



Dustin: Kristi's son



Harley: Tammi's son



Alexyss "Lexi": Shannon's daughter



Nick: Jeannette's son



Marcos: Cindy's husband

*http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/



My name is Kristi Finney-Dunn. I am a co-founder of Oregon and SW Washington Families for Safe Streets and a member of Portland's Vision Zero Task Force.

Crashes can and do happen to anyone at any time, but the average person is indifferent to danger and devastation until it happens to them. I know.

My son Dustin was killed in August 2011. A 17 year old boy survived. The two were riding their bikes 60 feet apart in the bike lane when an underage drunk driver struck them both and then fled the scene.

Dustin was a college student and advocate for equality for all people. He was a loving son and brother who hoped to use his education for the good of the community and to preserve our earth which he loved so much.

I wasn't prepared emotionally or financially to bury my son. But when this devastating crash happened, I had to deal with the aftermath whether I was ready or not, whether I knew how to or not. I had to figure it out, in the midst of mind-blowing grief and confusion, and I had to figure it out quickly. The medical examiner couldn't hold Dustin's body for long.

My son should not have been killed in the prime of his life, so preventably. This grief is not just great sadness: it is debilitating in its extremity, overwhelming in its enormity, never-ending in my yearning to have my son back.

Road deaths and injuries are sudden, violent, traumatic events. Their impact is long-lasting, often permanent. Each year, bereaved relatives of 1.25 million people and up to 50 million newly injured people* from every corner of the world are added to the countless millions who already suffer. The cumulative toll is truly tremendous. In the U.S. alone, nearly 100 people are killed per day. In Oregon in 2016, 489 children, spouses, parents, siblings, friends, co-workers, neighbors died: five people died every three days.

The grief and distress experienced by this huge number of people is all the greater because many of the victims are young, because many of the crashes could and should have been prevented, and because governments' and society's response to road death and injury -and to bereaved and injured victims- is often inadequate, unsympathetic, and inappropriate to a loss of life or quality of life. "Accidents happen." To other people. Even I used to think so...

Vision Zero is gaining momentum worldwide and nationally. The thinking that loss of life on our roads is acceptable and inevitable is simply not true. It has been easy to kind of overlook the scope of these tragedies because not many of us suffering want to speak up, to remember publicly the worst times of our lives, to cry in front of others, to rage at how unfairly life has treated us and our loved ones. Please know that for each of us willing to be vulnerable in front of you, there are hundreds -no, thousands- of others unable or unwilling to do so. So we are speaking for them.

It is excruciating for me to think of all the years left ahead of me without Dustin, as it is for Cindy without Marcos, Shannon without Alexxyss, Tammi without Harley, Jeannette without Nick, and the millions - millions!!- of others worldwide who've suffered the loss of their beloved Road Traffic Victim. Please support Vision Zero. I hope that by doing so you never have to know the loss you may have endured otherwise.