

2011 Wyoming Starfish Thrower Awards



The Starfish Thrower Story: There are many versions of the Starfish Thrower story, and the following is an example of just one.

"I awoke early, as I often did, just before sunrise to walk by the ocean's edge and greet the new day. As I moved through the misty dawn, I focused on a faint, faraway movement. I saw a boy, bending and reaching and waving his arms – dancing on the beach, no doubt in celebration of the perfect day soon to begin.

"As I approached, I sadly realized that he was not dancing, but rather bending to sift through the debris left by the night's tide, stopping now and then to pick up a starfish and then standing, to heave it back into the sea. I asked the boy the purpose of the effort. 'The tide has washed the starfish onto the beach and they cannot return to the sea by themselves,' he replied, 'When the sun rises, they will die, unless I throw them back to the sea.'

"I looked at the vast expanse of beach, stretching in both directions. Starfish littered the shore in numbers beyond calculation. The hopelessness of the boy's plan became clear to me and I pointed out, 'But there are more starfish on this beach than you can ever save before the sun is up. Surely you cannot expect to make a difference.'

"He paused briefly to consider my words, bent to pick up a starfish and threw it as far as possible. Turning to me he simply said,

'I made a difference to that one.'

To honor the message of this parable, the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division of the Wyoming Department of Health will host the 2011 Annual Starfish Thrower event to acknowledge those who are working tirelessly to improve the lives of persons suffering from mental illness and/or addictions. The recipients will be recognized as the "Starfish Throwers" during the Starfish Luncheon, July 16, 2011, at Little America, Cheyenne. *For more information, visit <http://health.wyo.gov/mhsa>.*

The 2011 Annual Starfish Awards will specifically acknowledge one individual or group from each of these categories:

- Person in recovery from substance abuse
- Person in recovery from mental illness
- Family or parents in recovery
- Person who has advocated for public change regarding substance abuse or mental health issues
- Person or group under the age of 25 years who has contributed to changing substance abuse or mental health issues
- Organization, program, provider, or coalition that has contributed to changing on substance abuse or mental health issues
- Person, organization, provider, coalition, or program that has made significant contributions to prevention in the field of substance abuse or mental health
- Substance abuse or mental health therapist
- Rodger McDaniel Award: A person who has demonstrated exceptional courage to address a community or statewide human needs issue (state employees or elected officials are not eligible for the McDaniel Award)

Please limit comments to the space provided.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

NOMINATION SUBMITTED BY:

SUBMITTER'S PHONE NUMBER:

Nominee's Release of Information—Required

I hereby give my consent to be nominated for a Starfish Award. By my signature I authorize the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division and the Wyoming Department of Health to use my name, my photograph and the information in this nomination form for the purpose of publicizing the Starfish Award event. I understand that the release of this information to the media may result in members of the media asking additional questions about my experiences. I understand that I may choose to answer or not to answer any such question. I sign this authorization willingly and with full notice that it may result in the publication of this information in newspapers, on radio and television among other public exposure.

Name:

Date:

Phone Number:

Address:

Email Address:

Town:

Signature: _____

For more information, visit <http://health.wyo.gov/mhsa>