

Advocacy In ACTION

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Welcome! I am a speaker, advocate, consultant, moderator, spokesperson, and philanthropist and I am dedicated to empowering individuals, non-profits, and organizations with the tools and the mindset needed to achieve greater impact. Keep reading to see how, together, we can improve and save human lives by sharing, educating, and collaborating on financial planning issues and health and safety issues. Teamwork is paramount to achieve success in any occupation or on any journey.



Learn more about what I do and hire me to speak at your upcoming event. I'd love to work with you. My 2024 calendar is

filling quickly, so please contact me soon!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Where Does Advocacy Come From?

A few weeks ago, I heard a speaker say, "advocacy comes from anger." I disagree.

This day, October 24th, marks the 20th anniversary of my husband's death due to the negligence of a red-light runner. My advocacy efforts began in 2003, the night of Mark's fatal crash, and they were born out of **love** and out of the **desire for change**.

Over the past 20 years, my advocacy efforts have created a way to **honor a legacy for my husband, Mark, as well as our daughter, Madisyn**. In turn, **I have also forged my own unique path**. Advocating for others has gifted me the opportunity to form a strong foundation for myself as I strive, personally, to make this my own life enhancing legacy.

By amplifying my voice which can be utilized for furthering legislation, guiding youth, enhancing safety issues, empowering individuals, or uplifting organizations via speaking engagements, **we can all strive forward**, while honoring the past and memorializing those we love.

Today and every day, we all have the **power to choose LOVE!**

Pictured with
Advocates in
New York City
at GHSA's
Annual Meeting



I've had the honor of sharing with so many amazing institutions this year. As an advocate, I am blessed to be able to share my personal journey while showcasing opportunities to improve and save human lives by educating and collaborating on health and safety issues, transportation issues, and financial planning topics.

November 3: Join The Mark Wandall Foundation for our 20th Annual Memorial Celebration and Fundraiser. We will be at the Legacy Golf Club in Bradenton, FL, and we still have room for golfers! For information and to register:

TheMarkWandallFoundation.org

November 17: Join us locally for our World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims event, in partnership with FDOT District 1, Target Zero FL, and the National Coalition for Safer Roads.

Meet at 5:30pm at the SE Corner of SR 70 and Tara Blvd. For more information and to also learn more about NCSR:

[NEWS - Melissa Wandall - Advocacy and NCSR Safety.org](#)

November 19: World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. The Sunshine Skyway Bridge will be lit in Target Zero-themed colors to memorialize and honor those seriously or fatality injured on Florida's roadways.



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- I traveled to New York City in August to attend the [Governors Highway Safety Association's \(GHSA\) 2023 Annual Meeting](#). The theme, "Connecting Communities: Putting Vision Zero into Action," affirmed the importance of involving communities of all sizes in implementing proven and innovative solutions for preventing crashes.
- As you'll read below, in August I also participated in two amazing "Stop on Red" events during [National Stop on Red Week](#). *I was honored to be interviewed by Alexis Goings with TV20 WJCB in Ocala* to discuss my advocacy work and the passing of The Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act
- Earlier this month, I was quoted in an article published in "School Transportation News" with content by [Verra Mobility](#). The article [Caught on Camera: The Growing Wave of Stop-Arm Enforcement](#) highlights how programs such as school bus stop-arm safety cameras are instrumental in promoting student safety and holding reckless drivers accountable for their actions. They serve as a deterrent to potential violators and provide a means to identify and penalize those who put children at risk. **Florida** is the latest state to acknowledge the results of these programs and **has passed legislation** to empower communities to operate automated enforcement systems that use cameras to capture evidence of vehicles that illegally pass school buses.
- Currently, I am working alongside the [Florida Department of Transportation as a Florida Target Zero Ambassador](#) and with the [National Coalition for Safer Roads as their President](#). Follow me on social media to see how I am supporting and promoting Florida's Target Zero Initiative.

DrivingDownHeartache.org

Regardless of your mission, we can ALL utilize advocates to help motivate, humanize, and propel our purpose forward. If you work in the traffic safety arena, you know how important it is to turn data into real life stories.

My website, DrivingDownHeartache.org,

showcases REAL people, not statistics, and remembers those who have died and honors all who have been seriously injured in roadway tragedies. Anyone can submit a story, and in turn, my hope is that these testimonials will become the faces and voices present at our traffic safety events. Please share my site and share your story today - advocates create action!



National Stop on Red Week Events, August 8th & 9th



In August, I had the pleasure of participating in two amazing "Stop on Red" events in partnership with FDOT District 5, Global-5 Communications, Target Zero Florida, the National Coalition for Safer Roads, Verra Mobility, the City of Orlando, Bike Walk Central Florida, MetroPlan Orlando, Asha Planning, and Ocala

Marion TPO. Thank you so much to everyone who supported our efforts. Several meetings and many hands helped make the two events a huge success to reminding the motoring public to ***always stop on red!*** August 8th we were in Orlando at the HIN intersection of North Rosalind Ave and East Robinson St., and August 9th we were in Ocala at the intersection of SR 200 and SW 27th Ave.

White Cane Safety Day



On October 13th, we hosted our White Cane Safety Day event in downtown Sarasota in partnership with Target Zero Florida, the National Coalition for Safer Roads, FDOT District 1, Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center, Sarasota Police Department, MADD, and 12-year-old, spokesperson, Cooper Vollmer. Thank you so much to Chief Rex Troche, with the Sarasota Police Department and the City of Sarasota for embracing this event!

White Cane Day emphasizes and acknowledges the achievements of the blind and visually impaired, and we came together to focus on ways to keep the blind and visually impaired safe as pedestrians on and near our roadways.

Mayor Kyle Battie, Commissioner Ahearn-Koch, and Denise McCalister with MADD wore goggles which simulated vision impairment as they were led by white-canners on a block tour to see what obstacles the blind and visually impaired encounter every day. ***Remember, in Florida, you must***

Florida Law Enforcement Liaison's Guardian of Life Award

The Guardian of Life Award is given to recognize traffic safety partners and community members who take a positive approach toward promoting a safer driving experience on our roadways. To make transportation equitable and safe for all roadway users, it takes teamwork with everyone advancing what they do best - engineering, enforcement, education, emergency response, legislation, and advocacy.

I was honored to receive the Guardian of Life Award at [Florida's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coalition](#) meeting in July. Why? This Coalition **embodies** teamwork and is comprised of a diverse group of federal, state, and local partners and stakeholders who are tasked with implementing goals, objectives, and strategies within Florida's Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategic Safety Plan. Working together, we ARE taking a proactive, POSITIVE approach to a safer driving experience!



Target Zero - Did You Know?

Target Zero takes many existing safety programs or campaigns a critical step further by addressing these four main components:

1. Focusing on **identifying behaviors** that contribute to crashes.
2. **Understanding why** those behaviors are occurring.
3. **Identifying** who the specific **target audience** is, and
4. **Creating impactful messages** to influence safe driving.



Target Zero is a data-driven, multi-faceted behavior change initiative that was created, in part, from direct conversations with those drivers that are most involved in crashes that resulted in serious injuries and fatalities. **Target Zero focuses on influencing change in these specific behaviors before they occur.** We CAN get to Zero if we all do our part. Safety saves lives! Help me, to help you, so together we can drive down insatiable heartache on our roadways.