

IN RECOGNITION OF LEWISVILLE
ISD'S MARCHING BANDS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Flower Mound, Marcus, and Hebron High School bands for their noteworthy success at the 2016 UIL Class 6A Marching Band Contest. These Lewisville ISD bands achieved the first, second and third place honors, setting a first-time UIL record for a single school district to win the top three spots in the largest classification. Their outstanding performances were made possible through the talents, perseverance and hard work of the band students under the incredible leadership of Brent Biskup at Flower Mound, Andy Sealey at Hebron, and Amanda Drinkwater at Marcus.

The Flower Mound High School band won the state marching contest for the first time in the school's history as well as secured its second consecutive top spot at the Bands of America Super Regional competition four days earlier. Their rise to victory is no doubt due to their creative and extraordinary dedication to their craft. Hebron High School took a narrow second place, and their achievements this year have served to inspire the students around them. Marcus High School finished in third place, and had previously been consecutive five-time winners. Their long-term success reflects well on the organization and the students and parents who make the show possible.

It is a privilege to represent these bands and the Lewisville Independent School District in the U.S. House of Representatives. I look forward to seeing more great accomplishments from LISD and their bands and wish them the best of luck in all future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING FAMILIES AF-
FECTED BY THE NATIONAL
OPIOID EPIDEMIC

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to include in the RECORD today the personal stories of families from across the country that have been affected by the opioid and heroin epidemic. In the U.S. we lose 129 lives per day to opioid and heroin overdose. In my home state of New Hampshire I have learned so many heartbreaking stories of great people and families who have suffered from the effects of substance use disorder.

Earlier this year, my colleagues and I were joined by many of these courageous families who came to Washington to share their stories with Members of Congress and push for action that will prevent overdoses and save lives. Since then, we passed both the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the 21st Century Cures Act to provide much needed funding and critical policy changes to fight this epidemic.

The advocacy of these families truly is so important to leading to change in Washington, and I am proud to preserve their stories.

JONATHAN SPARKS—LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Jonathan was a sweet young man who started off on a rocky note when he was diagnosed with Neuroblastoma cancer at the age of four. He battled this for a year and a half, which involved invasive treatments such as a stem cell transplant. His prognosis was very grim, but thanks be to God he made it and entered Kindergarten right before his 6th birthday.

It took a long time for Jonathan's stamina to improve after undergoing such intensive treatment and as a result, he was bullied as a child. He just couldn't keep up with the other kids during activities. This made him compassionate towards others who were less fortunate than he was, and he would take up for these people or help them in any way he could. Jonathan was always a people person. He would and could strike up a conversation with anyone; he felt just as comfortable talking to a politician as he did a homeless man.

During his teenage years Jonathan felt left out and like he didn't fit in with his peers. He struggled with academics due to what he had been exposed to during the cancer treatments. He was forced out of private school because of this learning disability. He went to public school his junior year, and in trying to fit in he fell in with a crowd he should have stayed away from. As soon as he turned 18, he dropped out of school during his senior year.

Jonathan was passionate about basketball and cooking. He never excelled at basketball because, again, he just couldn't keep up. He suffered from severe back pain due to radiation. But he knew stats about basketball that you wouldn't believe. He loved a lot of NBA teams, but his favorite was Miami Heat. Jonathan could cook anything; he was an avid food network watcher and could have given some of those people a run for their money. He watched "Diners, Drive-ins and Dives," and loved to eat at the places where Guy, the host, did his shows. His dream was to become a chef.

Sometime between the ages of 18 and 20, Jonathan was introduced to Xanax. His mother assumes it was in order to ease his back pain. From there he got into heroin. She does not know when he started using because he was good at keeping it a secret from our family. He came home in April of 2015 and stayed home all summer. He never went anywhere; he just hung out at home watching cooking shows and basketball games.

In August he started working at Pizza Hut. Around the middle of the month he was called by some friends who didn't have a car and needed a ride to the hospital—they were about to have a baby. Two weeks later he spent the Saturday of Labor Day weekend with these two women and their newborn. They went to the local skate park that evening to buy heroin. According to his friends, Jonathan went into the restroom to use and when he emerged he was unable to walk. The women helped him into his own car and then drove him around for 2 or 3 hours thinking that he would sleep it off. Finally, they drove him to the ER and dumped him in front of the door. By this time, Jonathan's body tissue was dying and his organs were shutting down. Jonathan was in a coma for 20 days and died 6 days after his 21st birthday, on September 26, 2015.

NICHOLAS "NICKY" DANIEL TOH V—PAGOSA
SPRINGS, COLORADO

Nicholas Daniel Toth V was born on December 27, 1995 in Pagosa Springs, Colorado. He was a miracle as far as his parents were concerned—they literally smothered the poor kid. Nicky was his parents shining star. Never in their life did they ever think they would only have 19 years with him.

Nicky was the oldest of his two brothers. The Toth family was blessed with two more sons, Jackson and Harrison. Life was perfect. They were all raised in a beautiful mountain town. We volunteered tirelessly in our community. As parents, the Toths didn't just go to every sporting event their boys had, they coached them. You name it and they did it for their boys. They ate organic foods and planted their own gardens. Life was effortless and delightful.

All of this changed one awful night when Nicky was in 6th grade and sexually violated by one of his peers. After that he was never the same. That same boy went on to bully Nicky and the school district did nothing. The Toth family received no community or school support. They felt abandoned but Nicky felt it the most. Following that year, the Toths decided as a family to move back east to New Jersey in order to be closer to friends and family where they felt they could get the most support, and more importantly, save their Nicholas.

Unfortunately, that one awful night shaped Nicky's teenage path. He didn't talk about it; he wouldn't and couldn't. Instead, Nicky started self-medicating—beginning with alcohol and marijuana. From there he moved to Xanax that he got from other parents' medicine cabinets. Then, Nicky discovered the love of his life, heroin. The Toth family was in turmoil. Nicky was in and out of treatment centers and jail. He missed multiple holidays. He wanted nothing more than to be happy and healthy.

During his active addiction, Nicky was in jail from January 2014 to June 2014 and again from July 2014 to February 2015. He finally came home March 20, 2015. The entire Toth family was so hopeful but also scared. Nicky was at least safe while in jail. He participated in outpatient programs and got a job. His family had no idea he started using again.

In April 2015, Nicky overdosed in his family's home and lived to see another day. Following that night, Nicky went to inpatient treatment in South New Jersey. His family were so hopeful because Nicky completed his 30 day program and organized himself into a sober living home. The person in charge said he had never had such a tenacious applicant. Nicky was ready to start his life. He lived in the house for two weeks.

On Friday, June 12, 2015, Nicky's mother went to see him after work and took him to dinner. She kissed his face, hugged his big shoulders and laughed together for the last time. On the morning of June 14th, the local police came to the Toth family's home to inform them that they lost their son. He was found in Newark. He was all alone.

AIDAN VANDERHEOF—MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA

Aidan Vanderheof grew up surrounded by love and attention. His life had bumps along the way, most of which were created by his family. Aidan's parents divorced when he was about two years old. He lived with mother but had a lot of visitation time with his dad. When he was about twelve, Aidan went to live with his dad in Bismarck and started playing JV football. He had loads of friends and got along easily with everyone. Aidan went back to live with his mother when he was sixteen.

Like any teenager, Aidan pushed the boundaries. He bought a pick-up truck the second he got his driver's license and would haul around as many of his friends as could fit in it. Around that time many family arguments started to emerge and Aidan began having trouble in school. Many nights he wouldn't come home, but he always had an excuse—he fell asleep on a friend's couch, for example. Over time, his absences increased at home and at school. Aidan's mother had

to report him as a runaway to the police too many times to count. Meanwhile, some of his friends, parents would hide him and cover for him.

Aidan came under the supervision of the juvenile criminal justice system when he was caught using a stolen credit card. For a period of time he wore an ankle monitor and seemed able to comply with the rules until he had the opportunity to break them. During this time, Aidan was referred to the Child and Adolescent Partial Hospitalization (CAPH) program through our local hospital. The program was set up during school hours and included group counseling, individual therapy, and schoolwork. His mother also worked with Aidan in family therapy and in-home counseling. He adhered to the schedule and completed the program.

Aidan was a fantastic liar. Principals, counselors, and many others got caught in his web. While under court supervision, he took random drug tests and would frequently test positive for benzodiazepines, amphetamines, and marijuana. At the time, his mother believed that his substance use wasn't all that serious because they were all prescriptions and she knew a lot of kids experimented with them.

Aidan was caught in the act of yet another crime. Prior to that, he had done things his mother could not prove: stolen all of her valuable jewelry, taken a bottle of amphetamines prescribed to her by her doctor, broken the window out of her vehicle the night before Mother's Day to steal change and cigarettes, stolen his grandparent's car when they were on vacation and busted a door to get alcohol.

When Aidan was finally placed in juvenile detention, his mother was scared to death for him and visited him once a week. Later, Aidan was placed in a Youth Correction Center in Mandan, North Dakota. His mother went to see him a number of times. Eventually, Aidan was placed at Prairie Learning Center in Raleigh, North Dakota where he spent about six months. All reports from his primary counselor were positive. Like everywhere else Aidan had been, he got along with everybody. Soon after, Aidan graduated from the program.

In the middle of June 2015, Aidan was caught on a surveillance camera using a stolen credit card in Bismarck. His dad saw it on the Police Department's Facebook page and contacted Aidan and his mother. Aidan and his father made an appointment to visit with a detective about the situation but right before the appointment, Aidan disappeared.

On July 4, 2015, Aidan's mother was awakened by a pounding on the door. A police officer stood by the door and informed the family that Aidan was found dead. He was only 19. Initially the police thought that Aidan had died of an accidental OxyContin overdose. There was a shoelace around his arm and a spoon near his body. He was found in the basement of a home. The people who were with him admitted they had been using and would test positive for OxyContin.

In the end, it was determined that Aidan died of a heroin overdose with methamphetamine in his system. The state has struggled to prosecute those with him when he died. His death was not quick, and no one called 9-1-1 until after he was dead.

T.J. WADSWORTH—COLLEGEVILLE,
PENNSYLVANIA

T.J. Wadsworth grew up to be curious, friendly, smart, had many friends, and was a good student. In middle school, T.J. was one of the kids that came home after the drug presentation and talked about how bad drugs are, and that he would never do them. Less than one year later, in 8th or 9th grade, T.J.

started smoking marijuana and it is believe he started drinking alcohol at the age of 16 or 17, at parties with his high school friends. Until his senior year, T.J. was doing what some teenagers do; go to school every day, complete schoolwork, work a part-time job, and then smoke/drink with friends on the weekends.

During his senior year of high school T.J. was high and/or drunk and offered a pill. It was that one pill, that one decision that sealed T.J.'s fate. Things for T.J. quickly escalated and later spiraled out of control when he went off to college. When T.J. would come home for vacation he was out every night.

T.J.'s grades for the first two years of college had been acceptable. He later joined a fraternity and he was having more fun than he should, and not studying the way he should have been. His mother later found out that T.J. stopped attending his classes the fall semester of his junior year and his friends were concerned.

When he came home for Christmas break his junior year, T.J.'s mother was so worried about him that she set up an intervention and offered to take him to a treatment facility. She did not know at that time how serious T.J.'s addiction was. T.J. stayed out every night and always appeared to be drunk or high. The many times she tried to talk to him about drugs he always denied that he had a problem, saying he was home from college and just having fun with his friends.

Instead of returning to school the spring semester of his junior year, T.J. was admitted to an inpatient treatment facility for 30 days. His mother came to find out that what started in his senior year of high school, with trying that pill, turned into a heroin addiction two years later.

After completing treatment, T.J. stayed clean for about six weeks and turned to drugs after several stressful events. His mother will never forget walking into the basement and finding him on the couch in the dark crying. T.J. hated what drugs had done to his life. After two months of taking drug tests on a regular basis, which he would periodically failed, T.J. went back into treatment. This time T.J. only stayed for two weeks.

When talking with T.J.'s drug counselor about why he released earlier than expected she said, that T.J. seemed to know what he had to do and had told her that he did not want to end up dead or in jail. Four days after he was released from the second treatment facility, his mother came home from work early after not being able to get in touch with T.J. She went to his bedroom, but the door was locked. She banged and screamed his name. Finally she called 911, so they could break into his room. The police told her a few minutes after breaking into his room that T.J. died from a heroin overdose. That was May 28, 2014.

MARK WALSH—BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Mark loved spending time with his family and cared for his siblings like they were his own. Whenever he found the time, he worked on his cars and motorcycles. He went above and beyond for anyone who needed help, whether that meant getting them a meal or helping them find a place to stay for the night. One might say he was generous to a fault.

At any given time in his life, Mark was fighting for or against something. At an early age, he was in a house fire and was later deemed a hero for running back into the burning building to alert others to the exit. The incident left Mark so badly burned that he had to stay in Shriner's Hospital for several months. The physical scars from this event influenced how people treated him.

Growing up, Mark was teased about his appearance by kids who didn't know better. Even though these interactions emotionally hurt him, Mark would never let you know it. Mark was private about his pain throughout his life.

Mark was the second oldest in a family of five. Raised in a single parent home, he tried taking on the role of a father figure when he hit his teen years. Mark wanted to give his siblings everything they didn't have and make their lives better. Academics weren't interesting to him, so Mark dropped out of school and began selling marijuana, which got him into trouble with the law. Mark's license was suspended but he never paid the fines or stopped driving. He was sent to jail several times for driving without a license.

Once Mark had a criminal record, finding a job was difficult. Fortunately, his extended family had a few businesses where he was able to get work but Mark couldn't hold down a job for any extended period of time. Between stints in and out of jail, he dabbled in using prescription medication. In 2005 at the age of 22 and in-between relapses, Mark had a beautiful son named Travis. Unfortunately, Mark wasn't ready to be a father and his family watched as he struggled with substance abuse.

In 2007, Mark met and married his wife, Sarah. She had a son named Patrick who was the same age as Travis. Mark and Sarah were both in recovery and worked beautifully together. Their early years were some of his best. Mark went to work every day, supported his family, and made time to indulge in his passion for fixing cars and motorcycles. In 2008, Mark and Sarah gave birth to a gorgeous daughter, Emma Grace.

Some blissful years later, a hand injury put Mark out of work. He underwent surgery, which came with a prescription for pain medication. The downward spiral began again. Mark checked into treatment various times and kept getting into trouble with the law. His drinking got out of control, along with his substance use. Mark and Sarah moved to Cape Cod where her parents were living for some extra support, but that only lasted for so long. They weren't able to overcome their addictions there together. Mark and Sarah separated and the years that followed were tumultuous ones filled with stints in more treatment and attempts at recovery.

In January 2016, Mark went to a program and loved the month he spent there, doing the hard work of dealing with all of the emotional baggage that comes with the disease of addiction. Mark was grateful to have a support system of friends and doctors who were there to walk him through the difficult process of recovery. However, within days of coming back home, he felt himself slipping and made a call to Malibu to arrange a return. The day before his flight, Mark overdosed at home alone.

We need reform in our country so that those struggling with addiction can have their needs met. If insurance had covered treatment for Mark closer to home, perhaps he would not have had to travel all the way to California in order to receive the services he so desperately needed. Maybe Mark would still be with us today.

COREY WATSON—GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Growing up, Corey had dyslexia and other learning challenges. He was shy, quiet, and very sensitive. He loved animals and was always sympathetic to others. All of that changed on his 13th birthday on September 13, when he got hit by a car while riding his bike. He landed on his head and was taken to the ER but they didn't find anything wrong with him.

Over the next two weeks, however, he changed drastically. His personality went

from painfully shy to aggressive and he became a risk taker—it was frightening. His mother took him to many neurologists but nobody could help. It seemed like there was no way to fix his injured brain. Corey then became depressed and got into drugs. He went in and out of the Brattleboro retreat in Vermont, including a period during which he went to school there until he started committing crimes and got caught up in the legal system, which never seems to help. This cycle was hard to watch because there was nothing his mother could do to help him, even though she tried everything: different therapists, medications, specialists, etc. In September, he started using heroin and fell in love with a girl. Some time after that, they decided to get clean together and admitted themselves into rehab in Boston. His mother picked Corey up on Christmas Eve so he could come and spend the holidays in Massachusetts with his family. His mother never seen him so happy.

One day, Corey called his mother around 5 o'clock and asked her to wire him some money for laundry and snacks. He had only been in the step-down unit for a few days after spending three weeks in a secure treatment facility. He had more freedom in the sober house—he was getting himself to and from meetings and appointments. He took the money his mother sent him and used it to buy drugs. Corey's roommate found him unresponsive. They did manage to revive him a couple of hours later but he never regained consciousness. Corey was brain-dead for three days before he was removed from life-support on February 1, 2014. Corey died of an unintentional overdose.

WILLIAM "WILL" HEAD WILLIAMS—NEW YORK,
NEW YORK

William Head Williams died of an accidental overdose shortly before his 24th birthday. Two years before his death, his parents first became aware that their son was using heroin. At the time William was already seeing a psychotherapist and over the next two years his family added various additional support systems to help William's struggle. These included an addiction psychiatrist, outpatient treatment, treatment with Suboxone, inpatient detox, inpatient treatment, outpatient treatment, outpatient detox, treatment with Vivitrol, more outpatient treatment, another inpatient treatment, more outpatient treatment, well over a dozen trips to and from the emergency rooms of at least four different hospitals, an attempt to work with another addiction psychiatrist, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Narcotics Anonymous. A home life fraught with tension, despair, sometimes hopeful during intermittent periods of sobriety, and always filled with the apprehension of misfortune. That apprehension became fact when William accidentally overdosed. Six weeks of comatose and/or heavily medicated hospitalization followed before the ultimate realization that William was consigned to a persistent vegetative state.

As a family, William's parents struggled from the beginning to find both their own support system and ways to engage and encourage William in recovery. In the beginning, they kept William's and their battle to themselves, in the interest of protecting his privacy and their own. William still had career goals and ambitions that could be thwarted with heroin use on his "résumé." While it's harder for them to admit, William's parents also kept quiet out of some sense of embarrassment or shame.

Over the course of time, with the help of addiction counselors, and sharing their circumstance at Al-Anon in particular, William's parents came to understand that they were not alone. There were, in fact, many

families like them, negotiating their response to addiction: discovering what they were powerless over, battling for the courage to confront what they could control, and, at least in their case, fighting desperately to distinguish between the two. There was and is relief in knowing that others suffer the same struggle, zigzagging along a tortuous path, enduring dead ends in hope of a solution, bravely putting in the work to realize a more promising and serene future. Yet, their story and others remained anonymous, pit stops at an emotional leper colony, quite separate from a world racing on.

Out of choice and necessity, when William's parents chose to remove him from life support, they offered William's story to virtually everyone they knew in the days just prior to his death and in the interim before his memorial service. In return, more and more people surrendered their personal horrors to the family. From even the most reserved and private came narratives of heroin overdoses, cocaine abuse, weeks and months in rehab, alcohol relapse, addiction to pills. Addiction is, as the Williams family has learned, a family disease. The number of stories they have heard of wives, daughters, fathers, sons, nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters—not in counseling or therapy scenarios, but from people who recognize their pain and somehow want to comfort them, or to comfort themselves through them, is staggering.

DALTON WOMACK—LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Dalton was born September 20, 1991. Anyone who was lucky enough to meet Dalton will never forget him. He had a smile that was absolutely contagious—you couldn't help but feel good when he was around and in good spirits. Dalton's love for children was always present. He could relate to children like no one else; he cared about how they felt and also he cared for them in a way that they knew Dalton was a friend.

The respect Dalton gave to the elderly was admirable. He would go out of his way to open a door, walk someone to their car, or carry their groceries. It was his nature to help others. Dalton did whatever was needed without even blinking an eye.

Dalton was a friend to anyone he would meet—in other words, he never met a stranger. Music was in his soul and he loved it more than anything (other than being with his friends and family). Dalton was a caring person and gave everything he could; on many occasions right down to his last dollar—he would go without it just to make sure someone else had what they needed. He lived his life unselfish and had a huge heart.

Before his family knew it, Dalton was struggling with addiction. His addiction started off small and became more powerful; bigger than they could ever imagine. His family had countless conversations but nothing seemed to help; therefore, they turned to treatment.

Dalton's family's worst fear came on July 8, 2016; the dreaded phone call that every parent hates but knows at some point might come. Dalton was gone. Not just out of town, not just going to the store and be back later but gone. He died at the hands of a steering wheel, with addiction gripping him. He was by himself, all alone.

His family received the news from the emergency room doctor and chaplain—the conversation still plays over and over in their head. The pain today still hurts as if it were yesterday and probably will forever. But one thing they know to be true, if Dalton and the many others could have the opportunity to look ahead and see how tragic life could end with addiction, maybe just maybe things would be different. Hell isn't six feet under; Hell is loving and missing a son who had addiction.

TRIBUTE TO THE RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES OF CENTRAL IOWA

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Iowa for its 35 years of service to families in need.

Since opening its doors in August of 1981, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Iowa has provided a "home away from home" for over 10,000 families whose children are undergoing medical treatment. In 2011 alone, the 12-room facility provided a home for over 400 families from 71 of Iowa's 99 counties and 10 other states. Families are asked to contribute a nominal fee each night, but if they cannot afford to do so, they are not turned away. The philosophy at the Ronald McDonald House in Des Moines is that one of the best medicines for a severely ill child is the love of their family right by their side during challenging times. It is humbling to see the widespread support from Iowa businesses and individuals that keep the doors open at the Ronald McDonald House of Central Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Iowa for its 35 years of serving families under the most difficult of circumstances. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them and wishing nothing but the best.

IN HONOR OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FLOATING HOSPITAL

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th anniversary of The Floating Hospital (TFH), located in Long Island City, New York, in the district I am privileged to represent. TFH was founded in 1866 with the goal: "To afford relief to the sick children of the poor of the City of New York without regard to creed, color, or nationality." Today, TFH serves thousands of victims of domestic violence, homeless families, and public housing residents.

Though it is a land-based organization today, TFH derives its name from the series of ships which housed the hospital and regularly sailed through New York Harbor, providing children and their caregivers with recreational opportunities on board, as well as healthcare services, health and nutrition education, and a respite from an overcrowded city. The idea was inaugurated by George F. Williams, a managing editor at The New York Times, when he saw newsboys being forced off the grass in City Hall Park by police and ordered to stay on the walkways where the hot concrete burned their feet. Their plight inspired him to appeal to the Times's readership to donate money for a boat trip for newsboys and bootblacks. These trips soon became more regular and were taken over by St. John's