

# Mr. Deeds: Passion drives award winner

One look at the list of Mike Zouhri's accomplishments and it becomes clear that his passion is helping make the community a better place through his volunteer work.

As a full-time University of Alberta student who spends virtually all of his free time volunteering, Zouhri is remarkably reserved.

While he admits the work he does can be tiring and time-consuming, he wouldn't have it any other way.

"I feel that if I am going to do something, I want to do it to make a difference," he says, explaining why he volunteers.

Going as far back as high school, he was determined to help others when he recognized a need. Forming Team Help, Zouhri and his friends decided to raise money to

help underprivileged students afford graduation. "Fundraising was pretty new to me and it was a good first lesson," he says.

Afterwards, he began volunteering at a hospital which was where he gained a first-hand look at ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), a fatal neurodegenerative disease.

Struck by how the disease affects individuals, Zouhri decided to start his own campus group called Action ALS which helps raise funds for education, awareness and research. All funds are directed to ALS Society of Alberta.

As co-founder, Zouhri is responsible for overseeing all the group's activities, organ-

ization events, securing sponsorship deals, managing volunteers and much more.

"A lot of people don't realize how much work is involved when you're running so many different things at the same time. The events don't just happen. It takes a lot of people to make it happen," he explains, adding that the group will be hosting a fundraising gala at the Crowne Plaza on Friday.

In addition to his work with Action ALS, Zouhri also mentors youth with the Youth Restorative Action Project (YRAP), a youth justice committee that works with young offenders.

His good deeds have not gone unnoticed. Zouhri was recently honoured for his work with a Stars of Alberta award. Given to Albertans who have made a significant contribution to the community, he was nominated by a colleague from Action ALS.

"It's his passion for wanting to make a significant difference in the community. Without such passion, he would not have been able to accomplish what he has

accomplished," says Sameer Rajwani. "He stands out as a phenomenal leader with great organizational skills. Best of all, he portrays his volunteer work as a fun experience which makes others like myself want to be part of something great."

Zouhri remains humbled by the experience.

"It was really cool meeting the other award winners and seeing what everyone else is doing. It was inspiring to meet all these people who have done amazing things."

He hopes others will tap into their own passion and interests, and become a volunteer.

"One of the best things about volunteering is the people you meet and the connections you make," he emphasizes. "I have learned so much, and it's cool getting to meet local talent like photographers and DJs, and networking with other people doing the same kind of thing that I'm doing."

To learn more about Action ALS, contact Mike at yzouhri@ualberta.ca.

For more information or suggestions for story ideas please contact Evelyn Pham, communications co-ordinator, at epham@volunteeredmonton or call 780-732-6655.



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Mike Zouhri

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The Legislative Assembly's all-party Standing Committee on Health is inviting public input on the following Bill:

**Bill 52: Health Information Amendment Act, 2009**

Bill 52 would make several amendments to the *Health Information Act*, including:

- the creation of a legislative framework for Alberta Netcare (the provincial electronic health record system) that includes the ability to specify what health information may be available
- the creation of health information repositories
- the inclusion of privately funded health services under the *Health Information Act*
- the facilitation of the exchange of health information over Alberta Netcare
- the co-ordination of activities and investigations of complaints among provincial Information and Privacy Commissioners

Copies of the Bill and related information are available online at [www.assembly.ab.ca/committees/health](http://www.assembly.ab.ca/committees/health)

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS APRIL 24, 2009**

The Committee may hold public hearings at a later date. In your written submission indicate if you are interested in making an oral presentation upon request by the Committee. Submissions will be made public. Please specify if you wish to have identifying information removed from your submission.

E-mail [health.committee@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:health.committee@assembly.ab.ca)  
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**Mr. Fred Horne, MLA for Edmonton-Rutherford**  
Chair of the Standing Committee on Health

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