

ALLIANCE AGAINST INTOXICATED MOTORISTS

Victim Stories



The Kevin William Benes Tribute

June 8, 1990-December 11, 2009

On June 8, 1990, excitement and joy fill my heart after giving birth to my first child, Kevin William. During the next nineteen years, six months, and three days I, along with everyone who knew Kevin, had the chance to watch him grow into a loving, kind, and responsible man, brother, and son. Kevin was a big brother to Matthew, Amy, and Jillian. Everyday our family had together, I witnessed the love abound and the laughter galore. I saw how much his siblings meant to Kevin and how much Kevin meant to his siblings. Kevin was an encouraging and supportive big brother, who loved practical jokes and to make everyone laugh. Kevin was a family man and generously shared his love with all his family and those close to him. Kevin was not only a caring man, but a responsible and determined man. He graduated from Lockport Township High School in the top 10 percent of his class. As an Illinois State Scholar and two sports athlete, Kevin had already shown us how hard-working and responsible he was. He then went on to become the third-generation electrician in his family. We were all so proud of Kevin. He was well on his way to grasping and living his dreams.

Since December 11, 2009, sadness and grief now fill my heart. Kevin was on his way home from work, when he was tragically killed. Kevin was not taken by sickness, or an act of nature. Kevin's life was not taken because of his own dangerous behavior or of a reckless disregard for others. Kevin was killed because, a repeat DUI offender, CHOSE ONCE AGAIN to get behind the wheel of his truck while intoxicated and violently crashed into Kevin's car at a high rate of speed, instantly killing Kevin. The DUI offender made a plea deal in April, 2011 and was sentenced to six years in prison. On April 13, 2016 the offender was released from prison, he was able to go home to his family. Kevin was not given that chance, he was taken from his family. We are serving a life sentence without Kevin.

It is almost 8 years since that tragic day Kevin was taken from us, yet each day is still a challenge. Although time has gone by, the pain is still intensely the same. We have to tend to the pain, and our broken hearts. The loss of Kevin will always be there for our family and friends. We are still trying to learn "how" to live without Kevin.

Kevin's memory and spirit lives on... as a living memorial in memory of Kevin we planted a tree and garden at the crash site; by sharing Kevin's story, speaking on the victim impact panel for AAIM bringing awareness to DUI offenders; to help continue the education of a Lockport High School senior we award the Kevin William Benes scholarship; through the love and care we give to each other each day in Kevin's memory.