Todd Anderson, 22-year old Central Washington University business administration student, died in a tragic house fire at his residence in Ellensburg, Washington on January 5, 2003. The fire broke out in a home he shared with two roommates from school. A propane heater ignited the blaze in the early morning while he and some visiting friends were asleep. He was the only person to perish from the fire.

Todd was in his fourth year as a member of the CWU Rodeo Club, and was serving as the club’s president at the time of his death. He also rode bulls, and even though a knee injury his freshman year kept him from competing, he continued to practice with and assist his teammates. “Todd Anderson was an incredible young man. As an advisor, I watched as Todd developed into a strong, enthusiastic and committed leader as well as good friend to all the club members and competitors. He was always the first to volunteer for community service projects, the first to help anyone in need, and participated in all club functions. Under Todd’s his dedicated leadership, the CWU Rodeo Club was recognized as the CWU Club of the Year in two successive years, the first time a student club has ever achieved this distinction at Central Washington University. The Rodeo Club continues to garner awards, a fitting testament to Todd’s legacy.

Several hundred people attended Todd’s memorial service in Tukwila, where he grew up. He loved the outdoors: hunting, fishing, off-road driving and rodeo. At Foster High School, Todd was student body president his senior year, and quarterback for the football team. He was extremely close to his five nieces and nephews and worked many summers at the Tukwila Community Center, where he indulged in another love: working with kids. “He had a soft heart,” his brother Brian said. “He got enjoyment just being on the floor entertaining the kids.”

In the fire’s wake, Todd’s relatives received ample evidence of what they already knew: he was funny and kind, and with a wide circle of loyal friends who have passionate memories of the young man they called “Cowboy.” Friends and family continue to post messages on a Web site, describing what Todd meant to them. And then there was that smile – that big, beautiful sincere smile Todd always had on his face, a smile that could never be hidden under that big black hat he always wore. These friends say his bright smile and sense of humor created a magnetism that endures.
Todd was set to graduate from Central Washington University in 2004 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and had already made plans to remain outside the Seattle area. He wanted some acreage, some horses and perhaps an old farmhouse to himself. Had he lived, he might have pursued a full-time job at Price Pfister, a faucet company where he worked part time. He told friends he eventually wanted to open an outdoors store to sell the camping, fishing and hunting equipment he loved.

Todd is survived by his father and stepmother John and Signa Anderson of Tukwila; mother and stepfather Paula and David Malo of SeaTac; brothers Kevin and Brian; stepsisters Kristen and Lauri; grandparents Jim and Margaret Angle; five nieces and nephews; and numerous other family members.

The CWU Todd Anderson Memorial Scholarship is available to deserving CWU Rodeo Club members: team members and non-team members alike. This scholarship was established in memory of Todd Anderson, and is intended to provide financial assistance to CWU students who have demonstrated a strong history of leadership qualities and community service participation, and will commit to become actively involved as a member or competitor for the CWU Rodeo Club, or both. The scholarship, currently in the process of becoming an endowment, is managed through the CWU Foundation, which is a non-profit (501 c-3 status) organization.

Requirements:

- Must be enrolled at CWU as a full-time student
- Become and remain an active member of the CWU Rodeo Club; either to compete for the CWU Rodeo Team in one or more of the college rodeo events, or make a commitment to undertake a leadership role in the CWU Rodeo Club, or both
- Demonstrate leadership qualities and community service participation
- Minimum 2.0 GPA
- Finalists will be required to participate in an interview with the scholarship committee.

Application process:

- Complete the CWU General Scholarship Application Form
- In essay form, describe your experience with rodeo (time involved and level of involvement, memberships and associations, awards/successes)
- List any activities that demonstrate your involvement with leadership and community service participation (organizations, positions, contributions)
- 500-word essay explaining why you believe you deserve to receive this scholarship award, based on your experiences listed above and your goals for the future