

Student served as an inspiration

By **KAREN RIVERA**
Staff Writer

Keith Hayes, a Ramapo College junior majoring in child psychology, died on Sunday from complications involving several long-term undiagnosed illnesses, according to family and friends. He was 20.

“Keith was really amazing,” said roommate Brian Kurtz. “He was so happy-go-lucky and inspiring. Never went a day without a smile.”

Hayes transferred to Ramapo at the beginning of this semester. His dream was to become a child psychologist to support patients and loved ones with undiagnosed illnesses.

“He touched so many people’s lives,” said his mother, Sheila.

On Internet social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, people shared their grief and provided insight into Hayes’ life.

Hayes was already spreading his wings online, offering support to people in all sorts of situations, from aiding a student going through chemotherapy to writing poems to help friends in tough emotional situations, said Sheila Hayes.

In light of the struggles that Hayes had to endure, his brother Adam, through support of family and friends, plans to start a foundation that will provide support and charitable resources for families whose lives are greatly impacted by illnesses that are unable to be diagnosed.

“He was an inspiration to so many people,” said Sheila. “He wanted to be independent and going to Ramapo was his dream.”

“Knowing Keith has been such a privilege,” said Kurtz. “It was a life-changing experience.”

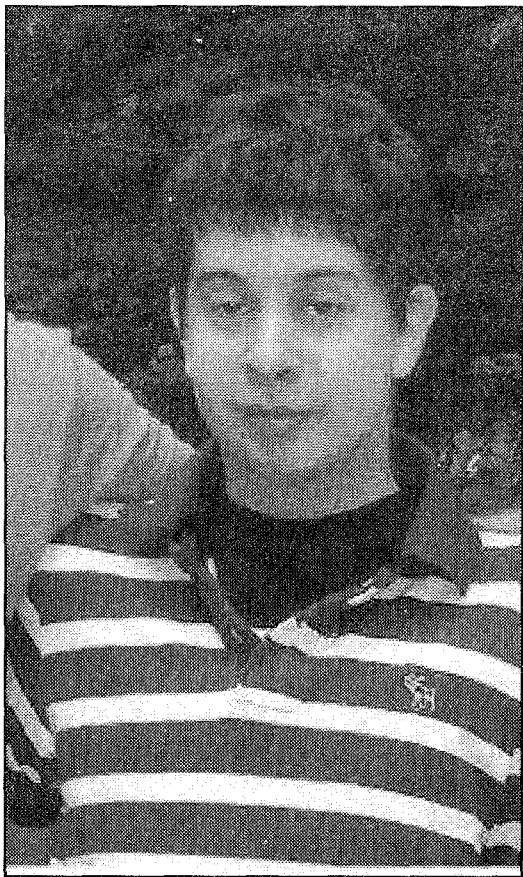


photo courtesy of the Hayes family

Keith Hayes inspired all of the people who surrounded him, according to family and friends.