



## Settlement reached with fraternity in Dallas teen's hazing death

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By MICHAEL GRANBERRY / The Dallas Morning News  
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The mother and stepfather of Lynn Gordon Bailey Jr., who died in a binge-drinking incident on a Colorado mountaintop in 2004, have reached a settlement with the fraternity that they contend provoked his death as part of a hazing ritual.



Courtesy

From left to right, Gordie's mother, Leslie Lanahan; stepfather Michael Lanahan; sister Lily Lanahan, 14; and Gordie Bailey sit at a dinner table in Rome while on a family vacation.

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"Gordie," as friends and family called him, was 18 and had just entered the University of Colorado. He and 26 other Chi Psi fraternity pledges were marched blindfolded to the top of a mountain in Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest near Boulder, Colo., and made to drink four bottles of whiskey and six bottles of wine, police said. He passed out at the fraternity house and was left unattended for nine hours, during which fellow Chi Psi members left vulgar markings on his body.

Reached at the fraternity's national headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., a spokesman who asked not to be quoted by name declined to comment.

Bailey graduated from Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts in the spring of 2004 but until 10th grade had attended St. Mark's School of Texas and The Lamplighter School. His mother, Leslie Lanahan, and her husband, Michael Lanahan, chairman of Dallas-based Greystone Communities, live in North Dallas, where they founded the Gordie Foundation in his memory.

Financial details were not released. But the family has pledged to devote the entire amount reached in the settlement to the Gordie Foundation, which Michael Lanahan says promotes awareness of "the dangers of alcohol, peer pressure, hazing and alcohol poisoning." The Lanahans addressed Bailey's death during a recent episode of *60 Minutes*.

"We both think it's really unfortunate that it's taken four years to come to this, where the fraternity would agree to take steps to make future pledges safer," Leslie Lanahan said Wednesday. She said the family never wanted to sue.

Michael Lanahan said the family had negotiated with Chi Psi since the incident happened to force the fraternity to acknowledge Bailey's death and to change its behavior, "so the outcome is not what we wanted. This is really not a happy day for us, to get an admission 4 ½ years after Gordie's death that this was, in fact, hazing."

The settlement's first component is just that – the admission that Bailey was fatally hazed. In addition, Chi Psi agrees to prohibit alcohol from being served at pledge events, and if it is, violators will be subject to penalties that may include expulsion. An alumni chaperon must be present at all formal activities, and by 2012 all chapters must agree to the presence of a live-in adult house director.

The fraternity also agrees to use Bailey's story to educate pledges and other members about the dangers of peer pressure, hazing and alcohol poisoning.

As part of their national effort through the Gordie Foundation, the Lanahans have released a documentary about Bailey's death titled *HAZE*, which will be shown at the Magnolia Theatre on March 27 and 28 as part of Dallas' AFI International Film Festival. Actress Robin Wright Penn, the chairperson and national spokesperson of the Gordie Foundation, will be present at the screenings.

'HAZE' SCREENING

**What:** Screening of *HAZE*, a documentary about the death of Lynn Gordon Bailey Jr., as part of the AFI Dallas International Film Festival

**When:** March 27 and 28

**Where:** Magnolia Theatre, 3699 McKinney Ave., in Dallas' West Village

**Information:** [www.afidallas.com](http://www.afidallas.com)