

# THE XAVIER UNIVERSITY NEWSWIRE

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## Cop loses battle to leukemia

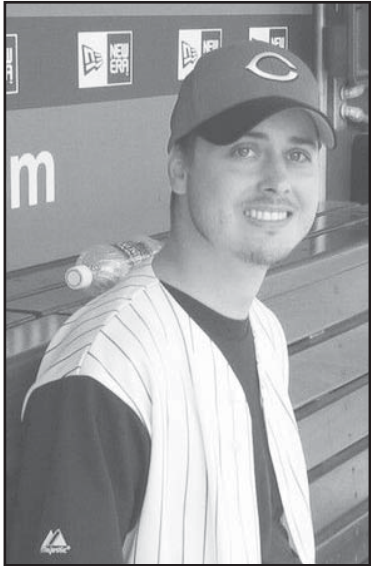


PHOTO COURTESY ENQUIRER.COM

Detective Jason Faulkner passed away last week after a two-year fight against leukemia.

RACHEL PETERS  
Senior News Editor

Local Cincinnati police officer Jason Faulkner, 30, died of complications from a December cord-blood transplant at University Hospital in Cleveland the evening of Jan. 24.

Faulkner battled acute lymphoblastic leukemia since January of 2005. Faulkner struggled to find a bone marrow transplant match for his leukocyte antigens.

Friends, family and co-workers organized donor recruit activities throughout the Greater Cincinnati area in September and organized a tissue testing at Xavier in the fall.

A non-exact donor match was eventually found from blood taken from the donated umbilical cords of newborn babies. The transplant was successful but pneumonia set in at the end of December due to a weakened immune system.

Faulkner was a member of the police department since 1998. He was an investigator who specialized in juvenile sexual abuse and physical abuse cases. Over a span of about eight years, he worked on more than 300 cases, which led to the arrests of more than 60 people.

The visitation was held on Tuesday night and a funeral mass will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 31 at St. Therese Church, with burial at Evergreen Cemetery following the funeral mass. A reception will follow at Southgate Community Center in Southgate.

## XU grad recovering from heart transplant

### ELDER TEACHER OPTIMISTIC AFTER SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

RACHEL PETERS  
Senior News Editor

After a month of prayers, tears and waiting from a community, Elder high school teacher, coach and Xavier alum Sean Tierney, 31, received a heart transplant and is on his way to recovery.

Tierney began struggling with heart failure in December and received a diagnosis of glycogen storage disease, a rare enzyme deficiency in early January. The disease is likely to be genetic mutation, however, most people suffer from liver failure and the heart is rarely affected.

In Tierney's case, his body was unable to convert glycogen into glucose to fuel heart function. Due to the slow breakdown of his heart muscles, Tierney waited at Cleveland Clinic on IV support for a heart transplant while his pregnant wife, Robyn, had to wait for news in Cincinnati.

Robyn reported to friends that Sean remained optimistic and strong as he waited for his heart, qualities he has projected to his students.

Elder and Xavier alum Mark Ledonne said, "Mr. Tierney gives his students more than an education. He teaches them all the characteristics that we are currently seeing in his recent fight for life. Strength, optimism, persistence and pride."

Tierney received his new heart on Jan. 20 around 1:45 a.m.

After his first biopsy, positive reports were received. Sean's body showed just slight rejection to the heart transplant. No adjustments will need to be made to his



PHOTO COURTESY WEHEARTSEAN.COM

Sean Tierney with his wife Robyn. Tierney, a 1997 Xavier graduate, is recovering from a heart transplant after a rare enzyme deficiency.

new heart; however, Sean will be in Cleveland for another several weeks for rehabilitation and recovery.

Tierney teaches religion and coaches volleyball at Elder High School on the west side of Cincinnati. He graduated from Xavier in 1997. His wife Robyn teaches at St. Ignatius School in White Oak. The Tierneys are residents of Price Hill in Cincinnati and have received continual support from their community.

Matt Koenig, a Xavier classmate and acquaintance of Tierney, said it was always refreshing to see Sean on campus because he always had a smile on his face.

"I was sad for him to hear that he had to go through such an ordeal. It does not surprise me that he is

getting the support he is receiving. If anyone deserves [this support] it is Sean," said Koenig.

Since the beginning of Tierney's challenging journey, the west side communities have been filled with Elder purple ribbons in anticipation for and, now, celebration of Tierney's new heart. The community has rallied to help support the financial burdens that Sean's journey will cause.

Elder students have raised thousands of dollars for Tierney's benefit already, and several more events have been planned.

Elder's fundraising was also supported by an anonymous donation of \$5,000.

Elder students, faculty and staff hosted a theme day on Jan. 18 in which they were paid to dress out of

uniform. The Elder Glee Club and Alumni Cabaret will host a show at 8 p.m. on Feb. 10 at St. William Father Reldon Hall.

Outside of the Elder community, rival high school Moeller and Hair Management Salon of Bridgetown has also taken part in the fundraising by raising thousands of dollars.

Other fundraiser events planned include Sean Tierney Night at Champions Grille on Feb. 20, Guest Bartender Night with Sean's brother-in-law and two former classmates at the Dog Haus on Feb. 23 and Sean Patrick's Day Party at Aspen Grove Banquet Center on March 9.

Tierney's influence on others is evident through the community's continued prayers and support. On Jan. 11, a prayer service for Sean was hosted at St. Theresa Church and only standing room was left available.

"He worked so hard to be successful in his career, worked so hard to make the people around feel good about themselves. Sean is the type of person that most college students and even younger kids should model themselves around," said Koenig.

"I looked up to Mr. Tierney's positive attitude, no matter what the situation. During prayer, he would thank God for the dreary, rainy day because he knew that he was lucky to be living on earth another day, something that many of us take for granted," said Ledonne.

It seems as though Tierney will now have many more rainy days to be thankful for.



PHOTOS COURTESY WEHEARTSEAN.COM

Friends of Tierney have held numerous fundraisers to assist him and his family with medical expenses not covered by insurance, including a dress down day at Elder High School (left) and a bake sale by St. Aloysius first graders.

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## Inside the 'Wire...

- An alternative fundraiser for AB and the search into the stars: **Campus News, pages 2-3**
- Tackling the issues of abortion, disabilities and the Church: **Op-Ed, pages 6-7**
- Questioning the need for nudes: **Diversions, page 10**