. Adrian's harrowing story, told by Edie Heideman in her lecture 'One Last Drink', and illustrated with slides and a recording of the 911 call made on the night of Adrian's death, drives home the awful consequences of over-consumption that can turn a night of fun into a life-changing - or life-ending - event.

Edie Heideman is a world-ranked age-group triathlete. Since Adrian's death she has competed in honor of and in memory of Adrian.

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