



Austin serves as voice for the vulnerable driving positive change in mental health care.

Living a life brimming with adventure, medical and academic achievement and a heartfelt passion to better the quality of life for others in his community, Dr. Austin Mardon of Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council (HAC) serves as a tireless advocate for mental health.

“Having confronted personal hurdles, including a diagnosis of schizophrenia, I’m motivated by a strong sense of purpose to promote understanding and diminish the stigma associated with mental illness. Additionally, I find fulfilment in supporting individuals both within my community and the academic realm.



Austin enjoys coffee outings. “Whether it’s meeting friends for a chat or enjoying a solo coffee break, moments of relaxation and indulgence are a highlight of my day.”

My passion lies in advocating for mental health awareness and education. I’m deeply committed to promoting understanding and compassion for those affected by mental illness, and I believe that education is key.”

Austin’s efforts have garnered appreciation beyond his community, reaching into the national and international stratosphere.

Recent accolades include an honorary Doctor of Law degree from the University of British Columbia (UBC) as well as a medal for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

NASA praises Austin for his “exemplary scholarship, advocacy, and commitment to promoting NASA’s principles of diversity and inclusion in community organizations and among the disenfranchised.”

At age of 24, he investigated meteorite impacts near the South Pole as a junior member of an Antarctic meteorite recovery expedition sponsored by NASA and the National Science Foundation. His dream of space exploration was curtailed by the onset of schizophrenia and mobility challenges from frostbite.

Austin recalls: *“I applied in Canada to be an astronaut when I was a young man before I got sick, so to receive a NASA medal at my age, after everything that has happened, is a lot.”*

Today, Austin wears a few hats, as Associate Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry & John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre, University of Alberta; Assistant Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Neuroscience, University of Lethbridge; and as a Special Advisor, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital.

As a member of the HAC, *“I hope to make a meaningful difference in our community and contribute toward positive change. The prospect of positively impacting lives through our Council work fills me with a deep sense of hope and purpose.*

“Our Council ensures community perspectives and needs are considered in the decision-making process, leading to more inclusive and effective outcomes. By serving as a bridge between AHS and the community, our Council ensures policies reflect the diverse voices and concerns of our community.”

He strives for increased funding for mental health resources and services: *“Many individuals with mental illness do not have access to adequate care, which can worsen their condition and lead to tragic outcomes. Providing access to the care they need could potentially prevent crises.*

In his leisure time, Mardon says he’s an avid reader who is drawn to academic and non-fiction works that expand his knowledge and understanding of the world.

“Spending time with my family is another cherished activity. Whether it’s a quiet evening at home or a fun outing, being with my loved ones brings me joy and helps me stay connected to what truly matters in life. I also enjoy going on walks, especially in natural settings. These walks provide not only physical exercise but also serve as a mental break, allowing me to clear my mind and re-energize.”

For more information on the Greater Edmonton HAC, visit ahs.ca/advisorycouncils, or email greateredmonton@ahs.ca.