



**NWACUHO Kay Rich Lifetime Achievement Award – Mark Chytracek
Nominated by Sarah Wolgemuth, University of Alberta**

I am writing to nominate Mark Chytracek for the Kay Rich Lifetime Achievement Award. This past weekend I, along with 1000 of Mark's family, friends, colleagues, and students attended his celebration of life at the Augustana campus at the University of Alberta. Mark has left a legacy that reaches far beyond Camrose, Alberta and I believe this award would help to honour his memory and devotion to our field.

The following is a piece I wrote for our Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) Journal, the Communique.

Honouring Mark Chytracek

It is with deep sadness that I share the passing of Mark Chytracek, Director, Student and Residence Services at the Augustana Campus, University of Alberta. Mark passed away October 9, 2015 from a heart attack. Mark is survived by his wife Brandi; children Jon (Angela), Amanda (Will), David (Jessi); grandson Noah and the rest of the Chytracek family. In the brief time since Mark's passing his legacy only grows with each memory and story shared.

For 33 years, Student and Residence Services was Mark's vocation. This might even be an understatement—Mark and his wife Brandi lived and raised their three children on-campus, in residence, for 17 years. Whether on campus or off, Mark and Brandi welcomed staff and students into their home and in the process redefined the concept of family. Mark breathed life into Augustana's residence and student services programs and in the process raised the bar for what we can do for students. He was integral in the development of Augustana and truly had a profound impact on many lives.

Beginning as a Residence Life Coordinator when he first joined Augustana's Camrose Lutheran College in 1982, Mark quickly progressed through various positions and incarnations until his final role as Director, Student and Residence Services. While he more than fit the bill, his influence reached far beyond his title. Mark played a huge role in shaping the student experience at Augustana, including helping guide the merger with the University of Alberta in 2004. Ultimately, Mark's quiet service leadership and focus on students helped Augustana grow into the vibrant, cohesive, proud community it is today. He truly led by example with dedicated service year after year, and his profound impact on the way student and residence services are run is a lasting legacy. Regardless of the challenges, Mark always found a way to make things work and ensured students had access to the programs and services they needed to thrive. From Aboriginal students to International students, academic skills to accessibility issues, Mark had a hand in making sure students were supported and felt a part of the community.

It's not surprising that his influence went well beyond Augustana. Mark was a founding member of the Residence Life Professional Association and served as its President in 1993-94 and again in 2008-09. He also served as a Board Member for a number of ACUHO-I, CACUSS, and SASA committees. He was recognized for his contributions and dedication to student services by through the RLPA's 2003 Josie Lamothe Memorial Award for Outstanding Service and the Alberta Student Services 2008 Dean Stetson Award for long-term service to students.

While his influence on Augustana and the student affairs profession over the years has been tremendous, his greatest impact was always on those around him. Students, staff, and faculty have all learned from his example, his advice, and his leadership. He was Augustana's biggest champion and advocate, and whether it was choral music, drama, or athletic events, Mark could be seen cheering students and applauding their talents. He truly believed that Augustana is one of the finest institutions a student could choose and was quick to share many success stories. Countless student affairs professionals credit Mark for the supportive and inspiring influence he had on their career.

Mark valued the people and relationships in his life in a way that few people do. He touched students' lives on a personal level – it wasn't just a job, and he genuinely cared for every one of his students. He approached each conversation with patience, never rushing, always listening intently and making those around him feel like they were important and respected with warmth and sincerity...and no one will ever forget his legendary hugs, for which he was never the first one to let go.

We will all miss Mark terribly, just as we are all tremendously grateful for the time we had with him. He leaves a wonderful legacy, and remains an inspiration to us all.