

Changing Agony into Advocacy

About Melissa Wandall

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Roadside markers often serve as a solemn reminder that someone's life was sadly lost to roadway tragedy. They prompt drivers to slow down, be careful, and think about the responsibilities associated with operating a motor vehicle.

Unfortunately, Target Zero Team Member Melissa Wandall knows this type of personal heartache all too well. In 2003, she lost her husband, Mark Wandall, in a car crash that was caused by red-light running. At the time, Melissa was nine months pregnant. Experiencing such a loss motivated her to turn her pain into advocacy. In addition to being president of the National Coalition for Safer Roads, founder and president of The Mark Wandall Foundation, and a national advocate for Families for Safe Streets, Melissa was also instrumental in the passing of Florida's Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act in 2010. The act allows Florida communities to utilize red-light safety cameras to help make streets safer.

Melissa enjoys using her enthusiasm, skillset, and knowledge to advocate for positive change, especially when it comes to traffic safety. Therefore, it was a natural choice when she decided to become a Target Zero team member through FDOT's Safety Office.

One of Melissa's latest initiatives involves humanizing traffic safety by sharing the stories of real people whose lives have been affected by terrible traffic incidents. She is seeking testimonials via

her website, DrivingDownHeartache.org. Anyone can submit a story, and in turn, Melissa hopes these testimonials will become the faces and voices present at traffic safety events.

Data is important, but putting a face and a name alongside these unfortunate statistics might be what makes the difference in someone making better choices behind the wheel.



Inspirational Stories

Would you like to share your personal testimony to remember those who have died or honor all who have been seriously injured in roadway tragedies?

Visit DrivingDownHeartache.org to submit your letter. The letter should be limited to approximately 600-650 words. You can also submit a picture of your loved one and if you desire, a picture of their roadside marker. If you are a survivor, please feel free to submit a picture of yourself.