

Student races to find donor for miracle match

College students typically worry about papers, tests, blind dates, money. Shahbaz Bagherian, a Rutgers U. senior, used to have those things on his mind. But his worries changed when he found out he has leukemia.

"When I was at Rutgers, the only things I had problems with were classes and exams," the 23-year-old says. "Now my only problem is what I am going to do tomorrow to find a donor so I will live."

This past summer, the day after marrying his college sweetheart, Bagherian was rushed to the emergency room where he was diagnosed with leukemia, cancer of the blood. He and his wife, Patricia, planned to spend their honeymoon in Hawaii. Instead, they spent it in the hospital.

Now Bagherian has put off finishing school while he tries to find a donor for the bone marrow transplant that could



A transplant could save Shahbaz Bagherian's life.

save his life.

Leukemia is a disease that affects white blood cells. In 1989, 18,000 people died from the disease and almost 30,000 cases have been diagnosed this year.

A bone marrow transplant is the only chance for survival. And the only way to find a donor is through a test that measures six parts of the blood. All six parts must match the patient's — a 1 in 20,000 chance.

It's crucial that he finds a donor before his disease progresses. "If I don't find a donor, I'm finished."

Anyone who wants to help should call Bagherian at (908)563-6790.

The National Marrow Donor Program has information about how to become a donor, and keeps a data base so anyone who is tested will stay on file in case future patients match their six digit code. They can be reached at 1-800-654-1247.

"It's just like the New Jersey lottery. I have my ticket. If someone else has the same six [blood configurations], I win. It's like a miracle match." ■ **Mark S. Rosky**, *The Daily Targum*, Rutgers U.

Have a clean record? You have to prove it at St. Augustine's

A high GPA and SAT score used to be enough to get you into college. But at St. Augustine's College, students have a bit more to prove.

This fall, prompted by a wave of violent crime on and off campus, the small, historically African-American school in Raleigh, N.C., started a controversial admissions policy. They asked all applicants to submit criminal background checks from their hometown police departments.

Prospective freshmen and transfers must have police fill out and notarize a "Police Record Check" form asking whether applicants have juvenile or police records (including minor traffic offenses). Applicants with criminal backgrounds will be reviewed by a special committee.

"We're considered the guardians of these students when they arrive on campus," says spokesperson Tracey Todd. "We don't want to make this a prison-like campus; we do want to make this an institution conducive to higher learning."

But Jim Shields, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina, is worried the policy may encourage discrimination should other schools adopt similar policies. Since African Americans often receive unfairly harsh treatment from police, he says, they are more likely to have such a record.

"We don't need more reasons to discriminate against black students," he says.

Sophomore Jesonna White isn't convinced the policy will work: "Even if you don't have a criminal record you can still do things." Other students maintain that most of the violent crime is committed by non-students anyway.

St. Augustine's will evaluate the policy next year. But for now, they're sticking by the decision. "Going to college is not a right," says Todd. "It's a choice. If you come to St. Augustine's, this is one of the requirements." ■ **Mark Tosczak**, *Technician*, North Carolina State U.

Grad student wants poetic justice

Most teachers would be thrilled if a student wrote a poem in their honor. At this point, members of the U. of Houston's history department would settle for a little peace of mind.

In 1986, Houston's history department expelled doctoral student Fabian Vaksman from their Ph.D. program after rejecting his thesis. But they had by no means heard the last of him.

Now Vaksman, who filed suit and regained admission to the doctoral program, has penned a vengeful tale that many believe is targeted toward the history faculty.

In the poem, a researcher at a state university ultimately uses an assault rifle to murder five faculty members who try to stifle his intellectual opinions. Some say the fictional murder victims closely resemble actual faculty members.

Vaksman has been back at the university since March 1992, and is \$122,500 richer in compensation and

damages. But time and money haven't made him any less angry.

An excerpt from the ending of "RRacist," which was sent to the U. of Houston's counsel in May 1993, reads: "Bobson sat at his desk/ about to jump up/... as he sprayed him with bullet fire... /He heard screams... /He saw blood... /Lots of it..."

Vaksman contends: "My poem is symbolically killing the demagogues, bullies and pushovers that exist all over America, not just at UH."

But Houston placed an armed guard outside the history offices for one month, and has since instructed history department faculty members to stay off campus between 5 p.m. and 9 a.m.

"We are handling him with kid



Fabian Vaksman: researcher, historian, poet, screenwriter?

gloves because no one wants to confront him," says an anonymous history professor. "All we can do is hang in there until the situation is resolved."

While UH is appealing the decision, Vaksman has until September 1994 to present his thesis. Meanwhile, he has written the treatment for "RRacist II" and adapted the original "RRacist" into a screenplay. ■ **Robert Arnold**, *The Daily Cougar*, U. of Houston

More Short Takes

continued from previous page

ties than those in two "responsible" ones.

THEY'LL ALL LICK MY FACE

TALLAHASSEE, FLA. — Don't call it a comeback. A Florida State U. student is aiming for the *Guinness Book of World Records* by attempting to memorize 100,000 digits of Pi.

Rajan Mahadevan, an FSU doctoral candidate, set the world record in 1981 with 30,000 digits, but a Japanese man has since broken the record. Mahadevan, who also knows 1,500 phone numbers and every clue from Trivial Pursuit, will shoot to reclaim his title this summer.

And as if this story wasn't odd enough, the Indian government plans to make a stamp out of Mahadevan's likeness. "Thousands of women will be licking my face every day," says the number cruncher.

updates

STILL LOOKING: Federal investigators, who have been trying to capture a serial bomber who has terrorized college faculty for 15 years [*U. Magazine*, Aug./Sept. 1993]. After offering a \$1 million reward in October, the government has received hundreds of phone calls from people who say they have information on "Nathan R," the name listed on a note that may have been written by the bomber. Any information on the case can be reported to the FBI at 1-800-701-BOMB.

GUN BEARING: The U. of Massachusetts' mascot, the Minuteman, who narrowly escaped the unemployment line in October after 40 student protesters asked the university to dump the white, armed figure. Protesters called the Minuteman a symbol of sexism, racism and violence. UMass officials rejected the idea of dumping the mascot after Massachusetts Gov. William F. Weld called the controversy "political correctness run amok."

The debate follows a similar controversy at the U. of Alabama, Birmingham, where mascot Blaze, a Nordic warrior, was dropped this fall for being too white and male [*U. Magazine*, Nov. 1993].

LOST: The U. of Montana's time capsule for their centennial celebration [*U. Magazine*, Aug./Sept. 1993]. The university drilled 13 holes in the cornerstone of Main Hall before giving up their search in August. Ever optimistic, university officials placed a new capsule in one of the holes and are hoping someone will find it at UM's bicentennial in 2093.

Briefs are compiled from the U. network.