

# KAREN TORRES

## Distracted Driving Advocate/Speaker



On March 17, 2006, Karen Torres received a phone call that has forever changed her life. Her father, Patrick Mapleson, was struck and killed by a distracted driver while working along the highway. This began her journey as a safety advocate, speaker, and educator for teens, adults and organizations across New York. Her engaging personality allows her to easily connect with audiences and delivers content that can be immediately used. Her story will change your perspective of driving forever.

Karen has been heavily involved with this issue since 2009 and is deeply driven to prevent distracted driving crashes and deaths. Traveling from high school to high school, Karen has shared her father's tragic death with thousands of students and adults during driver's education classes, school assemblies, peer leadership programs, church groups, rotary clubs and corporate organizations. She is single handedly waking up New York on what it means to be a distracted driver and its deadly consequences.

In July 2013, Karen was asked by Governor Cuomo to speak along side him at a "No Texting While Driving" press conference. Karen delivered the Keynote address at the 2013 Dangerous Driving Conference at Suffolk County Community College in Brentwood, NY, the 2016 NYS Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association in Verona, NY and the 2016 Traffic Safety Annual Training Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In April 2014, Karen was the recipient of News 12's "12 Making a Difference", she was featured on WABC news special "*Operation 7 – Save a Life*", ABC's News Program "*Viewpoint Long Island*" and on Fios News One "*Heroes on Our Island*". Karen has taken her message beyond New York, speaking in New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Texas, Chicago and New Mexico.

Karen is a speaker for The National Safety Council and the New York Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. Karen has volunteered for the New York State Department of Transportation by participating in their Public Service Announcement for a state wide roadway safety campaign. Karen's advocacy has been featured in various newspapers, magazines and roadway safety campaigns.

If you would like to schedule a speaking engagement, please go to <http://safeny.ny.gov/SRO-Toolkit/contact-us.html> and complete the form.