



## VOLUNTEER ACCOLADES

*Friends InDeed would like to recognize Lana Kaye Taylor for her contribution to MADD through the years. Lana shares her personal story at the Victim Impact Panels across the state of Texas that helps to educate, inform, and make a difference in the tireless effort against drinking and driving. Thank you Lana for being an extraordinary Friend InDeed.*



*Lana Kaye Taylor*

On July 13, 1990, my daughter Renee Seale was killed by a drunk driver as she and her husband, Mark, were driving home from dinner.

Renee lived in LaRue, TX and worked in Athens, TX. After meeting for dinner, Renee suggested they take the Leagueville Highway home, which was a new route that she was eager to venture. Mark and Renee were driving separate vehicles home.

Later that evening, Mark called me with the news of her death. My world was blown apart. After 3 weeks I knew that I needed help in dealing with her death, but felt a heavy reluctance about where to turn. At work one day, during a storm of tears, I remembered the ads I had seen on television about Mothers Against Drunk Driving and made the call for help.

I called the local MADD office and the woman who answered my call took my name and phone number, and very soon after I received a call from Arlene Burt. She and her husband, Allen, had lost a son in a non-alcoholic related crash. After healing from their grief they founded The Bereaved Parent's Grief Support Group; I started going to the monthly meetings that September and attended for many years.

A little less than two years after Renee's death, I received a magazine from MADD and read an article on Victim Impact Panels. I learned that this was a program where speakers of victims and offenders tell their story to an audience of first-time DUI offenders. I thought "I can do that" and I became involved. I remember being very scared the first time I spoke; it was so personal and emotional. At first, I spoke in Smith and Gregg counties with another victim. The program quickly developed and at one time we were speaking at 8 counties across the state; today, I continue to speak in 4 of these counties.

Becoming a part of MADD's Victim Impact Panel has become a very rewarding period in my life. I feel that together, we are making a difference in the way people think about drinking and driving. My hope is that people think about the victims and consequences of drinking and driving, and understand that there's much more to life than just having a good time.

Lana Kaye Taylor