

Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation

February 2015

Dear Friend of Katrina Tagget,

Looking back on the past six years since Katrina's suicide, we are humbled and amazed at the community of support which has embraced our mission towards awareness and education of mental illness and suicide prevention. We feel honored towards everyone who has helped us to honor and remember Katrina in such a positive way. Our work will continue until the stigma, shame, and silence of suicide is no more.

Sara, David and Blake Tagget
Co-Founders

- The **Kara Tagget Open** was another sell-out, hosting 144 golfers, over 25 volunteers, and raising a record \$27,500. This year, Ryan Newcomb, Area Director for Maryland and Washington, D.C. from American Foundation for Suicide Prevention spoke about the increasing suicide rate in Maryland and the great impact AFSP Maryland is making both from fund raising and education. This brings the total funds raised in six years to \$128,000. See KatrinaTagget.org for list of sponsors.



Kara Tagget Open 2014



- KTMF supports **Art for Life**, an Open Art Studio for families and loved ones who have survived a suicide loss and for those who have survived a suicide attempt. The reasons someone takes their life are individual, but those who survive a suicide attempt may be able to help the survivors of suicide loss in their quest for understanding by sharing their story. Through the art process, survivors come together to create artistic pieces that shed light on the subject of suicide and mental illness. The creation of the art leads to transformation and healing that augments traditional therapy programs. **Art for Life meets the 2nd Sunday of the month at Grass Roots in Columbia and the 4th Sunday of the month at Make Studio in Baltimore. For more information, contact Julia Andersen at andersenjulia2@gmail.com**

Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation

- **New Initiative!** In the Fall of 2015, the Howard County Conservancy's Honor Garden will be home to the **Garden of Life**, a memorial garden to honor and to celebrate the lives of our loved ones who have died by suicide and to raise awareness about suicide. Those of us who have been left behind by suicide know all too well the shame and silence that follows grief of suicide. As survivors of suicide, we need to remind the world that our loved ones are worthy of our remembrance regardless of how they died; their death does not define their life. The garden is a way to remember and celebrate the lives we have lost to suicide.



The Howard County Conservancy is located on a 300-year-old, 232 acre farm at 10520 Old Frederick Road, Woodstock, Maryland. The garden will include plants that bloom throughout the seasons, a tree, a walkway, and a bench. The Howard County Conservancy provides the design, building, and maintenance of the garden. The garden will be funded by donations and all donations are 100% tax deductible. We are asking for those who may want to honor a loved one with a memorial plaque for a minimum donation of \$250. Donations can be made by check and mailed to Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation at 10351 Waverly Woods Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland 21042. Online donations can be made at KatrinaTagget.org. A GoFundMe site will also be available.

- The **Katrina Tagget Fellowship at Michigan State University** was awarded to junior student, **Cheryl Graff**. Cheryl truly exemplifies Katrina, a talented and giving young woman who lives with a learning disability. Cheryl is working on a project to educate MSU faculty and staff about technology for students with disabilities. KTMF does not provide financial support for the KT Fellowship. If you want to donate to the scholarship, you can donate online at the following address:
<https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/scholarships/tagget>



The Katrina Tagget Fellow, Cheryl Graff with David and Sara Tagget, and Darryl Steele, MSU
2014

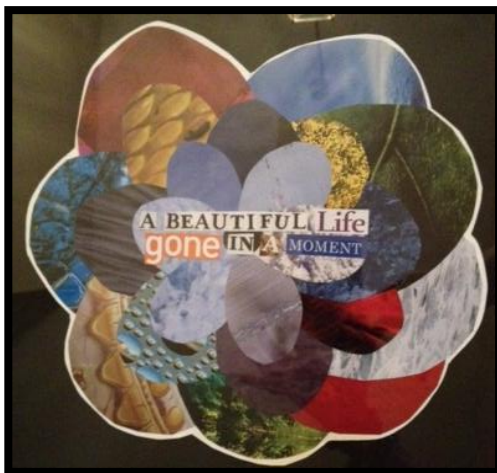
Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation

- KTMF continues to support local and national organizations and programs according to KTMF's mission. Our support includes **Michigan State University's** Freshman Accessing Community and Facing Survival (F.A.C.E.S.) program which includes depression screening and suicide prevention training; a local **Art for Life** program, an art therapy program for survivors of suicide loss and those who have survived a suicide attempt; **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)**, our various Out of the Darkness Walks have raised over \$25,000 for AFSP; **National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI)** and **Active Minds** for their programs targeted at adolescents and young adults, **I'M ALIVE**, a teen hotline on the eastern shore of Maryland, **Families for Depression Awareness**, a national organization helping families cope with mental disorders and prevent suicide, **The Compassionate Friends**, a national organization for those who have lost a child, grandchild, or sibling to death, **Change Matters**, a Howard County student leadership and entrepreneurship initiative partnered with Grassroots to prevent suicide, and **Grass Roots Crisis Center** for support of survivors of suicide and suicide prevention.



Sara Tagget at AFSP Advocacy
Conference
Washington, D.C.

- KTMF partnered with Mount Hebron High School's PTSA, AFSP, NAMI, Change Matters, and Grassroots to conduct a community workshop about mental health and suicide prevention called "Keeping Our Community Healthy".
- AFSP Maryland raised over \$500,000 in 8 walks across the state! 2015 is slated for 13 walks!
- Art for Life program was presented at the annual Maryland Suicide Prevention Conference.
- Sara and Blake were on a panel of Survivors of Suicide Loss at the Hospice of the Chesapeake.



A Beautiful Mind
By Sara Tagget

Made at Art for Life and donated to
AFSP, Party for Life 2014

ARTIST STATEMENT

SUICIDE is a tragedy. 90% of those who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable mental health condition at the time of their death. In a moment, suicide robs us of a loved one, someone whose life matters. The petals of the flowers were cut from Visions of Earth by National Geographic, a photo collection of all things of beauty, majesty and wonder on our planet. If only my daughter had understood that her pain of living would pass. In a single moment my beautiful daughter with a promising future was gone

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**Out of the Darkness Overnight
Walk, Philadelphia, 2014**

Thank you for allowing us to honor and remember Kara in so many positive ways. If you are reading this newsletter because you have lost someone to suicide or you love someone who is struggling to live, our heart goes out to you. We know all too well what it is like to live with someone who is struggling. Unfortunately deaths in the U.S. to suicide continue to rise; about 41,19 Americans die by suicide annually, twice the number of homicides. Suicide is now the number one cause of injury death in America, surpassing car accidents and unintentional poisonings including overdoses. 22 veterans die a day by suicide! Suicide is the 10th leading cause of

death in the U.S., and the only cause of death that is increasing, not decreasing. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds and the second leading cause of death among college students. Even one loss to suicide is one too many.

Most suicidal people are not psychotic or insane, they are usually upset, grief stricken, depressed or despairing. Suicide is preventable, 90% of those who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death. The CDC estimates 10% of the U.S. population has suffered major depression within the past year, at an estimated 311 million people in the US, that is 31 million people who have suffered major depression. One in four has a diagnosable and treatable mental health condition but only 25% seek help. Worldwide, over 1

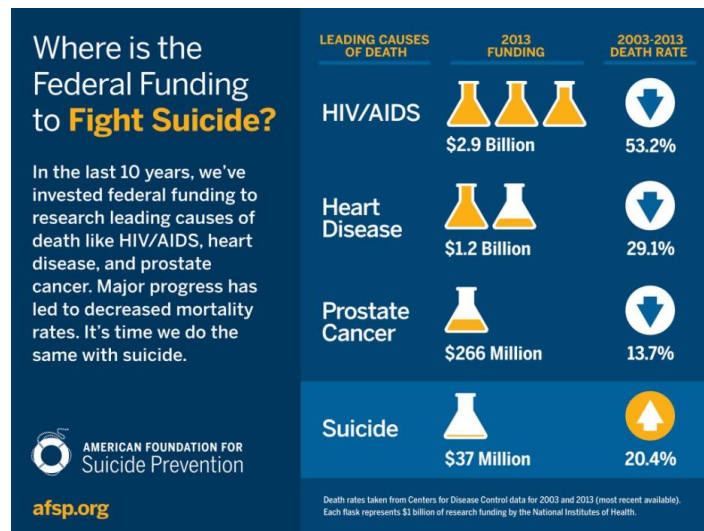


**Tree of Life
Donated to AFSP by KTMF
Out of the Darkness Walk, 2014**

million people die by suicide annually and that number is thought to be low. A death due to suicide is not always reported as a suicide due to the stigma associated with suicide. An estimated 1 million people in the U.S. survive a suicide attempt, and that number is low too as many attempts go unreported. Mental illness and suicide does not discriminate; it can happen to anyone regardless of gender, race, age, religion, or socio economic standing. We are all at risk. Surely the risk of mental illness and suicide to all of us warrants awareness, education, and treatment at least comparable to other illnesses such as breast cancer.

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Mental illness is treatable and suicide is preventable but only if we acknowledge the issues and aren't afraid to talk about them. Someone who is suffering mental illness will often suffer in silence and shame, afraid to seek treatment for fear of the consequences. Can you imagine having a heart attack and not going to the hospital for treatment? Why do we allow those who are mentally ill to not get proper diagnosis and proper treatment? Most of the time those who are willing to talk about mental illness and suicide are those who have either suffered a loss due to suicide or they themselves have survived an attempt. It shouldn't have to be that these issues get addressed only when and until someone is directly affected. If this continues, the problem will just continue to grow, and the sad thing is death by suicide is largely preventable.



So, what can we do? Help dispose of the myths. Talk about suicide with your family and friends. Talking actually lessens the incidence of suicide. Don't be afraid to get someone help for a mental health issue even if it means they will be angry that you did. A living ex-friend is better than a friend who is dead. Understand that suicide is not a disease; the mental illness issue that leads to suicide is the disease. There is proper diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses. Acknowledge that mental illness and suicide does not discriminate; we are all at risk. Familiarize yourself with the warning signs of someone at risk for suicide. Put the national suicide prevention lifeline phone number in your cell phone (1-800-273-8255). If the time comes, don't be afraid to make the call. You may just save a life.

Special Thank you

A very special thank you to the following individuals and groups who went above and beyond in their efforts to help us with our mission this year, Brian Greenbaum and the HABA group, Sara's friends who come every year to volunteer for the Kara Tagget Open, Mike O'Malley who graciously donated the dinner for the Kara Tagget Open, Tamara Van Newkirk (Grass Roots), Ryan Newcomb, Julie Metheny and the AFSP Maryland Chapter, Beverly Francis-Gibson (NAMI), Julia Andersen (Art for Life and Mike Hudson and the MSU RCPD Staff.

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Upcoming events

Art for Life is held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. For more information, contact Julia Andersen at andersenjulia2@gmail.com

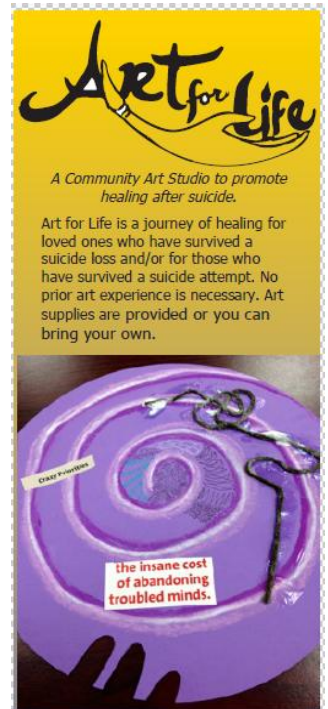
April 24 - Katrina Tagget Fellowship 2015 will be awarded at MSU.

June 10 - Party for Life hosted by the Maryland chapter of AFSP in Baltimore. Click here to get information or to register online. [click here to register or sponsor online.](#)



Out of the Darkness
Overnight Walk, 2014

June 27-28 - National Out of the Darkness Walk in Boston. Last year was our second year walking, but the experience was amazing, there are no words to adequately describe the impact the walk has had on our lives. The walk is up to 20 miles around Boston, if you can't make it all the way, they will pick you up and bring you to the finish line. We are walking with Your Life Matters team. Sign-up to walk or volunteer at the walk, or donate to a walker. If you are serious about walking and are having difficulty raising the required \$1,000 (\$750 if you are a student), send an email to stagget@verizon.net to find out about the grant program KTMF is offering. [click here to signup to walk, volunteer, or donate online.](#)



July 20 – 7th annual Kara Tagget Open

[click here to get information, register, or sponsor.](#)

September 7-13 – National Suicide Prevention Week with World Suicide Prevention Day on **Sept 10** and Suicide Prevention Symposium at Robinson's Nature Center on **Sept 11**.

September 20 – 7th anniversary of Katrina "Kara" Tagget's death

October 1 – Maryland Annual Suicide Prevention Conference at Martin's West, Baltimore.

October 18 - Out of the Darkness Walk at Lake Elkhorn in Columbia, Maryland. [click here to join Team Katrina "Kara" Tagget or to support a team member.](#)

November 21 - International Survivor of Suicide Day. [click here for information.](#)

December 13 – Worldwide Candle Lighting Service from The Compassionate Friends.



Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation
KatrinaTagget.org

If you are having suicidal thoughts?

If someone is at home with you, please tell that person how you feel right now, and ask him/her to help you find professional help. (Or call a dependable friend or family member)

CONTACT A PROFESSIONAL

Of if you have a counselor or medical doctor, please call him/her right now.
and tell a professional that you are having suicidal thoughts.

CALL A HOTLINE

If you don't have a close family member, friend, or counselor nearby to help you please call one of the numbers below and tell the person answering how you feel.

National Lifeline ----1-800-273 Talk (1 800 273 8255)

National Hopeline ----1-800-Suicide (1 800 784 2433)

Your Local Emergency Help (Grassroots – 410 531 6677)

911

THERE IS HELP IF YOU REACH OUT. PLEASE CHOOSE TO LIVE!!!!

Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation

How you can get involved in stopping the shame, silence, and stigma of mental illness and suicide

About 41,149 children, teens, and adults die by suicide in the U.S. annually. Unfortunately, the rate of deaths by suicide is increasing in this country calling for a greater urgency to do more to stop suicide. Below are six ways to get involved to raise awareness about this public health problem and to help save lives:

1. **Take a moment to learn about suicide** at www.AFSP.org and click on [understanding suicide](#). To further spread awareness, click the "share" icon on the top right of these pages to post to your social media accounts. If you haven't already done so, join the Katrina Tagget Memorial Foundation and Katrina Tagget facebook groups.
2. **Help us make suicide prevention a local and national priority.** Simply attending a local awareness and education event helps stop the silence of suicide. Organizations like NAMI , AFSP, and Grass Roots host local events and announce them in the local news, their web site, email, facebook, twitter, and other social media. You can join these organizations facebook pages and email lists free of charge to get the latest news. You could use your contacts and help arrange for awareness and education events in the school(s), your community, or local businesses. You could arm yourself with the skills to identify and prevent a possible suicide by getting trained in QPR (Question, Persuade, and Respond). You could join AFSP's field advocacy program to make suicide a national priority. [Click here](#) to find out more about the advocacy program.
3. **Get involved with the "Kara Tagget Open" event on Monday, July 20** at the Waverly Woods Golf Course, Marriottsville, Maryland. You do not have to be a golfer to be involved in this event. Consider being a sponsor or getting sponsors for the event. Ask someone you know to donate item(s) for the silent auction, prizes, and awards. Tell everyone you know about this amazing event; handout the brochures or direct them to KatrinaTagget.org to get involved. Help on the day of the event by volunteering your time. Come to the event and play golf by yourself or get a team together to play.
4. **Join us at the Out of the Darkness Walks, either in Boston on June 27-28 and/or the community walk in Howard County on October 18.** This will be our team's seventh year doing the walks and we have raised over \$25,000 for AFSP Maryland. You can join the team and walk by going to www.OutoftheDarkness.org and searching for either Team "Your Life Matters" for the National walk in June, or Team Katrina "Kara for the Community Walk in October. Once you join the team, you can get supporters, or not. Or you can make a donation online, even just \$20 helps!!! Donate to the Tagget Family. If you are going to walk with us in Philly, email stagget@verizon.net to find out about the grant program.
5. **Join us for International Survivor's Day on November 21.** If you have lost a loved one to suicide, please know you are not alone. For resources visit [coping with suicide](#). There will be nearly 300 healing conferences around the world. Last year, our local Howard County event was held at the Miller Library and had about 45 attendees. The program featured the national program as well as local survivors of suicide loss panel discussion. To watch the program online, visit <http://www.afsp.org/coping-with-suicide/international-survivors-of-suicide-day>.
6. **On September 20, remember Katrina "Kara" with a simple thought, smile, memory, or prayer.** Suicide does not discriminate; suicide knows no race, gender, ethnicity, or financial status. Just look at the picture of Katrina below. Does she look suicidal?



Katrina "Kara" Tagget

When we work together we can STOP, the SHAME, SILENCE AND STIGMA of mental illness and suicide. For EVERY LIFE MATTERS.

*Save a Life. Make the Call.
Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at
1-800-273-TALK (8255)*