

Throughout high school, Megan got into enough trouble where she had to serve time in jail and was court ordered to be on probation for three years. After two years, her probation officer decided to take her off of probation. Things then started to settle down for Megan, until the summer of 2013, when her mother was told that Megan was addicted to prescription painkillers. She confronted Megan, but denied it. Later that summer, Megan and her boyfriend of four years got into huge argument and broke up. Soon afterwards, she started seeing another guy.

Megan's mother spoke with Megan multiple times about her addiction, and each time she blew her off. On November 2, 2013, her mother spent the entire day with Megan and her new boyfriend cleaning her house. Around 4:30 PM Megan and her mother both left; Megan went to work and her mother drove home.

Around 10:10 PM that night, Megan's mother received a phone call from her sister telling her that Megan's boyfriend was dead. It was found out that Megan's boyfriend had been snorting Percocet throughout the day, and died as a result. Shortly afterwards, two of his friends showed Megan how to inject heroin. By March 2014, Megan came to her mother and asked her for help, sending Megan to a rapid detox facility in Detroit. Megan's mother was reluctant to spend the \$7,800, but Megan begged and said it was a matter of life or death.

After Megan completed detox, she got so sick she ended up having to go to the hospital and was hooked up to an IV. She was diagnosed with pancreatitis, caused by heroin use. This was when her mother first found out Megan was using heroin, and the nightmare had only just begun.

Three days later, after being discharged from the hospital, Megan was arrested and charged with four felony counts involving heroin. The next day at court, Megan's mother paid \$10,000 to bail Megan out.

Over the next five months, Megan's mother thought she was doing great; Megan was passing all of her drug tests. One night, Megan was stopped by the police because her car windows were too darkly tinted, and was rearrested when they found syringes on her.

Megan spent four months in jail before she was sentenced. During her sentencing, the judge said that heroin was a powerful drug, only to deny Megan a nine-month court-ordered inpatient treatment program for a drug that kills. Four months into her sentence, Megan relapsed, overdosed, and died. "My life forever changed that day," writes Megan's mother. "Her sentence became a death penalty."

KIRSTYN KING—RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

Kirstyn King was born in the early afternoon on December 8, 1990. She was a perfect baby and everything her family had hoped for in an infant daughter. The first time they saw her tiny, sweet face, they were overwhelmed with love, hope and emotions they had never experienced before. Her mother saw her own future and past in Kirstyn's eyes and cried with joy, she knew she'd do everything to protect her child and new family.

As the years went by, Kirstyn's mother worked hard and elevated their financial status to a six-figure income. A lot happens over the passage of time and in that particular period there were mostly beautiful memories, but, unfortunately, there were also agonizing ones that still haunt her today. Despite her every attempt to shield her family from life's worst, Kirstyn was harmed and sexually exploited when she was a young teenager. This started a slow avalanche as she rebelled and struggled. Her

mother tried to help her but she felt so powerless. Kirstyn's despair was evident and her mothers attempts to make it all go away were futile.

"Around this time, I injured my back falling down the stairs," writes Kirstyn's mother. "The physical pain was unlike anything I had ever experienced. This led to a prescription pill addiction that bottomed out in a horrible way. After layoff and foreclosure, I began writing my own prescriptions to support my escalating habit. I ended up in jail. I had never been in trouble in my life and suddenly I was a felon, effectively homeless and jobless, after being a homeowner twice over with a promising career."

"My children never used drugs more than the occasional sampling. Kirstyn suffered from anxiety and once I went to jail, the mom that had always saved the day was powerless to help her. Her fiancé transferred with a government contractor to England and her brother, nearly 18, moved with his father to California. She felt alone and began heavily and carelessly self-medicating."

Kirstyn was shy, gentle and gorgeous. She adored animals and wanted to save all of them. She would find the least attractive, the most broken of the bunch, and that would be the cat or dog she wanted to take home. From tadpoles to earthworms, there wasn't a creature that she was afraid of and didn't love. She had an infectious belly laugh and always saw the best in others. She complemented other girls and gave the most she could of her wonderful soul. She was the life of the party and a risk-taker with a childlike spirit. Her light wasn't reciprocated. In fact, it was abused. On October 16, 2011, Kirstyn lost her life to her brief addiction. I was in jail and could do nothing. All I can tell you is that it is a grief I'll never be able to fully comprehend or articulate.

"As a recovered addict and grieving mother of a 20 year old who lost her promising life to addiction, I know we must do more," writes Kirstyn's mother. "Those in recovery who are able to speak must be heard and represented in this fight to find solutions for this crippling American epidemic. We can't continue to villainize and hunt for the dealer or "that bad kid" that influenced our child. We need to dig deep, open our eyes and ask, why does America hurt? We are a nation in crisis."

MATT KLOSOWSKI—BEAR, DELAWARE

Have you ever met a guy whose smile could light up a room? Who made you feel like you had found a long lost friend? The kind of guy who would give you the shirt off his back? That guy who brings every stray dog home and makes it a member of the family? That was Matt Klosowski. He had that happy-go-lucky personality that drew people in and made them fall in love. Unfortunately for Matt, he never loved himself enough. He experimented with marijuana in high school and after graduating to pills, ended up in his first 30 days inpatient treatment facility.

Matt went on to become an excellent mechanic. He moved to the beach, bought a home and opened his own business. His adult life appeared successful and drug-free. Matt's family took a deep breath and started to relax, only to discover soon after that Matt was hiding his addiction. At first it was just casual use—a Saturday night party or coming down from a busy week of work. But he was slipping back into the deadly mindset that made him believe he was in control.

The beginning of the end began when Matt suffered a back injury—he had been lifting an engine when he felt a pop. The next day he could barely walk. Matt called his mother to let her know that the doctor gave him Percocet. Matt struggled with an addiction to Percocet for seven years. During that

time he lost everything he had worked so hard to gain. He tried to continue working on cars while he was abusing pills, but it was obvious to his steady customers that something was terribly wrong and they took their business elsewhere. His business closed six months after his injury. After missing too many mortgage payments his beach house was repossessed by the bank. Everything he loved now gone.

During those seven years Matt was in and out of treatment. Due to his insurance, however, Matt was never permitted to stay for the length of time he needed to learn how to handle life without pills. He would come home clean and his family would look into his clear eyes and thank God that Matt was back. He was such a joy to be around. He didn't want to be tortured by cravings. Our life would start to feel normal again but his family's joy was short-lived when, within a matter of weeks, Matt returned to his world of numbness and the cycle began again.

Matt's last attempt to get clean took place at a treatment center close to home. As his mother watched Matt struggle with demons that had plagued him for most of his adult life, she was proud and hopeful. Matt was coming back. Each time she visited she was greeted by his clear eyes and beautiful smile. She remembers sitting together looking out over the water. Matt was headed to a recovery home in Florida. She was unsure about his decision but remembered every book she read always talked about how different people, places and things are the best choice to support new sobriety. When Matt left for Florida on June 2, 2014, he wrapped her up in a big bear hug and told her he was so happy to have the monkey off his back. Little did she know that monkey would find him in Florida.

Matt was starting a new life and Once again he was living by the sea—his happy place. He found a job, his self esteem returned, and his mother believe that this was his "ah-ha" moment, that finally he was in a good place.

For reasons her heart will never understand, Matt relapsed and died. He lost his battle on January 3rd, 2015.

CAROL HODGES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carol Hodges for being honored by the Arvada Chamber with the Chairman's Choice Award.

The Chairman's Choice Award 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.

Carol Hodges serves the Arvada Chamber and her community with a sense of pride, energy and commitment. She is always willing to step up when called upon and works diligently to see each project through to the end. Carol's kindness and service has made a difference in Arvada and helped make it a great place to live, work and play.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Carol Hodges for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4,