



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Weaverville Couple Receives International Service Award**

*Richard and Marie Anderson honored for their contributions to the lives of those affected by traumatic events.*

CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA – September 22, 2009 – Weaverville residents Richard and Marie Anderson were honored at a special reception Tuesday night in Calgary. The Andersons were presented with an award earlier that day for their work as dedicated volunteers and educators for programs that assist survivors of traumatic events.

The Andersons know first-hand how important the work of such programs are after their 18-year-old daughter, Lauren, survived the crash of American Eagle flight 3379 which crashed into a heavily wooded area in North Carolina in December of 1994.

With most every bone in her body broken, Lauren and her parents faced a lengthy and uncertain recovery and an arduous legal process that left Anderson embittered toward the airline industry. But once they became involved with the Family Assistance Foundation's (FAF) work, the healing truly began.

"Rich and his wife Marie have been tireless volunteers, giving of their time to help others learn," said Dr. Carolyn Coarsey, co-founder of the Family Assistance Foundation. "The Andersons regularly attend conferences and participate in training classes to share their personal story of survival, recounting one of the most difficult periods of their lives so that others can improve the services provided to families following such a disaster." Richard Anderson also serves on the Board of the FAF.

Two other individuals also received awards for their contributions to programs that assist those who have been affected by traumatic events.

Barbara Webster, of Calgary, Canada, also received a "Sharing the Journey™" Award from the FAF for her work expanding WestJet Airlines' emergency response programs and stewardship to ensure the continuation of such programs.

The final award presented during at Tuesday night's reception was presented to Joan Ferris of Southwest Airlines, Dallas, TX. Ferris became the first recipient of the Family Assistance Foundation's Compassion Consciousness™ Award, an honor created to pay tribute to an industry professional who has made a significant contribution, over the course of their career, to helping raise awareness about the need for robust family assistance programs.

The awards were presented in conjunction with the 2009 Family Assistance Foundation Aviation Conference hosted by WestJet Airlines, a Foundation member.

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The Family Assistance Foundation, Inc. is an international non-profit organization founded in 2000 to empower people following tragedy. The Foundation takes a unique approach to helping organizations successfully meet survivor needs and enables organizations worldwide to traverse corporate borders when disaster strikes, working together to assist those in need.

Foundation education and training programs support members by monitoring the long-term outcomes of those impacted by tragedy. Promoting awareness and building skills and knowledge for those who are charged with responding are crucial elements of the Foundation's fully integrated training and support programs for business and industry. Its annual symposium provides member organizations, as well as survivors, the opportunity to share lessons learned and information about how to continually improve response efforts and business practices.

For more information on the Family Assistance Foundation, go to the Family Assistance Foundation website at [www.fafonline.org](http://www.fafonline.org) or contact:

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