



Hillsborough County Anti Drug Alliance

February 26, 2009

Goodwill, HCADA and the Studstill Family,

WOW!!! I can not thank you enough for recognizing me for the "Mark Studstill Award of Excellence" which was presented to me last week. As you can tell, I was speechless and didn't know what to say. I had been asking who was going to receive this award because it was very dear to me. There are so many individuals in our community that are deserving of this award and I had no idea that I would have the honor of receiving it.

Mark and I worked together for about 1 ½ years. I will always have the utmost respect and love for him as a person and for his passion to help people. Mark was amazing. He was always smiling and laughing and had a joke or funny story to share. He loved his wife and family and spoke of them often. Even while he was going through chemo – he was positive and brightened everyone's day.

It is a pleasure to work in the community and with our youth. They have a voice and they want to be heard. It has been exciting to see changes in our community because of what our youth has accomplish. We are in 22 middle and high schools and the teens get the message out that "Big Tobacco" companies manipulate, deceive and lie to our teens to get them to buy this deadly product. They do this through displays, posters, read tobacco facts on the in-school morning shows, presentations and events in the community, and so much more. I am thankful to work with an amazing group.

Any way, this "Mark Studstill Award of Excellence" means so much because, to me, it exemplifies passion, love for people, hard work, humor, dedication, and so much more that Mark stood for. I am honored to be chosen as this years' recipient and will display my plaque with pride.

I know it was difficult for many at the meeting because we all still miss Mark and everyone was emotional. I wish I could have spoken from my heart to express the gratitude I had in receiving this very special award.

Thank you very much-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Ellston".

Laurie Ellston
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