

SPIRIT OF THE MEMORIAL ORCHESTRA

The Spirit of the Memorial Orchestra Award was first awarded in 2003, and it recognized a student who had gone out of the way to make a difference in someone else's life. He took off the uniform of a teenager and put on the uniform of an adult. In my twenty-five years at Memorial – I have awarded this honor only six times – you can see the previous winners on our website. As I leave – I will raise that to seven.

Tonight – I am giving the Spirit of the Memorial Orchestra Award to Jae Lee. A young man like Jae is about as rare as this award. Jae is humble, he is a leader, he is kind, he is selfless. And as I get to know him more – I want to make sure he will be remain in my life as a friend.

Jae has dedication, he gives his full effort rather than partial. He goes for the 'all' rather than settling for the 'most' – and in all of that – his attitude remains positive. Jae has had setbacks in his life – many of them physical – but he has never let these things slow him down. Even his most recent injury barely slowed him down.

A couple of years ago – we were quite short on viola players. Jae volunteered to give up the violin and move to the viola section because he wanted to help the whole. Way back in August – I gathered teams to help Harvey victims and Jay was always there. He was tireless and he kept coming back to help. These are the kinds of selfless act that get noticed around here. This is the kind of person who has success in our orchestra program. This is the kind of student that I am glad has helped run our organization this year.

Tonight – we add another name to the list of honorees – it is a select few. It has been seven years since I have handed one of these out – but then again, students who distinguish themselves like this come around every so often.

Jae – I am going to miss you greatly – but I'm going to look forward to continuing our friendship. I truly pray that your spirit will live on around this place. Thank you for pouring into our lives – I know I speak for many in this room. Thank you for pouring into the orchestra as an organization. Thank you for showing us the Spirit of the Memorial Orchestra!