

# Sigma Pi Blood Drive a Success



photo by Patricia Gallagher

Senior Brian Catapano takes time to give blood. Sigma Pi hosted the American Red Cross Blood Drive, on Oct. 11.

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News Editor

On Thursday, Oct. 11, Sigma Pi Fraternity sponsored an American Red Cross blood drive in Anacon Hall from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. The blood drive drew over 135 applicants, each donating one pint of blood.

A registration table was set up at the door to Anacon, where Monmouth students and community members registered to give blood, and received preliminary information sheets. Applicants were then directed to a seating area, where they filled out paperwork regarding their health, as well as donor information. Health workers next called

participants to individual cubicles for a ten-minute consultation, in which a drop of blood was taken from each person's finger and tested for iron. Temperature and blood pressure were also measured to ensure that each person was fit to give blood.

After applicants were cleared to donate, they were sent to one of many hospital gurneys set up near Anacon's ceiling-high windows. The stretchers were arranged in groups of four, with one staff member for every two beds. The actual donation process lasted between eight and 12 minutes, depending on the speed of each individual's blood flow.

Following blood donations, student volunteers ushered donors over to several tables and chairs, where they were required to rest for at least five minutes after donating. Bags of pretzels and cookies were provided, as well as cans of apple and orange juice. Additional student volunteers walked from table to table to ensure that donors did not experience any mild complications, such as dizziness or nausea.

"I didn't fill a whole bag [with blood]," explained Espirit Smith, a communication and English major. "They took [the needle] out because my eyes started to

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photo by Patricia Gallagher

Senior Dave Markowitz donates blood to The American Red Cross

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roll back into my head. But everyone was very nice and helpful, and I'm okay now."

"I was fine until I got to the table," added Molly Pancer, a senior business major. "I was sitting at the table and I just got dizzy. But I left with a pint less of blood, so I reached my personal goal!"

Joe Palazzolo, President of Sigma Pi and a junior English major, explained that his fraternity had been trying to organize a blood drive with the American Red Cross since the World Trade Center incident in September.

"We set up a tentative date at the end of September, then [American Red Cross] wound up calling me back to cancel it because they were overstocked," Palazzolo said.

"Then maybe two weeks after that, they called me back and said we need blood, can we come? We set up a date here with the people at Student Services, and they came today."

"We helped register people," he continued. "We helped run the equipment back and forth to the tables, and we had people outside bringing others in to see if they wanted to give blood. The American Red Cross set everything up before we got here, so we just came in and whatever they needed done, we did."

"The contact actually came into the American Red Cross, Janice Palumbo, and we worked with her as far as finding a fraternity to work with, and helping us coordinate it," explained Towanda Long, account manager for the American Red Cross.

An unexpectedly large number of Monmouth students and faculty took time out of their Thursday schedule to give blood, and most expressed great satisfaction with the program.

"I wasn't planning on [donating]," said Rob Gussmann, a student and first-time donor, "but I just walked up the stairs to do some reading and a guy asked me if I wanted to donate blood, so I said sure. I think it was a great experience."

"I guess it just makes me feel good about myself that I did it," said Kristin Waters, a sophomore criminal justice major.

Added Smith, "It's for a good cause, especially now, after the World Trade Center. People need blood. They don't just need it then, they need it now and continually."

In regards to the large number of applicants at the blood drive, Monmouth University, American Red Cross, and Sigma Pi are pleased.

"This is the first college that we've done in Monmouth County. We've worked with Rutgers, and we're having a drive at Seton Hall next month," Long said.

"We would like to continue this, hopefully twice a year."

"I was very satisfied with the turnout," Palazzolo said.

"Our goal was 100 pints of blood, and coming into this, we only had 87 people signed up. I was the 100 person to sign the [registration] list, and that was a half-hour ago. So we made our quota."