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Friends remember Vasen as inspiration

Meghan Peters
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[img1]Inspirational, exceptional, mature and loving were among the words friends and family members used to remember junior Robert Vasen at the Temple B'nai Torah in Bellevue last night.

Hundreds gathered to mourn the loss of the 20-year-old who died in a car accident Sunday night.

"Robert epitomized what it meant to be a good friend and family member," said Brett Amos, a long-time friend and fellow UW student. "It was illustrated by the number of lives he touched and his ability to do so at first meeting."

Vasen served as ASB President his senior year at Bellevue High School, was an avid soccer player and an economics major with a minor in International Studies at the UW.

"He was ... deeper than anyone his age," said brother Jake Vasen. "He had an amazing business mind."

Vasen also worked as a management intern at the Virginia Mason Clinic this summer. A family friend said he valued people and showed compassion for all, even those he didn't know.

Many commented on Vasen's capacity to care for others.

"My favorite trait of Robert's was his ability to love all those around him," said sister Jackie Vasen.

"He knew how to love out loud," said relative Bobbie Stern. "He related to people so easily and enveloped you with a warm and genuine compassion."

Others remembered his sincerity.

"Robert was someone so genuine," said Randy Litzenberger, Vasen's U.S. history teacher at Bellevue High School. "There is so much in this world that is fake and he was the antithesis of that."

Family members and close friends said Vasen maintained a strong relationship with his grandmother throughout his life and made family a high priority.

"His life has been such a gift to us," mother Jackie Vasen said.

The temple was overflowing with attendees to honor Vasen's life. Friends said the memorial exemplified how he would have wanted to be remembered.

"Robert wouldn't want us to focus on the bad or negative, but to celebrate," Amos said. "If we can learn anything from him it's how to live our lives to the very fullest and give everyone our best."

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