



# Clayton Forstrom

## Died Age 17

### Fentanyl

Nov. 12th 2003, I went to wake Clayton for school and instead I found his lifeless body on his bed. He had worked the night before at his new job; we visited him on duty. Returning home at 10:35pm, he came upstairs where my husband and I were watching TV. I had fallen asleep on the sofa but awoke when I heard the front door open. I watched him go to the refrigerator and pour himself some milk. He sat in a chair in the room with us and we had a brief conversation. He then picked up our cat, and with his milk in the other hand, he stood at the top of the stairs and said "Good night mom, I love you, see ya in the morning." Little did I know that this would be the last time I would see him alive!

At 17 Clayton was happy and intelligent. Baseball, basketball, trick bicycling, skateboarding, motorcross racing, paintball, modifying foreign cars, and girls—there was never a dull moment. He was active in church and school activities, enjoyed mission trips and played the role of Jesus in the Easter Program in 2002. A senior in school, he scored above average on tests. Active in Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Bible Club and popular with his peers, he was selected Mr. Valentine 2003. As a Freshman he traveled to Europe for two weeks. A bright and talented child, we wondered, "Why did this happen to him?"

Rumors led us to believe it was an overdose; the rumors were confirmed



by toxicology reports. He had consumed a Duragesic brand of pain patch. These patches contain Fentanyl and used as prescribed, pain medication is released over 48 to 72 hours. We have learned prescription pain medication slows the respiratory system. Clayton fell asleep, forgot to breathe, and never woke up.

He had experimented with marijuana at 16, shortly after he confessed to experimenting with Klonopin, an anti-anxiety drug. We were devastated by the marijuana use, but the misuse of prescription medication scared us so much that we placed him in a treatment facility for evaluation. They kept him for 3 days, released him, told us he was spoiled and suggested out-patient counseling, which we did.

After experiencing this we felt we could not let our guard down; curfew was strict along with other things. We felt we fought the battle as a family and won, but that was nothing compared to the battle of trying to live without him now. We lost Clayton to misuse of prescription pain medication. He never had the chance to become an addict before his life was lost at 17. No words describe lost hope, lost dreams, lost promise.

~ Donna Forstrom

*Remembering Lost Promise*