

2006

Mountain of Heroes Foundation March 2 2006

I was privileged to bring greetings on behalf of the province to the second annual Mountain of Heroes gala last night. Five people were honoured, and they include Randy Fowler, whose life took a drastic turn 24 years ago.

Randy was literally on his way to a career in professional football when he was involved in an accident that left him in a coma, and doctors feared the worst, but today Randy gives inspiring speeches on behalf of the Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured, which he serves as a board member. He also speaks on the dangers of drinking and driving for the PARTY program, the United Way, and the Cops for Kids program.

Dale Taylor has initiated the sandwich club and the Warm Feet for the Street projects at the Mustard Seed street ministry. She also supports Inn from the Cold, the Sheriff King Home, and the Calgary Foundation through the Taylor legacy fund as well as projects in the West Indies and Central America.

Dr. Morton Doran has taught anatomy courses to medical students at the U of C for the past 15 years and received no fewer than three gold-star awards in each of those years. Dr. Doran has also volunteered with medical missions in Central and South America and has become a hero to those with Tourette's syndrome.

Marie Nicholson has donated countless hours to a plethora of causes as a member of the Stampede City Kinettes, holding every executive position at the club and zone levels for the last two decades and serving at the district level as well.

On November 4, 2002, Karen Venables' 18-year-old son, Devin, took one punch to the temple and died 16 hours later. Since then, Karen has been working on the DEVIN Foundation: Diligently Ending Violence in Neighbourhoods.

My wife, Jennifer, and I as cofounders of the Mountain of Heroes Foundation would like to thank the board of directors, the volunteers, and the corporate partners of the event for raising research funds for cystic fibrosis and at the same time recognizing these Albertan heroes who have truly turned tragedy into triumph.

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission April 4 2006

I am pleased to inform the Hon. members that AADAC has answered the call from Albertans to offer more addiction services for youth and their families.

AADAC has received \$19 million in new funding this year, and that's going to go a long way in allowing the enhancement of services and continuing operation of 25 area offices, three urban clinics, three adult residential treatment centres, two adult detox facilities, two youth service centres, and two youth residential and detox facilities. This increase brings AADAC's annual operating budget to \$95 million.

In addition to sustaining AADAC's ability to meet demands through regular operations, of which two new AADAC offices will be opening this summer, it will also provide funding support for 37 different nonprofit organizations across the province and add two new agencies to the network.

These new services will build on considerable work already under way as AADAC follows through on commitments for the Alberta drug strategy.

In terms of youth focus, a total of \$14 million will be invested across the province to expand services. It will ensure that treatment is available to families who are experiencing problems associated with alcohol and other drugs, including crystal meth.

Key priorities for the upcoming year include, number one, doubling the number of voluntary treatment beds for youth by expanding programs to locations in southern and northern Alberta;

number two, expanding AADAC's continuum in youth services in implementing detox and assessment services in support of the Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act, or PCHAD, which comes into force July 1, and that will mean additional beds in five sites across Alberta;

number three, continuing to build relationships with regional health authorities and other provincial partners to deliver addiction services in innovative ways, including continued work on concurrent disorders.

Other projects include an aboriginal youth treatment pilot in Edmonton, working with national partners, and an expanded public awareness campaign on crystal meth and with schools.

Compulsory Drug and Alcohol Treatment for Youth May 9 2006

Along with our Hon. Health Minister and the co-chair of the Crystal Meth Task Force, Dr. Colleen Klein, I was honoured to open the Capital health Stronger Together conference last Thursday.

AADAC was well represented that day, and staff members had been working hard every day to prepare for new addictions services for youth under the new Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act, or PCHAD, coming into effect July 1.

This act provides an additional avenue of support together with the AADAC range of services currently offered to parents and guardians whose children are abusing alcohol or other drugs, including crystal meth, in a way that severely endangers them or others and who resist or are not seeking voluntary help for their severe addiction.

AADAC announced the locations of the protective safe houses, the program structure, and the number of beds being established in support of PCHAD. There will be 20 beds dedicated to the program in Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, and Picture Butte.

To further support youth and families and to support the expansion of services, 24 additional staff members will be hired throughout the province. AADAC will also be adding another 24 voluntary detox and residential beds later this year in both northern and southern Alberta to ensure access to follow-up services.