

# OUTSTANDING MEDIA VOLUNTEER SERVICE

*Mike Henry - KBST News*



Frank Adams was an early visionary: his strong commitment to serving people with mental illness and mental retardation meant not only working hands-on in the field, but also spreading the message of providing sound, consistent care. As a leader in the industry,

Adams did much of the early work himself - meeting with people one-on-one or talking to large groups - he relayed the pertinent information to accessing better care for the populations.

At the time, Adams' methods of conveying the message were adequate. But today, advocates for mental health and mental retardation have a broader audience and fewer resources. That is why the media has become instrumental in spreading the word.

One such champion of mental health and mental retardation issues is Mike Henry, the News Director for Big Spring's KBST-FM and AM. West Texas Centers for MHMR has come to depend on Mike Henry and his accurate reporting and timely pieces to further the message we want to deliver.

Henry - and his extensive listener base - is often the first source people in Big Spring turn to when they need information. Henry is able to balance all the parties who have diverse wants, needs, desires and agendas with his good-natured personality, accurate reporting, conscientious background checks into information and his laid-back, good-old boy charm. He is a fixture in our market, and we know that when we need to get out information in a timely manner, he is

the person we turn to in a pinch.

When West Texas Centers for MHMR needs to distribute information that may require much more than a sound-bite or a quick read-through of a press release, Mike will suggest that we appear live on his Morning Magazine segment that also gives listeners an opportunity to call in with questions, such as the case when we promoted our free depression screenings or when we felt the need to share information on our Suicide Prevention hotline when several students in the area were facing difficult times following the death of a classmate.

He has even donated his services when it wasn't related to work by signing on as a judge for our Annual Chili Cook-off to raise money for our Children in Need fund. Henry has been recognized and earned numerous distinctions for his work in the news industry, including the West Texas Centers for MHMR 2006 Clyde J. Alsup Outstanding Media Award which is presented to an outstanding media representative who has worked to improve the public's understanding of mental illness and mental retardation.

Henry partnered with the mental health community, West Texas Centers for MHMR, and business leaders when an alternative use proposal for the West Texas VA Medical Center was proposed. Henry kept the community focused on our mission and educated the community on the ramifications of its change on the landscape of health and the business climate in Howard County. As partners, we work to educate the community and create a better understanding of mental illness and mental retardation. Mike Henry has prided himself in making the community more aware of the services we provide but has also helped our center disperse the truth about mental illness and intellectual and developmental disabilities to decrease stigma.

***Nominated by West Texas Centers for MHMR***