

Hart of gold

When Martha Hart suddenly became a widow in her early thirties, she could have retreated from the world.



Martha Hart with Elizabeth Daniels who received an Owen Hart scholarship in 2010.

Instead, Hart choose to honour her wrestler husband Owen's life, by inspiring others and helping those less fortunate.

Owen, Martha's husband, died in the wrestling ring in Kansas City, Missouri in 1999.

It was devastating for the young mother of two, but she was determined to honour her husband's memory and carry on.

"I really did not want Owen to be defined by what he did for a living because he was so much more than what he did for a living," said Hart.

Hart used money from a wrongful death settlement to set up the Owen Hart Foundation and then began to look for causes to support.

The Calgary Foundation was one of her first stops.

"She knew exactly what she wanted to do. She wanted to help young people with scholarships and she wanted to get less advantaged families into homes," said Kerry Longpre from The Calgary Foundation.

Hart formed a partnership with Forest Lawn High School. "Forest Lawn High was unique in the sense that it had the highest percentage of students that worked outside of their high school responsibilities," said Hart.

Martha Hart believes holding down a part-time job can put students at a disadvantage because they're not able to attain the grades they need to qualify for many scholarship programs.

Elizabeth Daniels received an Owen Hart scholarship in 2010 and is now attending the University of Calgary.

"Having Martha actually give me the scholarship kind of gave me the inspiration to go even further with my education and pursue my masters and not just settle with my bachelors," said Daniels.

The Owen Hart Foundation also helps families to put together a down payment on a home.

The program teaches the families how to budget and make sure they can handle home ownership.

Hart says she does it to honour Owen's memory. "Because he inspired me so much that I was able to turn around and give back to the community."

When it comes to education, Hart practices what she preaches. She has a Master's Degree and PhD in Social and Developmental Psychology from Cambridge University in England.

For her selfless contribution to the community and Calgarians, Martha Hart is our inspiring Albertan.