

medication quickly became a problem, and Adam was soon physically dependent, not just for pain but also to function in his daily life. This was where his addiction began.

In January 2008, at 18 years old, Adam checked himself into the hospital for being suicidal. He was then diagnosed with bipolar disorder and an addiction to opiates. He received counseling, started on bipolar meds, and was put on high doses of Suboxone to help with his addiction and also relieve his back pain. But six months later, after another night in the psych ward, he gave up on that medication and started using heroin.

"It is absolutely paralyzing to learn that your son has a substance use disorder," writes Adam's mother. "The stigma of having a child struggling with addiction caused us to withdraw rather than seek help. We learned how to live life with the truth hidden in the back of our hearts. We knew Adam was more than his addiction, and we desperately wanted our boy back."

Adam suffered and struggled for many years; finally, he found a medication that seemed to work for him. Adam received injections of Vivitrol for opioid addiction, and his life started getting back on track. After not using for 13 months, he relapsed and this time he started injecting heroin. After a six-month relapse, he set up an appointment to start receiving his Vivitrol shots again. In early November of that year, Adam was due for another injection. When he went in for his appointment, he managed to convince his doctor that he was ready to "try" one month without the shot. His entire life, Adam hated being on medication; whenever he started doing better, he insisted he didn't need it any more. So he stopped taking Vivitrol and scheduled an appointment for December to be re-evaluated.

Weeks later, Adam totaled his car on his way home from work. This was just too much and, after 150 days of not using heroin, Adam relapsed and lost his battle with addiction. Over 300 people attended his funeral. A woman Adam worked with told his family that just a few days before, Adam would have stopped to help someone fix a flat tire; this just goes to show you that people are more than their addictions.

ANDREW BENJAMIN SMITH—LAS VEGAS,
NEVADA

Margie Borth's world was forever changed on October 5, 2014, when her husband uttered those words: "I just received an email—Andrew is addicted to heroin." The news hit like a baseball bat between the eyes. Suddenly, all of the questions she'd been struggling with regarding her son were answered: Why so many car accidents? Why is he so distant? Why does he get mad and refuse to talk? Why doesn't he have any money?

Still I tried—I tried everything I could possibly think to do in such a desperate situation. I begged, sobbed, hugged, listened, scolded, yelled, pleaded—I mothered. I bargained with Andrew and with God.

But he was just visiting for the weekend and soon he had to get back to his job. Within two weeks, he was in the hospital with his first DUI and another wrecked car. He had overdosed on the streets of Las Vegas while driving. Thank god no one was hurt. He died just 21 days later, after spending a short stint in rehab.

When remembering Andrew, the first thing people talk about is his intellect. He was extremely bright; he thrived in accelerated programs and graduated from college in three short years. Many of his friends have said, "He was the smartest guy I've ever met." Then we remember his razor-sharp, witty, often self-effacing sense of humor. Andrew was also inquisitive, a good listener and a loyal friend. He was polite and people took to liking him immediately.

He was driven and it seemed as though he had the world at his fingertips. Andrew was confident about his opinions, view of the world and goals in life. He inspired many people during his short life. He was well loved by co-workers and a role-model for new employees at his new position in Las Vegas. His employer said they had so many plans for Andrew's future. She told me he always volunteered for extra projects, never complained and would have given the shirt off his back to someone in need.

Andrew began experimenting with drugs in high school, but his addiction to Oxycontin developed in 2009 while he was attending college in Florida during the Pill Mills—Oxy was cheap and readily available. Andrew often expressed his frustration with trying to find people on his intellectual level; Oxy made him feel more like everyone else. Oxy made people, life and college feel tolerable. Throughout the trajectory of his use, he thought he was in control. Even when he was forced to switch to heroin in 2014, he told a friend, "Heroin is not so bad, it's just like Oxy." In August 2014, he took a job promotion in Las Vegas and thought he could leave heroin behind: "Mom, I never planned to do heroin here," he said. "I planned to quit, but I realized I was an addict when I got to Las Vegas and still had to have it." Even at the very end, when his life really began to unravel, he still thought he had the upper hand on this drug. He refused long-term treatment and thought he could return to work after detox. I spend the last 6 days of his life with him, he was clean for 19 days before he overdosed. During that time, he told me what I wanted to hear, "I don't want to do heroin again, Mom." But he struggled; he was deeply sad and ashamed of what his life had become. On the surface, he was a successful corporate executive who appeared to have everything in check. He had great credit and a 401k. But in reality, he was a struggling addict who lived for Oxycontin and ultimately heroin—he was desperate to keep it a secret.

On a Monday afternoon, on November 10, 2014, Andrew handed me two red roses and said he wanted to go to an AA meeting. I was so excited that he was finally making progress and dropped him off at a meeting soon after. An hour later when he didn't respond to my texts or phone calls, I knew in my heart what had happened. The hospital called 45 minutes later. He was found in the bathroom of a Petsmart just down the street. It was too late to save him. He died alone.

I simply miss my son—he was my only boy and my youngest. Even though we lived in different cities, he was always present in my life except for the few times that he distanced himself due to his drug use. Even then, I knew I'd eventually get a phone call and a visit. I had hopes of grandchildren because he talked about becoming a father someday. He wanted to meet someone educated, maybe a doctor.

What I miss most is what could have been. He talked about wanting to move to the Pacific Northwest eventually, close to Portland, OR, where I live. I always thought he would join us. I miss his open-mindedness and intellect. His willingness to try new foods, adventures, places, his sense of humor. I miss our playful banter. I miss every phone call that ended in, "I Love You". Now there is just an enormous void in my life where he used to be. Sadness and tears are now a part of my everyday.

RON SLINGER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ron Slinger for being honored by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce with the Chairman's Choice Award.

The Chairman's Choice is selected annually by the Chairman of the Arvada Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors to recognize a member of the community who has shown leadership and outstanding support to the Arvada Chamber.

Ron's extensive involvement, leadership and contributions in Arvada have resulted in a significant and long lasting impact in the community. His sense of humor and kindness bring positive energy and perspective to any opportunity he undertakes. Ron is a true advocate for the Arvada Chamber and has fully dedicated himself to the betterment of the community.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ron Slinger for this well-deserved honor from the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

SUPREME COURT NOMINEE NEIL
GORSUCH

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in response to President Trump's recent nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. I now call on my Senate colleagues to rigorously vet his nomination and ensure that his values and constitutional philosophies align with those of mainstream America. At this critical juncture in our nation's history, it is important that this nominee be a fair and impartial adjudicator of the laws that protect the rights of all Americans.

In the coming days and weeks, I look forward to learning more about the judicial opinions and constitutional philosophy of Judge Gorsuch. Unfortunately, Republicans did not extend this same courtesy to President Obama's nominee Merrick Garland. For 300 days, Senate Republicans defied the Constitution, ignoring President Obama's nominee, and refusing to even give him a hearing. However, I along with my Democratic colleagues value the Constitution over partisan politics.

Therefore, I hope for a fair and vigorous vetting process of Judge Gorsuch and his judicial record. The Supreme Court will likely make many critical decisions in the upcoming decades, affecting issues from voting rights to privacy rights to consumer protections. America needs a justice whose interpretation of the Constitution aligns with American values and the rule of law.