

Reading 10

Victim Awareness: Reading, Analyzing, and Writing Victim Impact Statements

1. Jane Mosher Victim Impact Statement
2. MADDvocate – A Healing Impact
3. MADDvocate – I Knew Before I Was Told
4. MADDvocate – Shattering of the Soul
5. MADDvocate – Trial and Consequences
6. Madoff Victim Impact Statements - Ronnie Sue & Dominic Ambrosino
7. Madoff Victim Impact Statements – Norma Hill
8. Madoff Victim Impact Statements – Carla Hirschhorn
9. Madoff Victim Impact Statements - Caren Low
10. The Penn Stater - Remembering Michael

Remembering Michael

Ever Since my husband died in the World Trade Center attack, I've been working to teach my son about the father he never knew.

By LYNN PESCHERINE

ON SEPT. 11, 2011, MY HUSBAND MICHAEL Peschherine '91, 94 MBA Bus, was at work on the 89th floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center. A bond trader for Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, he was one of the nearly 3,000 people who never came home that day. I was 16 weeks pregnant with our first child.

Although I have been able to move on with my life, and have been fortunate enough to find another person to share it with, the most overwhelming aspect of Michael's death has always been his absence in the life of our son Ryan. How do you explain to a child that he will never see his father, that his father never had the opportunity

to meet him, hold him, and love him? How do you convey the essence of the person who changed your life to a child who is so much like his father? Ryan will never grieve for Michael, because he didn't know him. He will never understand the void left by Michael's loss—never know what a hole has been left in all of our lives that will never be replaced.

A few months after the terrorist attacks, as Ryan's birth approached, I decided to try to capture Michael in the eyes of those who knew and loved him best. I asked Michael's brothers, his best friends, my family, and his co-workers to write letters to Ryan about his dad. My mother wrote about my phone call to her telling her Michael was "the one." My best friend shared her memories of the trip we all made to Finland in August 2001, when Michael and I chose names and godparents for the baby. I keep the letters for Ryan in a file, which I don't look at very often. It's simply too painful.

I tell Ryan stories about Michael, too. I show him pictures of all the things his dad and I did together, and when Ryan and I are back in New York, I show him the neighborhood where Michael and I lived, as well as Central Park, where we spent so many hours running together.

One of my bedtime rituals with Ryan is to discuss the things that make him special. Nearly every night I tell him he is special to me because he is so much like his daddy, whom I miss and love very much. One of the things about Michael that drew me to him was his never-ending thirst for knowledge and information. His intelligence staggered me, and as I observe Ryan's insatiable curiosity and need to learn, I realize



lo PORTRAIT OF A FAMILY: The realization that the only part of Michael that lives on is in Ryan's face is enough to double me over in grief.

it comes purely from Michael. I sometimes look at Ryan with his uncles and boy cousins, and see the family resemblance, and even now, five years later, I realize that the only part of Michael that lives on is in Ryan's face. It's enough to double me over in grief.

As the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks approaches, and the media circus begins again, and I have to shield my eyes from the television for a week or two, I will remember Michael. I will remember his voice when he walked in the door of our apartment night after night. I will remember the shocked but incredibly happy look on his face when I told him I was pregnant. He immediately said the baby was a boy. I will remember the feeling of security and safety he gave me, as I knew he would always take care of us. But most of all, I will remember his voice the last time I spoke to him, after the first plane struck the North Tower. After telling me what was happening, he had to get off the phone to listen to the announcements, and his last words to me were "I love you, and I love the baby. When Ryan is older and is ready to learn the entire story surrounding his father's death, that will be the most important thing I can convey to him: His father's last thoughts were of Ryan and me, and that is the kind of amazing man he was.

Lynn Pescherine now lives in Burlingame, Calif.