



## SMAC Talk

Speed Management Advisory Cooperative Newsletter

April 2025



*Cooperatively, we can SMAC down speeding!*

### A Note from Janine

Greetings, SMAC-ers,

I want to send a BIG THANK YOU!! to all the SMAC members who were able to participate in the March in-person workshop. Your efforts helped to produce a comprehensive, multimodal statewide speed management plan that I am looking forward to sharing with you at the April SMAC meeting. I'm confident you'll be pleased

with the variety of activities included to address many of your key objectives for the first two years of the plan!

April is national Distracted Driving Prevention Month. As you well know, distracted driving and speeding are each dangerous on their own, but when combined, they create a compounded risk that significantly increases the likelihood and severity of crashes. Speeding reduces a driver's ability to react in time to unexpected hazards, while distractions—such as texting or adjusting a GPS—further delay response time and decision-making. Together, these behaviors impair judgment and vehicle control, making collisions more likely and more deadly.

Please consider integrating messaging that addresses both issues by using **free, ready-to-use materials from [NHTSA's Distracted Driving marketing page](#)**, which include social media content, videos, and graphics designed for public outreach into your organization's communications this month. I'm also happy to share that WTSC has a **[new focused driving public service announcement](#)**, which you're also encouraged to share widely. It's available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)! Finally, we also have an [awesome employer toolkit](#) for developing a workplace distracted driving policy that you're encouraged to check out.

See you all soon and thanks again for all the hard work these past months!

Please enjoy this month's edition of *SMAC Talk*, a monthly newsletter for and by the Speed Management Advisory Cooperative.



Sincerely,

Janine

Janine Koffel, DocSocSci, MS.Ed  
WTSC Program Manager

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***We are honored to bring you My Traffic Safety Story, a new column dedicated to recognizing the efforts of survivor advocates who have lost a loved one to a traffic-related tragedy. By sharing these stories, we hope to inspire action.***

## My Traffic Safety Story

Bringing compassion and awareness to the intersection of tragedy and action by amplifying the voices and sharing the stories of survivor advocates.

### Guest Contributor: Lori Markowitz

#### Josh's Story

Joshua Markowitz was born on March 15th, 1993, in Seattle, Washington. He was a very happy child with a passion from a young age for music. Josh has a younger sister, Jessica, and the two were exceptionally close.

Josh loved sports, especially soccer just like his dad. He was an excellent player with an amazing right kick who scored many goals. He developed lifelong friendships from his soccer days. Eventually, tennis became Josh's sport as well, as he had a powerful serve and forehand. Josh played varsity soccer and tennis throughout his high school years.

Josh's musical talent was apparent from a very young age. His ear for music and rhythm was exceptional, and his life continued in the music realm. Josh was engaged in music lessons starting at age 3, playing the clarinet and saxophone, and ultimately finding his love for percussion moving into a focus on drumming. At the largest public high school in Seattle, Garfield High School, Josh was a member of the distinguished Drumline team, performing all over the city of Seattle. Garfield HS Drumline was known as the topmost talented high school percussionist group throughout WA State.



As a serial entrepreneur, Josh started his own record label in high school, composing music working with all kinds of artists to develop his own creative sounds. He spent hours working on new songs, developing his business.

Josh took a gap year after high school to intern in Washington, D.C., for WA State Senator, Maria Cantwell. In the fall of 2012, Josh began his studies at the University of California and proudly graduated in 2016 with a BA in Communications and a Minor in Digital Studies.

After college, Josh established an event company with a few business partners, performing as a DJ worldwide in addition to continuing his creative composing of music.

Most impressive about Josh was his humility, kindness, and thoughtfulness. Josh was always concerned with humanity. His love of all people came through with his actions, he was an agent of change who did not look for pats on the back. Josh was very firm in his beliefs and convictions. Josh accomplished so very much in just 27 years and would have been able to touch so many more lives.

On the evening of Saturday, February 6, 2021, our beloved Josh was the victim of a tragic hit-and-run. The driver was intoxicated, 2nd offender DUI, plowing through three red lights and speeding 100 miles per hour in a 25 mile per hour zone. Josh sustained a traumatic and fatal head injury, until his organ-donor bequest could be honored.

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### **Advocate Actions (Lori's Story)**

I have been a lifelong advocate. My focus was education; however, after Josh's horrific loss, I pivoted to traffic safety. Josh's life was not in vain, and I feel compelled to raise my voice to make sure no other family has to suffer from a preventable tragedy. I'm dedicated to being a fierce and effective advocate for safe streets in WA State.

Josh believed music is transformative, empowering the lives of youth and turning dreams into reality. To honor this belief, family and friends have established a fund to support and nourish aspiring young musicians.

By appreciating music that came from all over the world, Josh understood that his own music could be sent out and shared all over the world. He believed aspiring, talented artists shouldn't find their reach limited by their circumstances. That belief, and now that legacy, will live on forever in support of musical inspiration and the unhindered chance to apply and share it. Financial support is provided in the form of a [scholarship](#) to qualified students pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree in addition to mini grants empowering aspiring artists to share their music with the world.

*Lori continuously works to honor her son Josh's life through advocating for safer streets by, among many other things, testifying before the Washington State Legislature for [HB 1596](#), being an active member of the Speed Management Advisory Cooperative, and participating in the World Day of Remembrance.*

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### **Resources**

- [The Josh Fund](#)
  - [Op-Ed: Anti-Speeding Technology Could Have Saved My Son](#)
  - [Guest Editorial: Robbed of Life](#)
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*We understand traffic safety is personal to many. If you feel inclined to share your traffic safety story in a future edition of SMAC Talk, we welcome you to do so. Please contact [Abby](#).*

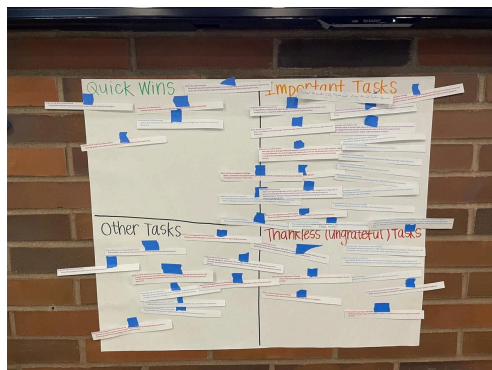
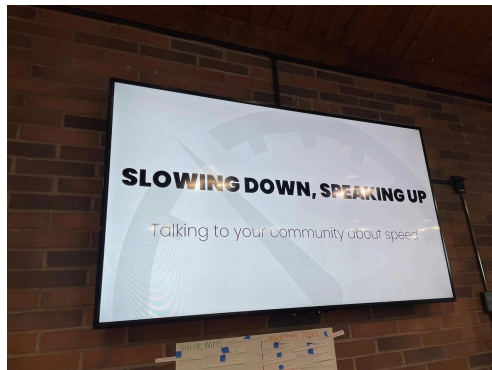
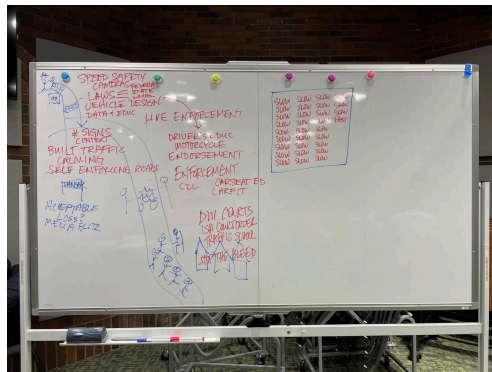
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## SMAC Workshop Recap

An overview of the March in-person workshop.

In March, many SMAC members gathered in Kent to select evidence-based countermeasures and innovative strategies for speed management. Highlights included hearing about the stages of behavior change and the seven prevention strategies, learning [speed communications strategies](#) from Doug Dahl, Target Zero Manager Communications Lead, and participating in work groups centered around the built environment, influencing behavior change, and legislation, enforcement, and incentives. Thanks to all who could attend!



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## Current and Upcoming Opportunities

Stay informed about current and upcoming trainings, webinars, available grant funds, and more.

### **Speed Science Questions Bank**

Calling all submissions!

Help generate a question bank of speed science questions for possible inclusion in our gas pump education mini-video series (1:00 minute max length). We're looking for questions that will help drivers increase their understanding of speeding risks, the science of speed management, and roadway design that helps 'calm' or slow traveling speeds. We may even play a Speed version of Jeopardy at a future SMAC meeting! Thank you!

★ Please send your questions to [Abby](#) or [Janine](#) by **April 30, 2025**.

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### **Safe Systems Champion Award Nominations**

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission and Washington State Department of Transportation are proud to introduce the **Safe Systems Champion Award**, recognizing individuals or teams making a significant impact in advancing traffic safety through the Safe System Approach. Awardees will be recognized at the Washington Traffic Safety Summit at the Spokane Convention Center July 15-17, 2025.

This award honors individuals or teams who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to safer roads, innovative solutions, community engagement, and measurable improvements in their communities. **Nominees should exemplify traffic safety commitment** in one or more of the **Safe System elements: Safer People, Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Speeds, Safer Land Use, and Post-Crash Care**. Whether through education, policy advocacy, infrastructure improvements, technological advancements, or community engagement, award recipients are dedicated to preventing crashes and saving lives. Their work reflects a safe system approach to reducing traffic-related deaths and serious injuries, ensuring that safety is prioritized for all road users.

★ [Learn more and submit a nomination](#) by April 25, 2025.

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### **Washington Traffic Safety Summit**

Mark your calendar for the [Washington Traffic Safety Summit](#) happening July 15-17 at the Spokane Convention Center!

★ View the [agenda](#) and [register today](#) to reserve your spot.



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## Thank You

*A special thank you goes to Lori Markowitz for her contribution to this month's newsletter.*

## Submit Newsletter Content

We'd love to know what's happening in your line of work or local community in regard to speed management, and to hear about any pertinent information that would be applicable to the SMAC membership. Submit any content you'd like included in *SMAC Talk* to Abby by the third Monday of each month.

## Speed Management Advisory Cooperative - Est. 2024

SMAC Webpage

Membership

We Are Patient



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