

Zachary Mendoza biography

Zachary Mendoza had many interests and passions, but nothing meant more to him than his family. He could open up to anyone around him, and his smile could put anyone at ease. When he spent time with others, he focused on what was happening in their lives. He truly put others first.

Zach — sometimes called by his legal first name, Brandon — was also a hard worker. He worked as a server at a popular theater and at a restaurant. He easily built relationships both with customers and his fellow workers. One manager called Zach the “heart and soul” of the workplace.

The love for his family was always deep. He looked forward to all family events. He cherished time with his young nephews. His relationship with his mother was a model for any mother-son bond, and he always sought to make his parents proud of him.

Zach’s love for family and care for others led him to become an organ donor. When Zach got his first driver’s license, he immediately indicated that he wanted to be a donor. This was due mainly to the fact that his aunt was, at the time, in dialysis for lupus while she waited on a kidney transplant. Zach knew everything that his aunt endured, and he made it a point to help others if he was able. Joining the donor registry was an easy decision for Zach, who once said, “I have to do what I can to help.”

Zach was in the hospital for one week after suffering a heart-related illness before passing on April 20, 2019. His organs helped four people, including a North Dakota man whose family has become close to Zach’s family in Wichita.

And while Zach passed away on Easter weekend in 2019, almost one year later — on Easter Monday in 2020 — Zach’s aunt received her kidney transplant. She is doing well today, and Zach, without a doubt, is looking down and flashing that beautiful, bright smile.

Zach’s family is grateful to be part of the Donate Life Rose Parade® float, and they see it as another way to carry on Zach’s memory and legacy.