



# Mariah's Messenger

The newsletter from the Mariah Daye McCarthy Scholarship Foundation

Vol. 5 Fall 2015

## Recipients receive \$47,000 in Scholarships SCHOLARSHIP CLASS OF 2015

May 20, 2015 was a night of celebration for 47 area high school seniors as they accepted their Mariah's Challenge scholarships. The night also served as the crowning event of the organization dedicated to end underage drinking and driving under the influence.

Each student received a \$1,000 scholarship for successfully going through Middle and High School without drinking alcohol or getting in a car with someone who has been drinking.

The challenge stems from the death of Mariah McCarthy, who was killed by an underage drunk driver in

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Abigail Dolan receives her scholarship certificate from Chad Okrusch at the 2015 Mariah's Challenge scholarship ceremony



Over 150 participants

## FIRST EVER HALF MARATHON

Local runners Matt Choquette and Lisa Minnehan posted blazing times in the first ever Mariah's Challenge Half Marathon race. The race saw 48 runners cross the finish line.

Choquette topped the men's 13.1-mile race, with a time of 1 hour, 28 minutes, 8 seconds. Don Foley came in second at 1:29:36, and Ted Connors placed third at 1:35:24.

Minnehan gets the women's title with a time of 1:31:34. Michele Bazzanella came in second at 1:41:37, and Rebecca Smith placed third at 1:42:13.

The 5-K race, run in conjunction with its longer counterpart, saw 109 runners, Butte's Jeff Braun and Tawnya Hermanson winning overall titles.

In 2014, the race began as a 5K and 1K fundraiser. Excitement for the race led organizers to believe a longer format would be more beneficial.

"The amount raised isn't tallied yet, but so many runners and families came out, that I feel it was a huge success for us once again," said Jenna McCarthy, Mariah's sister and organizer, who has visions of extending the race to the area's only full marathon in 2017.

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*"Every decision we make, no matter how large or small, no matter who is looking, is a chance to be a leader, a role model, and a healthier person. Whether you believe it or not, those small choices we make, over time, become the way we change our world."*

Jon Wick, Executive Director, 2015 Scholarship Ceremony



Remembering Mariah McCarthy and other angels who have left too soon

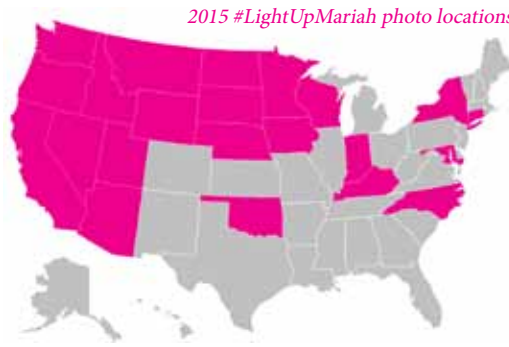
# #LIGHTUPMARIAH LIGHTS UP SOCIAL MEDIA

On Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2015, Mariah's Challenge asked residents, businesses, and organizations to turn on their porch lights or light a candle in a show of remembrance of the life of Mariah McCarthy and other angels who have left this world too soon because of alcohol, suicide, cancer, and other tragedies.

People from across the country participated, posting pictures on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter using the hashtag #LightUpMariah.

This is the second year of the #LightUpMariah remembrance and awareness social media event. The annual event is having numerous and far-reaching benefits to Mariah's Challenge.

"The idea of #LightUpMariah was to reconnect our community and supporters to the real reason



2015 #LightUpMariah photo locations

People who uploaded photos with the #LightUpMariah hashtag and indicated their location were posted from across the country. The 2015 #LightUpMariah event had over 22 states participate in remembering those angels lost too soon.



for Mariah's Challenge. Social media is a powerful tool to help get our message to the public and to have our community engaged with us," said director, Jon Wick.

At last count, nearly 200 photos were uploaded from at least 22

different states across the country.

"This is becoming a great annual event to remember our Mariah and help change the anniversary of her death into a day of peaceful remembrance," said Leo McCarthy.

Streamlined [mariahschallenge.com](http://mariahschallenge.com) allows more access

## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED IN AUGUST

This past August, after two months of hard work and dedication, Mariah's Challenge officially announced the launch of their updated and redesigned website, available at [www.mariahschallenge.com](http://www.mariahschallenge.com).

Our goal with the new website is to provide greater access to our mission and events. Also, the new format provides visitors an easier way to learn about the numerous impacts Mariah's Challenge has on individuals and our culture in general.

The new website features a more secure donation platform, and an interactive memorials map highlighting where our supporters are from.

Those looking to become more involved with Mariah's Challenge will find a specific navigation menu with

links to programs we offer, event schedules, and speaker requests. The Impacts page, full of testimonials directly from scholarship recipients, illustrates the true cultural change created as a result of these young leaders.

We hope you find the new website a fresh, easier way to access information and we also wish to establish this portal as a base camp source of information for those interested in Mariah's Challenge.

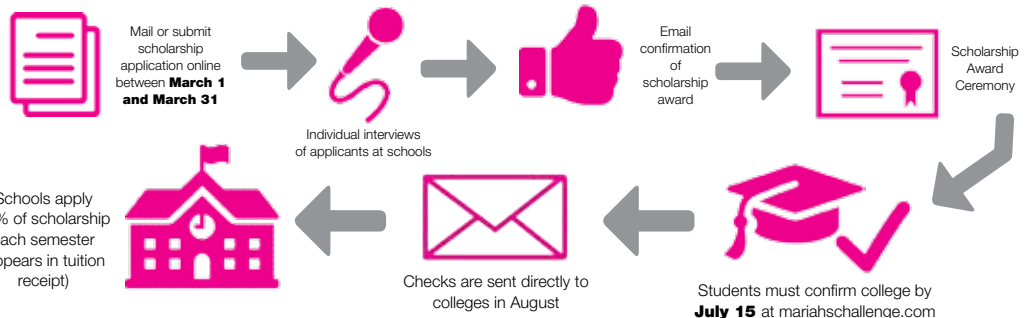


We would also like to thank the amazing staff of Vauthier/Ferguson for their time and energy to make this site what it is.

Graduating seniors from Butte area schools who qualify for the Mariah's Challenge scholarship, are encouraged to visit the website on March 1, 2016, where you can download or submit your application for consideration to join the Mariah's Challenge Class of 2016.

Paper applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2016.

## MARIAH'S CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROCESS





# NORTHWESTERN ENERGY

## What might someone be surprised to know about NorthWestern Energy?

NorthWestern Energy is an integrated utility company providing electric and natural gas service across about two-thirds of Montana, in eastern South Dakota and a portion of Nebraska. We have about 692,600 customers and more than 1,600 employees. About 80% of our customers, employees, and operations are in Montana. NorthWestern has deep roots in Butte and we are excited to be in the home stretch of the construction of a new General Office building on the corner of Park and Main Streets in uptown Butte.

Not many people realize that about 56% of the electricity we use to serve our customers here is generated by wind and water. The recent addition of hydro facilities gives us a very diverse generation portfolio, one that also includes coal and natural gas as critical components. We think that's a great mix for our customers and the company.



Paul Babb, Community Relations Manager for NorthWestern Energy, presents a donation to Leo McCarthy and Mariah's Challenge for \$1,000.

## Tell us about your decision to partner with Mariah's Challenge?

At NorthWestern Energy, we believe that we are not only a provider of energy, but also a partner in the overall success of our communities. Our partnership with Mariah's Challenge is an example of our corporate citizenship through contributions of time, talent, and resources to ensure the places we call home thrive.

We have the privilege of operating in some of the best areas of the United States. We have great customers and serve great communities. Making donations, supporting community organizations and being part of economic development efforts through our Community Works program is a form of investment that pays great dividends. The underlying philosophy of the program is straightforward: When our communities do well, we do well.



## What's your dream for Mariah's Challenge into the future?

Our dream for Mariah's Challenge is the continued progress in changing the culture of underage drinking; and drinking and driving. Mariah's Challenge changes and saves lives, and we are squarely behind this effort.

# Mariah's Challenge FLASHBACKS!



Clockwise from top left: the first ever Mariah's Challenge Scholarship class of 2009; President Obama wearing a Mariah's Challenge bracelet during a stop in Butte; Indianapolis Colt and Butte Native Colt Anderson speaking via video at the 2011 scholarship ceremony; Leo accepting the 2012 CNN Hero Top Ten honor presented by actor Josh Duhamel; special pink jerseys for Mariah's Challenge night at a Montana Tech Volleyball game



We would like to congratulate all of the CNN Heroes for their unflinching efforts to make our world a better place. We stand beside you, not just as a former CNN Hero, but as citizens of our world. As we continue our mission in memory of Mariah, we know she is also smiling down at the legion who share our hopes of providing and creating a better world. We look up to you.



**Class of 2015, from pg. 1**

2007 while she was walking home with her friends.

The event featured speakers including organization members Jon Wick, Jimm Kilmer, and Leo McCarthy. Current educator, activist, and former U.S. Senate Candidate Amanda Curtis was the keynote speaker and Paul Panisco was the evenings emcee.

Each message emphasized the importance of the accomplishment of abstaining from drugs and alcohol at such an influential time of life. Scholarship recipients were praised for the commitment to leadership and were challenged to continue their good habits amidst a challenging world.

“I get to live. My brother doesn’t have the chance to do the things I do. So I’m going to do these things, I’m going to live, in his honor,” said Curtis in her address. “Congratulations, from the bottom of my heart.”

The ceremony marked the first recipient of the Mariah’s Messenger Award, given to Dan Haffey. The award is presented to an outstanding individual in recognition of their tireless effort to further the mission of Mariah’s Challenge to end underage drinking and driving under the influence in Butte, Montana. Dan recently retired



*The Mariah’s Challenge Class of 2015 scholarship recipients*

from a 30-year career in the drug and alcohol prevention field.

Professional freestyle motocross racer and Butte native, Keith Sayers, also joined Leo McCarthy on stage to unveil Keith’s donation of a new, 3 feet tall, pink and white metal cross Keith built. It has since been installed on Blackfoot Lane in Butte, to mark the crash site and beautifully honor our angel.

Mariah’s Challenge has provided \$278,000 in scholarships to date.

The Mariah’s Challenge Class of 2015 scholarship recipients include Michelle Anderson, Jake Berger, Tanner Call, Kassidy Caprara, Blake Casagranda, Stuart Caughlan, BriAnna Collins, Justyce Connole, Elizabeth Cook, Clay Dean, Abigail Dolan, Caitlin

Evans, Jessica Flamand, Brittney Forsman, Benjamin Girdler, Britney Hendrickson, Kristine Heppler, Haley Hildreth, Mike Hogan, Seth Jaksha, Carlee Johnson, Jessica Jones, McKenzie Joseph, Lyndsi LeProwse, Samuel Maloney, Claire Manson, Ashten McCloskey, Conor McGee, Sierra McGinnis, Lindsey McLean, Maria Michelotti, Levin Mullaney, Lexus Murphy, Erin Olivieri, Lindsey Parvinen, Kennason Patrick, Kori Reilly, Julia Riley, Hannah Schaffer, Kaitlynn Schultz, Clay Seccomb, Hannah Skiles, Lindsay Torpey, Cortney Walsh, Shera Wanner, and Cree Weaselboy.



*“You have made a concerted, planned effort to make good decisions. That makes you leaders. I cannot wait to follow your path and see what you become and make of yourselves. Congratulations from the bottom of my heart.”*

**Amanda Curtis**  
2015 Scholarship Ceremony  
Keynote Speaker

*Clockwise from top left: Founder and President Jimm Kilmer, Founder Leo McCarthy, Dan Haffey receiving the Mariah’s Messenger Award, Keynote Speaker Amanda Curtis, and Ceremony Emcee Paul Panisco.*

# How you can Help!

## Mariah's CHALLENGE ten dollar DIFFERENCE

### The \$10 Difference!

We have recently upgraded our online donation platform to the safe, more convenient PayPal service. A one time or recurring financial donation as little as \$10 goes a long way to helping our youth! Head to our website to get started!

### MERCHANTS SUPPORTING



### Mariah's CHALLENGE

### Merchants Program

This new program is a nationwide partnership offering retail outlets a less expensive credit card processing fee-which a small portion of gets donated into our scholarship fund. If you or someone you know operates a retail location using credit cards is interested in lower fees while donating to Mariah's Challenge, please contact us today!



### Shop AmazonSmile

Head over to Amazon Smile and link your regular Amazon shopping account to Mariah's Challenge. Bookmark the site, then simply shop Amazon Smile rather than Amazon and know your purchases are helping raise scholarship money for our youth!



### Pennies for Mariah

If your business or organization would like to have a penny jug for people to donate extra change, please let us know! Current Pennies for Mariah locations are at: Three Bears Alaska, Park & Main Cafe, and Silverbow Pizza



### Presentations

Our presentations are sure to leave a lasting impression of positive growth. We ask for a presentation fee donation. Customize for schools, businesses, or organizations they also come with a promotional kit. Schedule yours today!



### License Plates

If you live anywhere in Montana, you can still support us with a Mariah's Challenge licence plate. Funds go directly to scholarships and the development of our educational materials! Ask about these plates or visit: <https://doj.mt.gov/driving/plate-designs-and-fees/>

Hickory, North Carolina

## MC IN NC

The After Hours program would like to thank Leo McCarthy and Mariah's Challenge for spreading their wings in Hickory, NC. The goal of After Hours is to inspire at risk high school students to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Leo's powerful message via Skype started a conversation towards stopping underage drinking. His inspirational presentation provided our students with the tools to make the right choices when faced with tough decisions. Children in high school face influences from every side — peers, movies, music, social media. But even in the face of all these pressures, there's still a secret weapon that can provide a positive counterbalance. It's called "talking".

By partnering with Mariah's Challenge, Leo helped us reinforce North Carolina's underage drinking campaign, "Talk It Out." This campaign involves talking about a problem that has been swept under the rug for too long. Hopefully, these conversations will change minds, protect our youth and help them to grow old!

Thank you Mariah's Challenge and Leo McCarthy for making a difference in North Carolina!

-Article submitted to Mariah's Messenger by Susan Woodrow.

## WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have a great Mariah's Challenge Story, event, or testimonial you'd like to share? We'd love to hear it! Send your experience to [info@mariahschallenge.com](mailto:info@mariahschallenge.com) and your story could end up in the next edition of Mariah's Messenger!



# MARIAH'S WINGS SPREADING IN NEW YORK

This past spring, Leo McCarthy Skyped with 5th graders in Brian O'Connor's Social Studies classes at the Seven Bridges Middle School in Chappaqua, NY. This was the third consecutive year that Leo brought Mariah's Challenge to these young middle schoolers, who have written letters to Leo and his family each year for the holidays.

The Mariah's Challenge messages of self-respect, building and maintaining positive relationships, and being responsible and confident in your decisions have now reached over 250 students on the other side of the country, thanks to these amazing Q&A sessions via Skype.

This past spring, Leo was joined by his daughter Jenna for the first time. The students had dozens of questions prepared for Leo and Jenna about Mariah, the obstacles that they have had to face as a family, and the tremendous work they are doing in Mariah's memory.

"I cannot thank Leo, Jenna, and Janice enough for what they have brought to my classroom and

to all of these kids. They have taught all of us so much about love, family and community bonds, dealing with adversity, showing perseverance, and being a good and positive person for everyone's benefit. The most important lessons that my students learn every year do not come out of our textbook or any worksheet that we do—they come from people like the McCarthy's and messages like the ones they hear from Mariah's Challenge," stated Mr. O'Connor.

Mr. O'Connor and his students first learned about Mariah's Challenge when they saw Leo being honored as a 2012 Top Ten CNN Hero. Ever since they learned about Leo's story, and the Mariah's Challenge mission, the positive messages of this program have been a big part of their classroom. The students felt compelled to send a letter to their new hero from Butte to offer their congratulations and encouragement. Leo offered to meet his new pen pals via Skype, and a wonderful new tradition was born.

*-Article and photos submitted to Mariah's Messenger by Brian O'Connor.*



Leo and the rest of the Mariah's Challenge crew criss-cross the state and country presenting Mariah's story to schools, businesses, and civic groups to spread awareness of underage drinking and to raise scholarship funds. Presentations are catered to each audience, occur in-person or on Skype, and include a promotional package. To request a presentation, please contact [info@mariahschallenge.com](mailto:info@mariahschallenge.com) or visit [www.mariahschallenge.com](http://www.mariahschallenge.com).

## OUR COMMUNITY IS OUR STRENGTH Continued on back page



For several years, Mariah's Challenge has been asked to present at the 6th grade graduation of Margaret Leary Elementary. This September, this school was named a 2015 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. We are sure proud of these future leaders and can't wait to see how they positively impact our world!



We would like to give a huge thank you to Bob Bennie, Barb Russell, and their families for their amazing support of the Mariah's Challenge Golf Tournament. They sponsored a hole, and were at the tee box grilling all day! We have been asked by the numerous players from that day if you're going to be back!! We sure hope you and your family do come, with or without your grill!



We would like to congratulate our Executive Director, Jon Wick, for being honored as a 2015 Distinguished Alumni from Montana Tech. We are proud of the work he has done for Mariah's Challenge and throughout the community of Butte. From Left to Right: Technical Communications Department Head Nick Hawthorne, Jon Wick, Chancellor Blackketter, Alumni Association President Dean Bentley

# 2015 Mariah's Challenge Scholarship By-the-Numbers



**11 Schools**  
**in 4 States**



Total \$\* **\$39,000**  
\*\$6K TBD



\$1K



The University  
MontanaWestern  
**MISSOULA COLLEGE**



\$2K

\$6K



\$17K



From Left: Lexi Murphey, Tanner Call, Carlee Johnson. These testimonial quotes from 2015 scholarship recipients were taken from each student's application essay. More testimonials directly from Mariah's Challenge scholarship recipients can be found at [mariahschallenge.com/impacts](http://mariahschallenge.com/impacts).

We ask you to consider helping Mariah's Challenge reach our annual fundraising goal of \$100,000 by using this envelope or by visiting our safe, secure donation platform at [www.mariahschallenge.com](http://www.mariahschallenge.com). All money provided goes directly into the the Mariah Daye McCarthy Scholarship Foundation.

Our organization would not exist or grow if there were no supporters to spread the message. Mariah's Challenge is grateful to our followers and sponsors for not only supporting our mission financially and sharing our mission far and wide, but for living our mission. Thank you to everyone in the Mariah's Challenge community for the nonstop support. If it were not for these loyal people and business sponsors, we could not continue on our mission to eliminate drunk driving and underage drinking. Together we have created a unified force no longer accepting of a drunken driving culture. Although it may seem like we still have a long road to travel, look at how far we have come, and be proud.



# OUR COMMUNITY IS OUR STRENGTH

From pg. 6



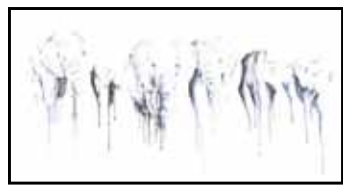
On May, 20, Butte police officers and firemen squared off at the 2015 Guns & Hoses charity basketball game. The game included celebrity coaches, former Montana Tech football coach Bob Green, and former University of Montana football coach Mick Delaney. A huge thanks to everyone putting on this great event. Police officer Ryan Hardy presented a check in the amount of \$7,050 to Leo McCarthy and Mariah's Challenge. We are so grateful to have been your chosen charity.



A big congratulations shout out to our good friend Travis Hettick for his induction into the Montana Tech Sports Hall Of Fame. Year after year, Travis works incredibly hard organizing the Mariah's Challenge Golf Tournament, which has brought tens of thousands of scholarship dollars to Butte's graduating seniors. Congrats 96!



At the 2015 scholarship ceremony, freestyle motocross racer and Butte native, Keith Sayers, unveiled a beautiful new pink and white metal cross that will replace the original cross marking the crash site on Blacktail Lane in Butte. This cross will stand as a resolute symbol for years to come. Thank you, Keith, from the bottom of our hearts for your incredible talents and generous donation to Mariah's Challenge.



We are so incredibly honored and thankful to have such amazing and thoughtful people supporting our cause. L to R: Olympic skier, artist, and Butte native, Brad Wilson ([www.bradleywilsonstudios.com](http://www.bradleywilsonstudios.com)); Hyalife clothing ([www.hyalifemontana.com](http://www.hyalifemontana.com)); Lisa Wareham Photography ([www.lisawareham.com](http://www.lisawareham.com))

