



DENISE BATTERS

Dave and Denise Batters were married in 1997. Dave Batters was first elected as a federal Member of Parliament in June 2004, and he was re-elected in 2006. In 2008, Dave became quite ill with severe anxiety and depression. He also overcame a dependency on his prescription medication that was used to reduce his anxiety and help him sleep.

Shortly before the federal election was called in September 2008, Dave announced that he would not be able to run for re-election. And, he publicly announced why – disclosing the battle he had been waging. In Dave’s words taken from his press release, he said: “I make this very personal disclosure with the hope that others who suffer from these conditions will seek the assistance they need. There is still a stigma attached to such illnesses and I want to make sure people realize these are conditions that can strike anyone and need to be treated.”

Tragically, despite all kinds of treatment and tremendous support from friends and family, Dave took his own life on June 29, 2009. Taking a cue from his openness about his illness, Denise issued a press release disclosing that sadly, Dave had died by suicide. He was 39 years old.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper attended Dave’s funeral, and delivered a very important speech which not only described some of Dave’s great personal qualities, which made him a valued friend and colleague in their Caucus; he also talked about depression and suicide. Denise thought that one of the most fitting lines of the Prime Minister’s speech was this – “Depression can strike the sturdiest of souls. It cares not how much you have achieved or how much you have to live for.”

In early 2010, some of Dave’s close friends approached Denise about putting on a golf tournament in Dave’s memory. Denise wanted the money raised to go to a cause that might help someone like Dave. She wanted to produce a television commercial that would target men between 30 and 50 years old suffering from anxiety and depression.





The inaugural Dave Batters Memorial Golf Tournament raised \$20,000. And, this money was used to produce a television commercial, focusing on awareness about depression and suicide, and broadcast it on television for many weeks. This 30-second commercial is now available for viewing on YouTube. Click on this link to view:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=uN1iPXNcq1U

The Prime Minister sent a video message to the golf tournament, which contained this message: "By publicly revealing his struggle with anxiety and depression, Dave reminded everyone who suffers from mental illness that they are not alone. This is a message that needs to be heard, not just by victims of mental illness, but by everyone, to deepen the well of understanding and support for those battling this disease. This is Dave Batters' legacy."

