

Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation

February 2012

Dear Friend of Katrina Tagget,

Thank you for allowing us to honor Kara's memory in positive ways. If there is any doubt that we need to stop the shame, silence, and stigma of mental illness and suicide, we need only to read the words of Kara. In high school, she wrote,

*They say that without the pain there is no beauty
But how much pain I say must I endure
Before I am relieved, before I wake up
So detached, so deranged
I am not who you see walking down the street,
Run into in the hall, talk to in class
Go to a party with.
I am dying inside.
Withering away and I'm too scared to share this with anyone
but this computer screen.*



Kara's Last Day

Deaths in the U.S. due to suicide continue to rise, the latest statistics, 35,909 died by suicide in 2009. Someone dies by suicide in the U.S. every 14 minutes. 90% of those who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death.

So, what can we do? Help dispose of the myths. Talk about suicide with your family and friends. Talking actually lessens the incidence of suicide. Don't be afraid to get someone help for a mental health issue even if it means they will be angry that you did. Suicide is not a disease, the mental illness issue that leads to suicide is the disease. Mental illnesses are diagnosable and treatable. Acknowledge that suicide does not discriminate; it can happen to anyone, we are all at risk.

2011 Review

We have had another successful year in spite of the bad economy,

- The **Katrina Tagget Kookie Exchange** raised about \$1,500.
- The **Kara Tagget Open** was another sell-out, hosting 104 golfers, over 25 volunteers, and raising about \$19,000. This year, Active Minds brought some of the backpacks from their Send Silence Packing program, including Kara's.
- The **Katrina Tagget Fellowship at Michigan State University** was awarded to junior student, Marissa Poe. Like Katrina, Marissa is an academically gifted young woman with a strong community focus and has views her dyslexia in a positive way. Marissa is a second time recipient of the scholarship.



Kara Tagget Open 2011



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- **Team Katrina “Kara”** had about 20 walkers and raised almost \$7,000 for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) via their **Out of the Darkness Walks in Maryland**.
- KTMF donated funds to **Grass Roots** for their crisis intervention program and survivor of suicide support. KTMF sponsored bringing the Rita Project to Grass Roots once a month. The **Rita Project** is an art therapy program for survivors of suicide loss and those who have survived a suicide attempt.
- KTMF donated funds to the **National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI)** of Howard County for their “free” programs to support families and individuals living with mental illness.
- KTMF donated funds to **Active Minds** to support the six Howard County High Schools who are piloting the Active Minds club at the high school level. Kara’s backpack traveled with the Send Silence Packing tour to over 15 colleges, and whenever they highlight a backpack, Kara’s is always one of the backpacks featured.
- **MSU** has been very active in their suicide prevention activities. MSU distributed 5,000 KTMF Suicide Prevention bookmarks to all incoming freshman and their parents. MSU held their first Out of the Darkness Walk on campus. MSU continues to deploy suicide prevention training to their staff, faculty and students which KTMF has helped fund.
- New this year has been speaking engagements by Sara. Sara spoke on a panel of survivors of suicide at the annual **Maryland Suicide Prevention Conference**. Sara presented at NAMI’s workshop, “The Risks of Undiagnosed Mental Health Issues” in October. Sara was videotaped on a local program, **Mental Health Matters**, which can be viewed in YouTube.



MSU RCPD Awards

A very special thank you to the following individuals and groups who went above and beyond in their efforts to help us with our mission,

Brian Greenbaum and the HAHA group
Tamara Van Newkirk, Grass Roots
Amanda Bruce Ganoe, AFSP
Susan Helsel, NAMI
Dr. Jan Collins-Eagan, Juliette Niemi, and
the MSU Counseling Staff
Ms. Julia Andersen, Rita Project



AFSP Out of the Darkness Walk 2011

save the dateKara Tagget Open, July 23, 2012



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