

Stillbirth Stories

No one is immune to this neglected health crisis



Introduction

These are the stories of families throughout our country who have experienced the tragic stillbirth of their beloved babies. They are sharing their heartbreaking experiences to SHINE a light on stillbirth to ensure that we will finally begin to work towards preventing the deaths of tens of thousands of children every year. We hope you will take to heart the need for action and pass the bipartisan SHINE for Autumn Act, H.R. 5012/S.2647, before the end of the 118th Congress, so that fewer families will have to suffer the potentially preventable death of their baby.

Rachel's Story:

On July 8th 2021 our daughter, Marlo, was born sleeping at 39 weeks and 4 days gestation. Her death was classified as a cord accident. They said part of her umbilical cord was not coiled and therefore clamped. Had I known the warning signs I feel her death could be 100% preventable. She was my first pregnancy and during countless doctors' appointments I was asked "is she moving a lot?". Being my first child I had no frame of reference. To me her movement seemed reasonable. I was never informed of the risk of stillbirth nor was I given any additional monitoring past the 20-week ultrasound. In August of 2022 we gave birth to a healthy baby boy. During that pregnancy I noticed a substantial difference in fetal movement. If I had known what to expect during my first pregnancy, I could have made my provider aware that I thought something was wrong.

Ashley's Story:

It was a typical healthy first pregnancy. Went into the hospital in labor at 39 weeks and 2 days all hopeful, excited and nervous for what was to come. While having contractions in triage, we were only at the hospital for about 20 minutes and they began hooking me up to the monitors to monitor the baby's heartbeat and my contractions. The nurse was having a hard time finding his heartbeat, I didn't think anything of it since he was such a wiggle worm and didn't like to cooperate. The nurse said she would be right back, and a second later was back with a room of nurses and a Doctor we didn't know. The doctor began scanning my belly with the probe for the portable ultrasound machine. I didn't even have time to wonder if it was good or bad that she was doing that. Then she said, "I'm so sorry, there's no heartbeat." The air was sucked right out of me. I was in shock and didn't understand that no one had a sense of urgency. They should be trying to cut me open to save him. But they weren't because it was too late. I grew him and protected him inside me for 9 months. He was supposed to be his safest inside me. What did I do wrong to make this happen? What could I have done more of to prevent this? Our world shattered that day...and changed but not in the ways we thought it would. I assumed I was having a nightmare. Absolutely nothing prepared us for this. We didn't even know it was a possibility.

I only had ever heard of SIDs, so at that time I was more concerned with preventing SIDs. About 9 hours after hearing the worst news ever, I delivered our sweet Henry Thomas Lindberg into the world stillborn at 4:03 pm on March 23rd, 2021. It was a great moment delivering him into this world, but the room was so quiet and there was no baby crying. It's not fair, that is not what should have happened, not to anyone. This is not how we envisioned becoming parents, but it's our story and we will continue to tell people about Henry. He had his mom's button nose, but the rest of him was all his dad. Pure spitting image of him but with more hair on his head thanks to mom. And we assume the most beautiful blue eyes, since mom and dad both are blue eyed.

To this day, we still have not been given any reasoning to why Henry died. Except, with more data, testing, and observations with any and all pregnancies we know lives can be saved. And kick counting needs to be more well known to anyone going through pregnancy. All pregnancies should be treated like the miracles they are. Pregnancy does not automatically mean you get to bring home a baby. I can only hope that the babies lost too soon will help us save more babies in the future. We should be doing everything in our powers to save all the babies we can. I wish my firstborn son, Henry, were here with us. But since he is not I will do everything in my power to make sure no other couple has to go through what we went through. There's no term for when a parent loses a child or baby because it's just awful and unfathomable.

Stacie's Story:

My name is Stacie Lofton, I'm 32 years old from Arkansas. This is my story. I got really sick with Covid in November of 2021. Delta variant. I was 33 weeks. My otherwise low key pregnancy suddenly took a turn for the worst. The day after I was out of my 10 day quarantine, I went out to do a little shopping. It was the day after Thanksgiving. I remember feeling so tired and weak, like nothing I've ever felt in my life. I sat on a pile of plywood that was stacked in the store. I thought it was just my body still recovering from Covid. That night, I felt Grace moving and I went to bed with no issues, possibly even felt a tiny bit better. The next morning I woke up with a lot of abdominal pain, but I thought it was a pulled muscle due to having a coughing fit during the night. I called the doctor and told them about my pain and that I hadn't really felt Grace move that morning. She said if I hadn't felt her move by a certain time, to go to L&D. We decided to just go. The pain was getting worse and worse. They wheeled me up to L&D and the nurse "found Grace's heartbeat" for a brief minute then lost it and nobody could ever find it after that. Come to find out, it was my heartbeat.

All I remember hearing is, "I'm so sorry" while the doctor put his hand on my knee and looked at my husband and I. I don't think I fully processed it at that moment. I remember this feeling of terror, shame, and complete heartbreak crashing down on me all at once. I just said "no, no, no," over and over again while looking at my husband, Bryan. He was in shock, too. I was terrified of birthing my baby knowing she wouldn't be breathing. My physical pain was so horrible that they gave me morphine and it didn't touch it. I was doubled over in my bed. In complete shock combined with blinding pain, I was begging them to please do something. Then I started bleeding. Then the doctor said I'd be having an emergency c section. I was so severely dehydrated, it took about 10 different people to draw enough blood to check my lab work. After more tests, the doctor realized I was hemorrhaging internally. They rushed me to the OR and I remember the pain being so unbearable that I was gripping the side of my bed while laying in a fetal position. The doctor informed me that they were going to do everything they could to stop the bleeding, but they might have to perform a complete hysterectomy if they couldn't. I don't think the gravity of everything fully sunk in. They performed the c section and I remember them taking Grace but it was just so quiet except for the nurses and doctors talking. I remember looking up at the anesthesiology nurse and asking him if I was bleeding and if I was almost done. I was so tired. Bryan was holding my hand and kept reassuring me that everything was okay. But I could see the fear in his eyes.

I remember seeing bags of bloody things taken out of the room. I was finally wheeled back to my room and I just slept. But as the reality was setting in, I was becoming more and more distraught. Bryan slept right by my side and I woke up during the night in complete hysterics. I couldn't breathe and I was sobbing. That's when I realized that Grace was gone forever and she was no longer safe in my belly. I felt so empty. Like a shell. I remember everything seemed so dark and empty. The next day, our nurse brought us Grace to hold. I was so scared to see her, but my arms ached to hold my baby. She was perfect, dressed in her little outfit. A whole head of hair, beautiful little lips and nose, and her eyes closed peacefully. Like she was sleeping. I watched Bryan hold her and kiss her and my heart tore in two. How could our baby be gone? Our beautiful Grace. Although I had a severe placental abruption, severe preeclampsia, dangerously raised liver enzymes, and severe internal hemorrhaging, my body managed to heal. My numbers started leveling off, my blood pressure lowered, and I didn't need a blood transfusion thankfully. But I would do it all over again to bring our Grace home safe and sound. For a long time, I suffered from shame and guilt that my body had betrayed my baby.

Ashley's Story:

My doctor told me that we were having a perfect pregnancy. Two days later, my baby died. I was 26 weeks pregnant when I realized I hadn't felt my baby moving. I brushed it off telling myself that I just wasn't paying enough attention. As the day went on, I was getting more and more anxious. I felt deep down something was terribly wrong, but I kept finding ways to convince myself it was okay. I mean my doctor hadn't told me to do kick counts yet, so I'm probably overreacting, right?

I knew my baby's routine. I should have known better. I even did the juice test and no kicks, but I kept convincing myself I wasn't paying attention or that I felt flutters. I went to bed and even went to work the next day. I didn't realize that I could call my doctor after hours (it was NYD 2020), so I waited until they opened the call. I heard the nurse's tone, and I knew it wasn't good.

She sent us to the ER where we heard the worst news of our lives "I'm sorry. The baby has died." I labored, I delivered my baby, I bled, my milk came in. I went through it all without bringing my baby home. I got a few short hours with him to carry with me the rest of my life.

To this day, I wonder why my doctor didn't mention anything about stillbirth risks or signs. We ignorantly believed nothing could go wrong after our 20 week scan. On top of being completely blindsided, it was going to cost around \$4,000 to get an autopsy (on top of our \$5,000 hospital bill for delivery), which was not feasible for us. We may never know the cause of our baby's death or how to prevent it from happening again because of this.

Denise's Story:

I had a normal pregnancy with my last daughter Amaris Luna. At 7 months I decided I wanted to do a home birth away from all the chaos in hospitals and safe with my loved ones around. My midwife Laura had over 20 years of experience and assured me she wouldn't take me as a client if she had concerns about Amaris dying. I still kept all of my appointments with my obgyn just to triple check that all the testing was coming back normal, and they were. The day I went into labor everything was as planned. The pains were coming and going. My water had broken Friday and Sunday Laura came to help me induce my labor. Sunday around midnight my contractions changed to full belly pains that were unbearable. My mother suggested I stood up and when I did I bled to death. Laura decided to check me after not checking me all day and I was only 1.5 cm. We rushed to the hospital and I was very aware of my body dying. I told them I was bleeding to take my daughter out (I was 41 weeks) .

They had to check for her heart rate and they didn't find one. I was out to sleep, an emergency C-section and hysterectomy was performed to save my life. They tried to revive Amaris but it was too late. Once I woke up I asked for Amaris and they confirmed that they had her. I asked if she was alive and they said no. They told me I had 9qrts of blood infused and won't ever be able to carry another baby. I have my right ovary and two living daughters who were so excited to meet their baby sister. I was given a box and luckily my parents arranged all the funeral services. This has truly been a nightmare. Amaris was a perfect full term baby. I turned away from the medical field and tried to go natural, forgetting that death is part of nature too. I trusted my midwife who in fact failed us. I've had to fend for my sanity searching for mental health providers for myself and my daughters who are also very much affected by this traumatic loss. Amaris would've been 1 on 10/25/22 she is my forever baby and I am forced to live with this loss.

Diane's Story:

Kane Pham Lazaro was born on May 13, 2022 at 38+2 weeks. He was born still after I was admitted into the hospital for labor. He was a completely whole and healthy baby all the way to labor, during one of our hourly checks with no prior indication, his heartbeat was suddenly gone. The reality of his loss did not sink in until I had delivered him, he was still warm, and he was and still is perfect. My healthcare provider performed an autopsy without any successful indication of what happened. Upon more research, I was connected to Dr. Harvey Kliman at Yale Medical who reviewed our case and placental slides. He was almost certain that our case was preventable with the right measures in place early on. Kane died because my placenta was too small to sustain his life any longer. Something as simple as a 5-minute measurement could have informed this, yet that is not happening because there is no research, or education around this. It's an understatement to say.. this should not be happening with our medical advancements. My husband and I unknowingly joined a silent club of grieved parents. No one should have to endure this type of loss and pain. Kane's spirit was felt deeply, there has not been a day where I have not felt his void.

Crystal's Story:

I support this act because I was a victim of malpractice, I lost my baby due to health issues that came along the way due to denying my c-section if it weren't for that my baby would have lived for a very long time my heart feels that and I want to bring awareness so it will not happen to anyone else in this community losing my baby has been my worst nightmare I have not worked up from it 💔 it's heartbreaking to live this pain I will appreciate if my baby's name lived forever.

Supreet's Story:

My husband and I always knew we would eventually want kids but were in no real rush but when we found ourselves expecting our first baby, we were thrilled and felt grateful. When we found out the baby was going to be a girl, we decided to name her Noor, which means light. I had always been obsessed with lighthouses and my husband even proposed to me at one, so we knew it was the perfect name for our daughter.

My entire pregnancy I was told I was healthy and my baby girl was healthy. I never had any symptoms other than swelling which was always deemed as a normal side effect of pregnancy. On January 22, 2024 at 40 weeks and 2 days I went into labor. During active labor the doctors discovered my platelets had dropped so low. I was told I should have at least 150 and I had 63. They did a transfusion but every time I had contractions; my baby's heart rate would drop. They rushed me into an emergency c section, but my daughter was born without a heartbeat. They tried CPR but too much damage had been done to her organs. She died the next day.

I was later told I had atypical preeclampsia/HELLP syndrome where I displayed no "real" and "serious signs" so they never suspected anything. Meanwhile my whole 3rd trimester my platelets were dropping, and my daughter was struggling but no one ever knew.

We will grieve our daughter for the rest of our lives. But I want to always emphasize to every expecting mother how important it is to demand blood work throughout your entire pregnancy whether you are healthy or high risk.

Nubia's Story:

I wrote this on August 23rd. I am in recovery at the hospital. On August 23rd, I gave birth to our baby girl, Lily Marie Rodriguez, through a C-section at 37 weeks and 3 days. Earlier that day, I noticed she wasn't moving much and mentioned it to the nurse during monitoring. Initially, they reassured me, but then doctors confirmed what I couldn't bear to hear—Lily no longer had a heartbeat, our world shattered. My husband, John, held me together as we faced the unimaginable. Lily was born at 6:30 PM, weighing 5 lbs. 5 oz and measuring 18 inches. We spent cherished hours

with her, holding and memorizing every detail of her beautiful face. She had my nose and lips, with her father's features shining through. Saying goodbye to her was the hardest thing we've ever done. The devastation was unimaginable. My husband and I begged for it to be a mistake, but additional scans confirmed the worst. Just days earlier, she had been active and healthy, kicking me and filling us with excitement for her arrival. We had been preparing for her original due date, September 11th my husband's birthday and later adjusted to September 6th.

Throughout my pregnancy, I battled Hyperemesis Gravidarum, iron deficiency, and gallstones. Our care team, including nurses and doctors who had supported us through my challenges, shared in our grief. They stayed by our side, offering compassion as we made the difficult decision to proceed with the C-section due to my high-risk condition. This loss has broken us. Lily was deeply loved and eagerly awaited, her room filled with gifts from family and friends. Our son, Richie, who chose her name, grieves with us. The pain of her loss is immeasurable.

Denise's Story:

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Janelle's Story:

Monday February 1st, 2021 I went to my doctors office for my 34 week check up, I had been having a rough past 2 weeks having labor like contractions aka Braxton hicks they deemed it as irritable uterus because I wasn't dilating any, they gave me a shot in my arm to stop the contractions and would send me home each time as everything looked fine on the heart monitor etc. So here I am Monday hoping everything still looks good, they measured her heart beat and did my measurements and all was fine. Tuesday I had my regular monthly US scheduled but decided to reschedule it for the 16th as I had an extra one in January because she was measuring small and my doctor gave me a hard time saying "insurance won't cover it if you have another one too soon". Tuesday came and went and my little contractions continued but since they never did much when I went in which was excessively I just decided to wait for the big ones, like I can't drive myself big ones. I don't remember much about Wednesday except I went to work like normal, the day was crazy. The kids were crazy and I was thinking omg my child is gonna be deaf I'm so tired of raising my voice and saying stop!!! I remember joking like she's gonna come out so stressed out she's gonna need a drink (don't judge me lol). That Wednesday after having a conversation earlier in the week with Regina about where I should put the car

seat, I installed it yep big and pregnant and sweating I sat and pulled and tugged to make sure the base was secure. That night I went to bed and as normal couldn't get comfortable if I laid on my side no matter how much lotion I put on my belly would itch until I was crying so I was a slight side /back and I remember thinking hmmm she's not moving like she usually does at night but I just figured she was being mellow as it was just lighter movement. Thursday February 4th I woke up and rushed to get ready for work and still had this nagging feeling that I hadn't really felt her move, so I pulled out my hand doppler to search for a heart beat.... I couldn't find it but just chalked it up to I wasn't doing it right because I was rushing. So I went to work, and all day I worked with this nagging that something wasn't right but getting out of work had become a task so I waited and decided I would call the doctor's office on my lunch break which was at 2 pm. I called them as I headed to the office and they said they could squeeze me in at 2:45. I said I'll be there at 2:30 as I was already down the street. I got there and checked in and I'll never forget the front desk lady said "how are you" I said "I don't know" she replied "everything will be fine". I sat there for what felt like an eternity and the medical assistant called me back, we went to a room where they had a monitor and a big brown reclining chair. She placed the bands around my belly and pulled out the doppler and gel and started to move it around... nothing silence she said oh I hear a faint sound but I think this doppler isn't working right so she went to grab another medical assistant to try and I remember thinking and trying to block it out like a scene in a movie they are gonna say my baby is dead, I pushed that thought out quick and told myself Janelle your over reacting, but when the 2nd medical assistant couldn't find a heartbeat my eyes started to water. They both stepped out of the room briefly and came back and said we are going to send you into the exam room and have the doctor do an ultrasound. So I got up, they removed the bands and I walked into the room down the hall and sat on the exam table, I laid back and the doctor came in with the ultrasound machine. She placed more gel on belly and moved the doppler around for a little bit and pressed some buttons and then she said....."I'M SO SORRY THERE'S NO HEARTBEAT". She helped me sit up, said we would go over to labor and delivery, do a confirming ultrasound and I would be induced that night. I don't remember who I called or texted first, her dad, my sister, my family, all I know is it took what felt like forever to get a hold of anyone (my family in particular). So I sat in that room for minutes alone trying to breathe and understand what was happening. My sister finally called me back as my doctor walked in and shared that she had just been told the news, I couldn't even talk to my sister to get the words out. I just handed the phone to my doctor who couldn't understand what I was saying or maybe I wasn't saying anything. She handed the phone back to me and I mustered up the words " She's gone, shes gone and they are going to induce me. She said she'd be there as soon as possible. About a minute or 2 later another nurse walks in and says are you ready, I get up and we take this back way out of the clinic and walk down this long hall that leads over to the labor and delivery dept at the hospital. They have me change and get into the bed and another nurse comes in with the ultrasound machine to yet another ultrasound to prove what I so desperately hope is wrong that there is no heartbeat and she does just that. It's final, it's real this is happening.

Time passes and my sister arrives in disbelief and shock and she shares the confirmation with the rest of my family. The staff wanted me to eat before the induction began. I ordered a burger and fries and took one bite, I couldn't eat, how could they expect me to. Time seemed to fly those next few hours. It was now 7. They started the induction process here we go, they gave me something to sleep and by 11, I was out. I woke up at around 3:30am to my water breaking but contractions were still manageable at that point so I still held off on getting the epidural, they started pitocin and by 4 they worsened and I decided I couldn't take it anymore so they gave me the epidural. By 5:30 it was time to push and I'll never forget the nurse said are you ready? I said No and she said you got this you are. 2 pushes and February 5th, 5:48 am

My beautiful 4 lb 9.4 oz baby girl was born..... dead. I could say it softer and say she was born sleeping because it sounds nicer but the raw truth is she was dead, absolutely perfect but yes dead .I gazed in awe at every inch of her body and she was perfect, so how could my perfect baby be dead???? Can you imagine that.... All the planning, worrying, preparing, labor, delivery, future hopes, worries, dreams all gone just like that. I what if and maybe all the time because I should have saved her. If you have tortured yourself this long and actually read this you are awesome and I hope you learn something from what I didn't do. DO YOUR KICK COUNTS, DO TRUST YOURSELF, ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF, DOCTORS DON'T ALWAYS KNOW BEST. I will always wish I had done things differently even if it wouldn't have changed the outcome. So I hope that I can change someone else's outcome. Anyways, thanks for reading My story, Brielle's Story.

Sarah's Story:

Last year on July 14, what should have been the happiest day of our lives, the day we were looking forward to since we started trying to grow our family, quickly turned into the worst. Our beautiful baby boy, Beau, with his dad's nose, a head full of my brown wavy hair, and kissable chubby cheeks was born silently. I was told I had a completely healthy pregnancy and took extra precautions throughout the pandemic to keep Beau safe, all while working as a registered nurse. I ate all the recommended amount of protein, drank 3 liters of water per day, attended every appointment, isolated from friends and family, and took the vaccines to keep both of us safe, but that alone couldn't save him. Instead of tending to Beau these last 16.5 months, I've been tending to my grief and addressing the trauma that comes with the death of a child.

Helen's Story:

Lucas was our first child. All my prenatal checkups showed both he and I were healthy. I had my OBGYN visit on May 11th, 2018 and it was my 38th week. Lucas didn't move much but his heart rate was normal. During my pregnancy, my OB asked me about Lucas' movement. But he never emphasized the importance of it or taught me how to measure Lucas's movement. He also told me that it was normal that the baby would move in the third trimester because he grew out of the room.

In addition, my OB told me about the 39-week's rule, a strict clinical guideline established in 2009 that "restricts labor induction in the 37th and 38th week of pregnancy." The 39-week rule is now a strict clinical guideline that is enforced by professional organizations for doctors, governmental agencies and the medical insurance industry in the US and our nation is the only country in the world that has such a rule. After losing Lucas, I learned that several recent studies advise caution against the universal application of the rule, especially in high-risk pregnancy groups, such as older moms, which was my case. The studies show that the U.S. stillbirth rates in late terms -- between 37 to 40 weeks, increased after the implementation of the 39-weeks. I didn't know any of these when I was pregnant with Lucas. My OB never mentioned stillbirth risk at all.

I was 39 wk pregnant as of May 14th, 2018. On the evening of May 14th, after I experienced contraction, I called my OBGYN office multiple times and after talking to the on-call doctor, my husband, my mom, and I went to a local hospital. Two nurses received us. I laid in a bed and another nurse connected me with monitors to both the baby and I. My husband, my mom and I all immediately heard the baby's heartbeats. Lucas's heart rate was initially at around 125, which was lower than a normal baby's heart rate of around 140. It should have been a warning sign, but nurses kept telling us that it was normal that the baby's heart rates fluctuate during delivery. I started bleeding shortly after a nurse checked on me. Again, we were told some bleeding was normal. I kept on asking where the doctor from the OB's office was and we were told she was on her way (it turned out that she wasn't on her way until the nurses called her three times and she came after Lucas was delivered). As my bleeding became more heavily, Lucas's heart rates dropped. Again, we were told everything was fine. The nurses waited for close to an hour before they got another doctor who was on deck in the hospital. This doctor decided to perform an emergency C-section.

It was too late for Lucas. He passed away. I was in a coma after so much blood loss and doctors were racing against time to save my life. My mom told me later that while I was in the surgical room, the hospital staff separated her from my husband and put her in a room alone. She doesn't speak English, but she knew something terrible was happening. Yet, no one came to talk to her or explain what was happening. My husband had to call my sister to serve as a translator for my mom and deliver the bad news. I spent five days in the ICU after my C-section. I was told that I had a placenta abruption. I learned later that placenta abruption doesn't always cause a baby's death if medical staff recognize the symptoms early and perform C-sections in time.

The loss of our son was like an earthquake, and it shook the world of our entire family. For my parents, Lucas was their first and only grandson. My mom made Lucas many different things: outfits, blankets, hats, crocheted sweaters, and several pairs of delicate shoes. Lucas would have enough wear from the time he was born to two years old.

The first and the last time Lucas wore anything his grandmother made was at his funeral. My father experienced many pains and sufferings in his life, but I had never seen him cry. After Lucas's death, my father cried twice. The first time was at the hospital. My father held Lucas in his arms for a long time, and he wouldn't let go. By the time he had to leave, my father had cried. He told Lucas how sorry grandpa was for not being able to protect him. The second time I saw my father cry was at Lucas' funeral. As for me, everyone close to me knows how much I want to become a mother. There are no words to describe the shock and pain I've experienced. More than four years since Lucas's death, I still cannot talk about him without crying. We lost our son, a healthy full-term baby because:

1. Many doctors and nurses are not educated about stillbirth risks themselves. They often fail to recognize early warning signals.
2. Many healthcare workers ignore or take pregnant women's complaints seriously and dismiss our concerns as being hysteria or anxious.
3. At least 25 percent of stillbirths are preventable. OBs and nurses should have open and honest discussions of stillbirth with every pregnant mom and their spouses, listen to women's complaints, treat each of us as unique individuals, and apply the latest technology to detect if anything is wrong.
4. Couples, especially pregnant women, need to become themselves and their babies' advocates in our healthcare system. The more we can learn reliable information about stillbirth, the better chance fewer couples would have to suffer such devastating losses in their lives.

Jen's Story:

After seven hopeful years of medical procedures, fertility treatments and a previous miscarriage, we were thrilled to learn that our most recent IVF transfer was successful. While the rest of the world was coping with a pandemic shutdown, we were living in our quarantine bubble of joy! Our precious baby boy Jonah was the answer to all we have longed for. I had a very high-risk pregnancy with frequent monitoring, which eventually eased us of the anxiety that accompanies pregnancy after loss. During the day I educated teenagers as a high school math teacher. At night I spent hours researching how best to prepare for a baby with Down Syndrome.

I should have spent those hours researching how to prevent stillbirth. Just before 30 weeks I felt what I would now describe as frantic kicking. We were thrilled to finally feel him saying hello... we had no idea something was wrong until it was too late and there was no movement at all. I went to L&D and there I was again, sitting in a silent room, staring at an ultrasound screen that looked more like a photograph: our baby boy curled up, not moving, with no visible heartbeat. I delivered our Jonah Anthony, the spitting image of his daddy with identical golden blonde hair and long limbs. We spent 25 minutes with him. It wasn't enough time.

Jonah's death was documented as "unexplained" because no one in my county was qualified to perform and read the necessary pathology reports. For 18 months I lived with the burden of guilt believing I was responsible for his death. We have since paid out of pocket to learn there were clots in his umbilical cord and evidence of cord compression, both of which can sometimes be indicated by changes in fetal movement. None of my care providers made any attempt to educate us on tracking fetal movement. What I had read about kick counting in books and websites was incomplete and inaccurate. I did not know that a sudden increase in movement can also be a sign of fetal distress. I believe my son's death was preventable. I am working in his honor to prevent other families from experiencing the heartache of stillbirth and to destigmatize the conversation about pregnancy loss and stillbirth prevention.

Paige's Story:

On July 24th, 2022 I had the most beautiful elephant themed baby shower for our little boy, Kase. Little did we know that just 7 days later we would be saying hello and goodbye to our angel baby. Kase was born "sleeping" on July 31st at 3:57pm at 19.5 inches and 5lbs 5oz right at 34 weeks.

The day we lost him, it took us THREE calls to our obgyn before being brought in. I was experiencing bad cramping, back pain, pain on my lower left side and Kase was way up higher in my abdomen than he ever had been. I was a first time mom, I knew nothing and just continued to listen to "these are normal pregnancy symptoms". I was told that as long as I wasn't bleeding and I could actually talk, there was nothing to be worried about. When getting to the hospital I was actually told that I had a high pain tolerance. As if that meant anything. I actually had an NST the day before and we were told all was well.

We were originally told there was a good chance we would never find out the cause of our perfectly healthy baby's death. We refused to accept this answer and started digging on our own. After finding and reaching out to a specialist at Yale, we got some answers. Fun, frustrating fact, pathology usually only saves your placenta for about 4 weeks. I called just after 4 weeks and they said it was disposed of. I again, refused to accept this answer and made them go look for it. They were able to find it, save it and send it over to Yale. It turns out that Kase's placenta was placed in the bottom 6th percentile of placental size. Kase however was in the top 65th percentile for gestational age.

During my pregnancy, my placenta was never measured. If there is one thing that I hope to achieve from posting Kase's story would be raising awareness of this heart wrenching gap in maternal care in hopes that another family would not have to go through a similar loss. The measurements take 30 seconds and can be done during your regular ultrasounds. Why, in one of the greatest countries in the world, is this not getting done?!

Kathy's Story:

Tinsley Gardner came into the world stillborn at 31 weeks and 4 days on Monday, December 4th, 2017 at 12:05pm ET. She weighed nearly 3 pounds and was 15 inches long. Her heart stopped beating in the early morning of Sunday, December 3rd. Tinsley was a perfect, healthy baby girl who developed a "Double True Knot" in her umbilical cord, which went undetected, despite my being treated as high risk patient because of my hyperemesis gravidarum and advanced maternal age (I would have just turned 35 before her due date). I saw MFMs from Yale and had BPPs at 28 and 30 weeks. Although she was measuring small, she wasn't measuring "small enough" to warrant concern. If they had scanned the cord at either of those appointments, they would have seen the knot. And then I could have been warned to pay attention to any erratic, frantic movements as signs of potential fetal distress, which I did experience the day before she died.

Her last day on earth was spent enjoying Christmas music and meeting Santa on the Essex Steam Train with her brothers, Charlie and James. Her last night on earth was spent attending the Sandy Hook tree lighting ceremony. I thought she was happy and dancing to the music, but she was trying to tell me that she was in trouble. I had never heard that a change in movement could signal a problem or that hyperactivity was a siren going off. If I had known that, she could have been saved. She died on her great-grandmother's birthday – the woman she is named after. That night was the first and only full moon supermoon of 2017. She was buried among other babies gone too soon in the Angel's Walk during the first snowfall of the season on Saturday, December 9th. My two subsequent pregnancies were full of terror, trauma, and frustration with MFMs. I am blessed that Henry and George made it here safely, despite double nuchal wraps around their necks. I firmly believe that surveillance and data collection on stillbirths can reduce the incidences of these tragedies. We can and should do more to protect our unborn.

Vivian's Story:

My son, Edward Alexander, died due to a "cord accident" and was stillborn in April of 2020 in the height of the global pandemic. Several months later I found out my symptoms prior to his death were consistent with other stillbirths due to cord accidents. Edward is my third child and I had never been told about the risk of stillbirth. I also learned that there were tool kits/screeners that had been used in other countries that drastically reduced the stillbirth rate. For over a year I relentlessly advocated for my OB office to use this toolkit, free of charge...for over a year I advocated for better support to parents who go through this loss. Nothing. I support the SHINE act because I want to believe that my son's death wasn't in vain. I support the SHINE act because research supports best practices, can lead to better education and support...but most importantly I support the Shine for Autumn Act because our babies deserve to live.

Katherine's Story:

I had an amazing pregnancy with Brody. He loved strawberries and York peppermint patties and flipped around all the time. I even called him Cirque du Soleil. We couldn't wait for his arrival. He is our first child, and I just knew the entire time that it was a boy...

Throughout the pregnancy, I was considered Low Risk, despite my advanced maternal age. I was treated very casually in my appointments, almost like, get out, we have others to tend to. At around 10 weeks, my due date was changed from February 1-February 10th. I fought them on it several times and they always said it didn't matter. But it did... My blood pressure started to creep higher in the 3rd trimester. To the point that it was mentioned if it continued, they would suggest inducing me at 38 weeks. My overall health was treated as not a big deal.

One morning, around 36 weeks, Brody's movements started to slow. I was told that was normal, that he was running out of space and that I'd only feel small "rolls" not punches. And then one day, he stopped moving completely...It was recommended that I come into the office, not the ER. So I went in to be told that he no longer had a heartbeat and he had died. After his death, I had more tests done on myself as well as on Brody. I was told that Brody had a small placenta, in the 2nd percentile. His growth most likely started falling behind in the 3rd trimester. But because his due date had been changed so drastically, it was not caught and a specialist was not recommended.

Brody could have been monitored more closely if the placenta was measured and he could have been taken out before he died. I also found AFTER his death in a simple blood test that I have a genetic blood disorder, Prothrombin Gene Mutation Factor II heterozygote, which makes me 4x likely for a blood clot. Knowing this beforehand would have made me high risk and had better and more intentional monitoring done. We could have caught him in distress.

Not one time in any of my appointments was I educated on the likelihood of a stillbirth. NOT ONCE. I was never asked about kick counting or my baby's movements. The risk of clots was never spoken about and worst of all, the mention of the placenta never happened. As a first time mother, I had no idea that it was more about the change in my baby's normal movements, not the kicks I needed to look out for. I had NO idea stillbirth was possible. I had NO idea my baby was being deprived of nutrients and oxygen due to a small placenta. I had no idea that placenta was causing the high blood pressure.

Bottom line is, I went to one of the busiest and biggest practices in the state, and they seem to have zero idea about anything. If I had just been told, if I had been tested, if I was made aware through better evaluations, monitoring, education, support, my son would be alive. Now moving forward, I have to find doctors who will do all of these things in basic prenatal care, when it should be standard for ALL.

My Brody isn't coming back, my first born is dead, and the worst part about it all, is that it could have been prevented if our medical care was better. Thank you for taking the time to hear my story. I hope this will help others as well as push towards change being made...

Liz's Story:

My son Harrison was stillborn at 38 weeks and 5 days on October 20, 2021 at Northside Atlanta. I had a very normal, healthy pregnancy the entire time and hadn't received any additional testing or ultrasounds after our 20 week scan.

At my routine 38 week appt, I went in and the doctors detected no heartbeat. I had noticed less movement in the last day or so but was unaware that meant signs of fetal distress. I feel like there could be more awareness around fetal movement in the last couple of weeks of pregnancy to help parents know the signs of what to look for.

With my son, there were no initial signs of cord or placenta issues. We sent the placenta off for testing and came back inconclusive. We learned due to lack of testing and knowledge, the people who are researching placentas may not know everything to look or test for. In addition, my son is assumed to have absorbed the amniotic fluid inside the placenta as there was no fluid at my appt. Additional testing in the third trimester including NST's and ultrasounds could have potentially seen signs of lower amniotic fluid levels or a small placenta which would maybe have led to being monitored more frequently or even induced early. My husband and I are adamant that our son would be here if there was more testing in the third trimester. We'd love to see stillbirth rates in America come down due to simple things doctors can monitor throughout the entire pregnancy.

Cassandra's Story:

My husband and I lost our son this July. During every check-up, no medical provider told me of concerns during the third trimester, and since this was my first pregnancy, I did not know what was considered worrisome. No one told me to pay attention to movement or the difference between Braxton Hicks contractions and movement pains. Additionally, because my 20 week ultrasound was "normal," none of the medical professionals whom I saw thought additional inspection of how my son was growing was needed. If additional tests were more commonplace, my son could have been saved. No family should have to go through the devastation we have due to an arcane process and a lack of funding and education for medical professionals.

Savanna's Story:

Our son Elias was stillborn at 38 weeks on March 13, 2022. He was our first child. I had a normal, low risk pregnancy with no complications until the very end. Everything went smoothly throughout the pregnancy. I went to the hospital one night because I noticed reduced movement but it was too late. Unfortunately, for about 2 weeks prior to losing Elias I had noticed a change in movements but I made the mistake of believing he was "running out of room" or that he "was settling in." The change was not a frequency of movements until the end but more a change in the type of movement and the strength of the movements. I have to live with this guilt and this grief and looking back it is easier to say "I should've done this, or why didn't I do that?" But honestly I can't know what I didn't know. I do believe that informing parents of the risk of stillbirth, the warning signs, and the importance of things like kick counts can make a huge impact. One doctor asked me about my baby's movements, one time. That was it. During the entire pregnancy it was mentioned once. I was never encouraged to track movements. Also, I never had a 3rd trimester ultrasound, since everything else had gone smoothly, routine care for a normal-low risk pregnancy does not require this. I will wonder every day, if we had done an ultrasound later on would we have seen something??

Last, I think there is a huge lack of understanding regarding autopsies and placental investigations after a fetal demise. The placenta is such a vital piece of a healthy pregnancy with a positive outcome and when something goes wrong, typically the individual examining the baby also examines the placenta but that person is not actually trained to do so. I asked my doctor for information about the placenta. I asked if there were pictures taken or notes written down and there was nothing. The autopsy report does not mention anything in relation with the placenta.. I definitely hope to see more research done in relation with the placenta during pregnancies and after a tragic event like a stillbirth because it could provide answers.

I am currently pregnant again and have already met with a specialist. I asked about measuring the volume of the placenta during pregnancy. I asked if anyone in the practice does this or has any experience and the answer was no, there is not even research/literature to support this. So even though I have had a previous stillbirth and even though there is evidence out there (although it may be limited) that supports measuring the volume of the placenta, it will not be done unless I find another doctor who is willing to do so. This is concerning and discouraging as I will be concerned about this during the duration of the pregnancy. Not knowing what happened to my son gives me such anxiety. I just wish there was more research being done and more protocols in place to prevent such tragedies because my family and I are not alone in this.

Adriana's Story:

My baby Lucia was born January 25th, 2022 stillborn at 38 weeks. I had a perfect pregnancy, never had any issues, diseases, or things to worry about. On January 24th, I had scheduled my 38th week visit to my doctor, which is an Emory OB/GYN group in Midtown Atlanta. It was at 8 o'clock, I was checked by the nurse and doctor. It was really brief, I remember my pulse rate was higher than normal for me, but still within the normal range, I asked the doctor about it and she said I had nothing to worry about. She only checked Lucia's heart rate with a doppler and I was sent home. So I went home, I was working from home that day, at noon I went for a walk and I started with sharp pain in my lower back, which continued throughout the day. I mentioned it to my mom and she said that it was normal, I was so close to giving birth. Baby felt normal and she had movement throughout the day. At night we followed our routine, had dinner, went to bed, the pain wasn't bad and the baby was moving. Later I woke up and had pain again. I tried to go back to sleep but it kept waking me up. Around 2 am the pain was unbearable, so I asked my husband to go to the hospital. I took a shower, ate and got ready, as the doctor advised. At this point I'm not sure the baby was moving, I got to the hospital, and they made me wait for a few hours. I was feeling terrible, vomiting and the pain was awful. Around 7 am they finally took me in, and they didn't find a heartbeat.

I just wanted them to get the baby out, but they told me I was in labor and had to go through the process. So I did, and at 4 pm the baby was born.

They took an autopsy, they found 2 blood clots in my placenta, and they don't know if they were formed before or after Lucia died, also meconium in her lungs. The autopsy said I had "insufficient placenta", later they told me they put that because they had to put something but that my placenta wasn't the issue, I later asked Dr. HARvey and he also said that my placenta was normal sized for the size of the baby. They also said it wasn't the umbilical cord, the baby was perfect genetically, I didn't suffer from infections either.

Jennica's Story:

My son Hugo died on October 20, 2021 from a small placenta that could no longer sustain him at nearly 39 weeks gestation (full term). I gave birth to his beautiful body, 6 lbs 15 oz, 19.5 inches long, on October 21, 2021. And this is our story, in hopes that we can advocate to save other babies and parents from the same tragic outcome. On February 19, 2021, my partner and I found out I was pregnant with our first baby. But I actually knew he was on his way before that. I felt his little soul tap me on the shoulder, telling me it was time to *be ready already!* I felt such a strong connection to him throughout my pregnancy, and even though we waited until he was born to find out his sex, I knew he was going to be a boy, our Hugo.

My pregnancy was relatively "healthy," so much so, that I was set to give birth at a birth center, where I was hoping to have an unmedicated birth in a tub - a dream I later realized would never be my reality. Every appointment showed a healthy baby, other than a marginal cord insertion, which we were told was a risk but would probably be fine, and a healthy me. My blood pressure never spiked or dropped too low, and Hugo's heartbeat was always strong. He was also a pretty active little one, averting doctors with his strong movements and making his dad and me laugh.

Near the end of my pregnancy, about 33 weeks, I discovered that Hugo was breech. Then began my anxious search for solutions, since there was only one doctor I knew of in Atlanta who would deliver a breech baby through the pelvis, and I wanted to avoid surgery if I could. I tried everything to turn Hugo, including Spinning Babies™ exercises, acupuncture, chiropractic care, massage, baths, singing to him, and even an ECV (external cephalic version) at the hospital, but nothing worked. In fact, he turned head down during the ECV but turned right back! He knew where he wanted to be! So I decided to transfer to the one OB who would give us the ability to try for a pelvic delivery.

The day before Hugo died, my partner and I were at the doctor's office, talking about our plans for our baby's birth and getting excited that we finally knew where we would be on the day. Though it wasn't what we had hoped for, we were just excited to be done wondering if we would still be able to be at the birth center or at a hospital. I felt like I could breathe easy for the first time in weeks, as I had been so worried that something was wrong with my baby—this feeling I couldn't shake. At that appointment, Hugo's heart rate was strong, as always, and I was visibly healthy as well. I prepared myself for a possible breech birth by frequenting the [Breech Without Borders](#) website and watching videos of pelvic breech births.

But the night after having that last appointment, I remember Hugo had moved frantically before bed, which I thought was him just being active like he always was, then I remember waking up to go to the restroom and not feeling Hugo move at all as I tried to fall back to sleep. Normally, he would keep me up for at least half an hour, and I cherished that time when I knew he was safe. I woke up the next morning with a feeling of utter dread, knowing that I had not felt him move. I tried to eat and move around, hoping I had just been too tired to wait for his movements overnight. I felt nothing. I called my doctor's office, and the nurses told me to drink a surgery drink. After doing so, I thought I felt Hugo move, which I have since learned may have been contractions after Hugo had passed. Because I felt something, I thought he was okay. I wanted so desperately for him to be okay. After waiting for more movement, I didn't feel anything again and called my doctor's office. They told me to wait another two hours and let them know if I didn't feel ten kicks in that time. When I didn't (after going to a horrific nail appointment to try and distract myself, where I spent the entire time knowing something was absolutely terribly wrong), I came home in tears, and my partner and I drove to the doctor's office.

There, we found out our baby's heart had stopped beating. And my whole world seemed to end. I couldn't believe it. I had said in the car on the way there, "If anything happens to this baby, I will not survive it." Yet, somehow, less than an hour later, there I was surviving, on my way to the hospital to get induced and give birth to my baby, who would never come home with us. What especially breaks my heart now looking back at our story is, because Hugo was breech, we had at least three third trimester ultrasounds, and not once did anyone look at the volume of his placenta. (Those ultrasounds wouldn't have even happened at all if he hadn't been breech.) His life was in danger, but the danger was hiding in plain sight, simply because the ultrasound techs and providers did not know about EPV (estimated placental volume). I also didn't know to check for *quality* of movement and not just *quantity*. When I look back, I remember that his movements did slow down. He kept kicking me with what I imagine was his left foot, right near my ribs because of his position. If I had known what to look for, maybe I would have been able to save his life. I thought I had felt movement, and that was enough. I never wanted to be a bother to my providers and thought I had been overly anxious. I didn't want to seem like too much, or just a freaked out first-time parent. Now I know that movement should never slow down in the third trimester, and I should feel comfortable to ALWAYS go in to check on my baby, without waiting at home first or feeling silly. My intuition was right.

Before and after Hugo's birth, we were told that he probably died from a "freak cord accident," which would likely not recur. But the autopsy report had revealed nothing out of the ordinary. For a few months, I accepted that. But I was terrified that this would happen to us again if we were to have more children. After speaking with a fellow loss mom and friend, I took a look at [PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy](#) on Instagram and found a Clubhouse episode featuring Dr. Harvey Kliman, placental researcher at Yale Medicine. I learned that there are preventable causes of stillbirth that many people never find out about, even if it happened to them. After a long journey of trying to get Hugo's placental slides to Dr. Kliman, we learned that Hugo had died from a small placenta, which occurred because of a genetic issue (that could recur!). He was nine times bigger than his placenta at birth, when he should have only been six times bigger. He was in the 30th percentile for his weight, but his placenta was in the less than 1st percentile for its volume. No one ever knew. There were no obvious warning signs.

He should be here with us now. I don't blame any of our care providers for Hugo's death, because I know they did the best they could with the knowledge they had. But I do blame the system for not taking action sooner to make Estimated Placental Volume measurements standard care for all pregnant people. This should not happen. Period.

Now, I parent Hugo by advocating. His legacy will hopefully help save other babies and parents from the heartbreak of not spending their lives together. He will always be my beautiful, headstrong, firstborn baby. And because of the information we've gained from Dr. Kliman and Measure the Placenta, we will be able to save future babies (I am currently pregnant with Hugo's sibling and constantly balancing hope and fear) from what Hugo experienced. I am grateful for that, though it breaks my heart, too. Thank you for reading our story. Sending you love, wherever you are. Let's measure placentas and gather as much research as we can to end preventable stillbirth, in honor of Hugo and of all the babies who should be here with us now.

Alina's Story:

My name is Alina Grill and this is my story of my daughter, Isabel. Isabel's story starts with her dad and me. We have been best friends since we were 15 who 10 years later fell in love (or maybe we always were!) and got married. We soon found out she was on her way and it was the best surprise of our lives. We were so excited to become parents and start our family.

I had a fairly smooth pregnancy until about 20 weeks, when at the gender reveal, the ultrasound technician noted a "double bubble" in Isabel's abdomen. I remember sitting in the patient room after the ultrasound oblivious as to what was about to transpire. I was so excited at finding out she was a girl that I didn't know yet something was wrong. My OB came into the room and told me that a double bubble was noted during the ultrasound and informed me of what that could possibly indicate and that I was being referred to MFM for further evaluation. She mentioned that Isabel

could have Down's syndrome amongst other things. I started crying and the ob had the audacity to ask me why I was crying!? I am pretty sure I was stunned by her inability to be compassionate that I snapped at her and left the room. I spent that whole next week with severe anxiety waiting for the MFM appointment. I knew that we would love Isabel no matter what but I did grieve that she might not have the life I had envisioned for her.

Finally, the day of the MFM appointment came. I was elated when they determined that she did not have Down's syndrome but we weren't necessarily in the clear. She did have what is called duodenal atresia, which basically is a blockage between her duodenum (small intestine) & stomach. She was otherwise healthy. I was from that moment on to be monitored by MFM and considered a high risk pregnancy. Initially, there was shock that came with that diagnosis but eventually my husband and I were able to absorb the news and then just learn what we needed to do & expect to take the best care of our girl.

I was to be monitored twice weekly at NST's because the duodenal atresia would give me polyhydramnios. Isabel was unable to process the amniotic fluid so it would build up in my womb. At birth she would be taken to surgery to repair the blockage, she would be in the NICU for about 3 weeks and then after that we would bring her home! At least that's how it was portrayed to us and that is the expectation we had going forward. We were never told that we were at risk for stillbirth due to the polyhydramnios; it was never on our radar. The polyhydramnios became severe in my 8 month of pregnancy. I was constantly contracting and I had 3 times the standard amount of fluid in my womb. I was bedridden and very dependent on my husband to get up and out of bed, sit down on a toilet etc. It was extremely humbling but it never took away our joy because it was all going to be worth it when we finally got to meet our precious baby girl.

The last four weeks of pregnancy with my girl were full of ER visits. I broke out in hives all over my pregnant belly for one visit, had fluid pulled for another and another visit where we thought she was coming early because my contractions had become so regular. Every time we left the ER we would have this feeling of okay not today but soon. She will be here soon. The visit where amniotic fluid was pulled, however, still haunts me to this day. My OB wanted to induce me because the polyhydramnios had gotten so bad, but the attending physician at the delivering hospital (who I guess got to make the call despite me never having seen him during my prenatal care) decided he would rather let her stay in longer than be pulled out at only 36 weeks. Now knowing that stillbirth was a possibility for us, I will forever wonder what would have happened if this physician had made a different call and let her be born that day instead. Would she be here in my arms? Something to note that is important in understanding the next part of her birth story is that with polyhydramnios, her movements were not always so easily deciphered by me. All the extra fluid essentially cushioned her movement and I only felt her at certain times of day when her movements were very strong.

Fast forward to when I am 37 weeks and 2 days pregnant. I had just had fluid pulled from my womb a week prior and was actually feeling great. The decrease in fluid allowed me to breathe easier, had decreased my back pain and minimized the contractions. I had also been given notice that I was being induced with Isabel in 3 days. I had an NST that morning that now I realize should have signaled my health care provider that she was struggling and needed to be taken out.

Isabel typically passed all of her NSTs. They look for two accelerations in heart rate during a 10 minute interval. That morning the nurse had to use a buzzer on my pregnant belly twice to "wake" Isabel up to pass the NST. I should have been sent to labor and delivery but instead I was assured everything was fine and me not knowing any better and having full faith that my healthcare providers were taking good care of me and my girl. I went home to get our house ready for my mother in law to fly in for our induction in 3 days. Two days later, it's the night before induction day. My mother in law is in town and she and my husband and I are making plans for how we will rotate shifts to care for Isabel while she's in surgery and afterwards in recovery in the NICU. Our close friends invite us to dinner to celebrate our last night before we become parents and so we excitedly pack our hospital bag before we get in the car to meet them all for dinner.

While at dinner my friend asks if she can feel Isabel's kicks. Due to the fluid, there were two times a day where I could feel her movements and that was in the morning around 10 am and in the evenings around 7/8 pm. My friend knew this schedule and because it was about that time in the evening, she wanted to feel Izzy kick! I realized I hadn't felt Isabel moving yet that evening but that as soon as I did my friend was welcome to put her hand on my belly. At first I didn't feel anything other than just impatience. Impatient to feel my sweet girls' movements. But as the minutes became an hour I put on a brave face around everyone at dinner but I was starting to panic. I excused myself to go to the bathroom and sat in the stall poking and prodding my belly to try and elicit a response. I plead with God to let my baby be okay and that this situation not be as it seems. I go back to the table and tell my husband that I am tired and that I would like to leave. While in the car, I let him in on my fears and he immediately started driving to the ER.

The rest of the story I remember as if they are snapshots. I remember the car ride while I desperately hoped to feel her move so that we could breathe a sigh of relief and turn the car back towards home. I remember going to the ER and telling them my complaint was "decreased fetal movement". I remember the time they took to get my vitals and check me in, making me furious that I wasn't immediately hooked up to a Doppler to check on Isabel. I remember when the nurse mistakenly thought we were there for induction and announced that it was "baby day!". I remember the nurse's face as she scanned the screen furiously trying to find Isabel's heartbeat. I remember me trying to lighten the mood by saying, "oh she's hiding, huh?". I remember the panic that started to boil over when the nurse said she had to go get the doctor because we might need to get the baby out now. And then the moment when the doctor says, "I am sorry but there is no heartbeat." I felt stunned. The trap door in our life had opened up. There was no forevermore a "before" and "after" in our lives. I remember sitting up in the hospital bed embracing my husband as we both held each other with her lifeless body between us in my belly and our tears pooling on top of her. I spent the next 36 hours in labor while grief suffocated my husband and I. Family and friends flew into town. I would catch relief during short little naps throughout those 36 hours and every time I woke up to the nightmare that had become my life, a new family member and/or friend had gathered in the labor room with us. I don't know what we would have done without all of them because they have carried my husband and I ever since this "after".

Isabel was born on June 12, 2018. She had the most beautiful strawberry blonde hair. My husband and I spent the next four days with her in a cuddle cot trying to squeeze a lifetime into those four days. Although I'm grateful for those four days, they will never be enough. We have spent every day since with a hole in our family where a little red haired girl should be.

Keri's Story:

How do I tell you the story of my second child, Grace? There are so many words but not nearly enough as she only lived for 38 weeks inside me. I birthed her on May 6, 2005 after going into the hospital for a planned version to try to manually turn Grace to a head down position as she was breech. When the nurse put on the fetal monitor to track the baby during the procedure, they couldn't find her heartbeat. I was induced and birthed Grace that night. When she was born, there was no sound of a baby crying, only silence and my tears.

Stillbirth doesn't just impact the baby who died, it impacts the family for the rest of their lives. I went home to my first-born daughter who was 4 years old at the time and instead of taking pictures of her holding her new baby sister, I was giving her the devastating news that her sister died. She lives knowing she almost had a sister. She misses her every day as I do. Now almost 24 years old, she lives in fear of a pregnancy of her own, wondering if she will go through a pregnancy loss of her own. I suffer from anxiety and PTSD. I had a beautiful baby boy born the next year. He was a miracle and loved completely. However my pregnancy with him and his early years were filled with angst and fear of what could happen to him. Once you have seen the awful possibilities, you can't unsee them.

I went to specialists to see if they could help me understand why my baby died. There was evidence of the umbilical cord wrapped tightly around her neck three times. How was that not something that was discovered during one of my routine care visits so that she could be saved from the one thing that gave her life? Research is desperately needed to know what is causing the alarming amount of stillbirths in this country. Research would have saved my daughter. Please pass the SHINE for Autumn Act and let's help save babies.



Tierra's Story:

Summit Oct 31st, 2020 After our first pregnancy was an ectopic, we waited until Jan 2020 (due to health issues for myself) to meet with our provider again and go over our next pregnancy plan. During this "time off" from trying to conceive I was having asthma issues and had my second DVT (blood clot in my leg) and this led to the discovery of a blood clotting disorder. So the journey of blood thinning medication began and this was a part of the planning for our next pregnancy. The plan with my hematologist and ob provider is to switch to Loveonox as soon as I got pregnant again. About the end of April is when I tested again and we were pregnant again. Made another early appointment the first week in May because of my history of an ectopic and had planned on meeting with my original OB. Unfortunately that OB provider was taking on a job at a different location within the company, so I had to find a new provider.

Fast forward, we told both sides of the family after we reached 10 weeks of pregnancy this time around. We didn't announce anything on social media until our gender was revealed. A baby boy, our baby boy. Over the next couple of

months we picked our son's name, Summit and planned my baby shower for Nov 7th, 32+ weeks. Wednesday, Oct 29th was my 31 week appointment and I had some concerns because I had gained 10+ lbs of swolleness (water weight), I was having lower back spasms, and when the provider (and a student) checked our son with the doppler, his heart rate was in the 160's. My provider started to stop eating so many carbs and sodium.

The 29th and 30th I worked and watched what I was eating and remembered how swollen I was that it was difficult to feel our son moving. Looking back at texts those days I started to express my concerns to my husband who was traveling for work.

Friday, Oct 30th while at work I went to the restroom and had a little bit of spotting (2pm). I panicked and called my OB office where the nurse said that spotting is normal and to keep watching for more spotting, "if it becomes bright red and more than a quarter in size then to call back or head in to get checked out.

After work I went home and went to the restroom and there was a bright red spot and I called my husband who was out of town for work to start heading my way please, because I am going to head to the hospital to get checked out (8pm). Arrived and was taken to labor and delivery and my original provider from my ectopic pregnancy. There is when she confirmed that there was no heartbeat. All I remember is having to tell my husband on the phone that I was alright but our baby isn't and to please drive safe and I would see him as soon as he got there.

I got checked into labor and delivery, and my OB provider from outpatient "assumed care for the delivery". The staff began the process to induce me to give birth to our son, around 9pm on the 30th. Since I had taken my lovenox shot that morning, I was unable to get an epidural if I had wanted one. I had two doses of cyotec and labored throughout the night. Saturday, Oct 31st at 8:31am our handsome Summit, was born, 3 pounds 7 ounces and 17 inches in length at 31+ weeks. Summit our forever first born. Forever loved and never forgotten.

We spent that morning with the sweetest nurses that helped us take pictures with Summit. Some of both sides of the families were able to meet our boy that Halloween morning. We have photos and some other keepsakes from that day in a box in our nursery, along with some clothing and objects we had for our sweet accepting boy.

I don't remember much from the following days after returning home. Looking back at all the events and notes from my care in this pregnancy was not ideal to say the least. After we got the autopsy report of Summit and my placenta, there was bacteria around my cord which was inflamed and there was clotting in my placenta. They unfortunately don't know which caused what, either Summit was in distress and relieved himself then the placenta clotted after he died, or if the placenta clotted that put him into distress which then relieved himself.

I looked back at all the notes from appointments and ultrasounds, there were pretty limited notes but in the ultrasounds the "high risk specialist" had looked at them (because of my clotting disorder, and wasn't informed a high risk doctor was an option in the beginning for all my care). This high risk doctor had put in my last 2 ultrasound notes that I should have an additional ultrasound for growth observations anywhere from 30-34 weeks. Advocate for yourself and your baby. Question the doctor about your concerns. Track your baby movements. Get checked out anytime you're worried about movement. (Increased or decreased)

I believe that Summit could have been saved, born alive in our arms if I had proper education about movements and monitoring throughout my pregnancy. This, and having a provider that actually read my notes or took detailed care for my baby and myself. The lack of education around stillbirth and prevention of stillborn babies is completely unfair for families that are not properly educated.

Lindsay's Story:

In 2014, my husband Matt and I were living in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and expecting a little girl. We were overjoyed. We had decided as soon as we found out that she was a girl that she would be named Sadie Amelia, after my great-grandma. On a Tuesday around 31 weeks, a well-meaning friend noticed that the baby was getting big and said not to worry if she slowed down, because a nurse had told her when she was expecting that babies slow down as they run out of room (a fatal myth).

On Thursday, Sadie made a huge flip as I hurried from one end of the school to the other. My job had become quite stressful in my second school year, as my class load doubled because of staffing issues. Regardless of the stress, I was so excited about feeling such a big movement and asked a teacher passing by if she had seen my belly move. It was that huge. I had learned from a pregnancy app to do daily kick counts, but didn't know how important it was to pay attention to patterns, count at the same time each day, and not to count hiccups. I also didn't know how soon I should go in to be seen if I hadn't noticed movement or if the baby's movement had changed. Saturday I counted what I thought were hiccups in the afternoon before going to a friend's daughter's birthday party. Normally I kick counted before bed, but I didn't that day, since I had already checked it off my list for the day. Sunday (a normal workday in the UAE) was exhausting. I fell asleep counting kicks, but had not logged even one kick. I thought Sadie must be sleeping because it had been such a busy day.

Monday I worked the entire day without slowing down to notice any movement. When I got home, I had a terrible nagging feeling that something wasn't right. I googled "32 weeks pregnant no movement 2 days" and panic began to set in. I ate a Kit Kat, drank something cold, and waited two hours and felt nothing. I was waiting for Matt to get home from taking our car to the shop and cried myself to sleep. When Matt got home late that night, I called my OB, who said she'd be in the clinic for a bit longer and to just come in and she'd check things out. We had to take a cab to the hospital because our car was still in the shop. When she started the ultrasound, it didn't take her long to see that Sadie no longer had a heartbeat. She questioned me about when the last time I had felt movement was and said it looked like it had been more than just 2 days and I felt like she was telling me I should have known something was wrong much sooner. She never once told me how important kick counting was. She would simply ask, "Is the baby moving?" And I would answer yes, because she was always very active. In disbelief, we walked home. It was a short walk, one of the reasons I chose that hospital. But it was the longest walk of my life.

Tuesday morning we took a cab to another hospital for a second opinion and they confirmed what our OB found. We then contacted a friend who worked for Emirates and he got us a friends and family discount ticket to fly home to deliver Sadie. Sadie was born still on Friday, November 14, 2014, though our family friend and OB in Idaho who delivered her said it looked like she had passed about a week prior, that fateful Saturday I "kick counted" hiccups (which can be a sign of fetal distress, I later learned). Her entire body was entangled in her umbilical cord and he said it was most likely a cord accident, since it had been a perfectly healthy pregnancy otherwise.

I later recalled that our OB in the UAE had actually noticed her growth was lagging by a week around 25 weeks and had us get a second opinion Ultrasound done at the same hospital where we had it confirmed to us that she no longer had a heartbeat. Even though they confirmed her growth was a week behind, they said it was within "normal range," and that it wasn't any cause for concern or extra monitoring. Her birth weight at 32 weeks was tiny: 3 pounds, 4 ounces. Compared to our later 3 babies, she was the smallest (our last baby was estimated to weigh over 5 pounds at his 32 week ultrasound), and I wonder what closer monitoring, including measuring her placenta, Non-Stress Tests (NSTs), and Biophysical Profiles (BPPs) would have revealed. If there's one thing I wish I could do, it would be to turn back the clock and educate myself on the importance of kick counting and noticing a change and advocating for my baby. We would have asked for closer monitoring after the grown scan. I would have not left the hospital if I felt concerned, even if I wasn't being listened to. But since that is impossible, I will spend the rest of my life educating other expectant parents in hopes of saving them from the same heartbreaking fate

Ariel's Story:

My name is Ariel Kessler and I live in buffalo grove, IL. My daughter Violet Serena Kessler was born on January 27, 2021 at Evanston Hospital in Evanston, IL.

After what was a normal, uncomplicated pregnancy I woke up on Tuesday, January 26th 2021 and everything changed. I went about my Tuesday like any other day until around noon when I noticed I hadn't felt the baby move all day. I began to panic but ran down to my husband and asked him to talk to the baby because whenever he talked she usually got really excited. Unfortunately, still nothing. I began to drink something cold and eat sugar while calling my doctor who said to wait an hour and if there is no movement still to call back. About 45 mins later I knew something was wrong. I called my doctor and was asked to go to the hospital. After a couple nurses messing around with the Doppler they wheeled in the ultrasound machine and shortly after followed the doctor. That is when he told me that there was no heartbeat and his words before I could even say "yes, I am sure".

The next 36 hours were the hardest I have experienced. I had to say hello and goodbye to my daughter all in that short time. Leaving the hospital that Thursday afternoon was the most difficult thing I had to do, I still miss her so much. We gave permission for the doctors to do an autopsy and a few months later we learned that the cause of death was a blood clot in the umbilical cord and there was nothing I could've done differently to prevent this from happening, it all happened in a matter of minutes. I still wrestle everyday with what I could've done differently and if there were signs that I missed. Although the doctors assured me this was a freak accident I still wish there was something that could've been done differently to save her. My heart breaks everyday for my daughter who didn't get a chance to live.

Gretchen's Story:

We had a perfectly healthy pregnancy with our son, Otto. At our 36 week appointment there was no heartbeat. We were completely blind sighted. We knew nothing about stillbirth. We did an autopsy on Otto and tests on me. Everything came back normal. We were told what happened to Otto is "unexplained." We left the hospital with a memory box rather than our son.

Sara's Story:

Last year my husband and I decided to try and start a family. We took the decision seriously. I was careful, followed all my doctor's instructions, and after a few months we found out we were expecting. At 8 weeks we were able to see our baby's heartbeat for the first time. I started reading books about what to do, what to expect, and what not to eat. I knew that sometimes losses occur in the first trimester and so we kept our news a secret. I thought that if we had an early loss it would be easier if I didn't have to explain it on social media. All of my doctor's appointments were normal, bloodwork normal, ultrasounds, genetic testing, all normal. We started a baby book with our pregnancy story, ultrasound pictures, a diary of what I felt and how our baby was growing.

We shared our news with our family. Our two nieces, who were six and four at the time, cried when they found out they would have a cousin. We had a list of names and had agreed on one when we found out we were having a little boy. We received some books as gifts and I recorded myself reading them and would play the recording and sometimes music on headphones that I held to my belly. I started feeling his kicks early on.

I was nearly 26 weeks, almost 6 months. His kicks seemed to slow down and after a virtual appointment with our doctor I tried to start counting kicks and wasn't able to feel him. I called the doctor and she suggested I eat lunch and walk around to see if I could get him moving. It wasn't working and so she told us to head over to the hospital for an ultrasound. I told my husband not to worry and that we were going to be those parents who worried more than we

needed to. I was wrong. The ultrasound tech couldn't find a heartbeat. She called a doctor who was available, because our doctor wasn't there yet. He said "I'm sorry."

Everything was a blur. We were told I needed to be induced and deliver our stillborn son. We had to pick a funeral home and make decisions we were not prepared or capable of making after hearing our dream, our son, was lost. We had to call our families and tell them the devastating news. I tried not to think that my body had failed me, had failed my son but it was impossible not to. When we checked in to the hospital they started medication to induce labor. My doctor said it would be quick. I checked in on a Saturday morning in November and delivered our baby boy the following Monday. We held our son and had him baptized. Our nurse took pictures and that is all we have of him. The saddest and only family photos.

Labor was not quick. It was hard on my body. I lost a lot of blood. They warned me they may need to give me a blood transfusion. When I was finally able to go home I bled for months after. My doctors prescribed birth control pills to regulate "my period". I went to the ER twice and asked my doctor if I might die. After several exams and assurance that everything was fine, an ultrasound was ordered (just in case) and they found something. A D&C was scheduled in January and they found placental material left behind. The doctor who performed the D&C said my body would not have passed it, a family member said I was lucky I wasn't septic.

During the time I was bleeding we had to take care of funeral arrangements. Luckily I was able to take short-term disability, a luxury to most people in this country. But I did go back to work from home after six weeks, before I had the D&C. We had genetic testing done when our baby was born. All tests on me, on the cord, on the placenta were normal. Normal. It is now 8 months after our boy was born. We are both in therapy, we skipped all holidays in the months following, we started attending a support group. I have PTSD triggered by my period, any discussions about funeral homes, and hospital/delivery stories.

Everyday we wonder what our baby would look like, what foods he would like to eat, what it would feel like to hug him. Our loss matters. Our baby boy Jasper matters. Loss is hard, any loss. But the loss of your child, it is beyond anything anyone could imagine. We will never have an answer to why we lost Jasper. I would do anything in my power to prevent someone from experiencing this loss, won't you? Please support the SHINE for Autumn Act.

Dan's Story:

Stillbirth is not something you prepare for when you are getting ready to bring a child into this world. You hear about some concerns here and there while pregnant but very little information is provided about the prevalence of stillbirth and the chance of it happening to you. When my wife and I went in for our 36 week appointment, it was much like any other appointment. Another check of the box, another step towards seeing our baby boy. When the doctor couldn't find the heartbeat with the monitor, there was little concern even from the doctor that something was wrong. Going into the ultrasound room with the technician, we even heard, "hey maybe we'll get you some good pictures today for your troubles." When the technician couldn't find the heartbeat, we didn't know what it meant. We sat there in confusion and denial. When the doctor came in, she didn't even have to look at it herself, as she knew if the technician couldn't find it, she wouldn't either. What does this mean? I thought to myself. What do we do next? But there was nothing left to do. No triaging, no "fixing", there was nothing. I began to sweat profusely and almost passed out as I looked at my wife in shock, heartbroken, and crying uncontrollably. I gathered myself and put my arm around her, not knowing what to do. It wasn't going to be alright. We lost our son at 36 weeks. Not many people know that this happens; that you have to figure out what to do next. That you have to figure out a way to get out of the doctor's office, go to the garage, drive home, pack a bag, and gear up for the worst night of your life.

Calling your parents and trying to get out the words that the son we all are so excited to meet, that we've already celebrated with countless showers and gifts, was no longer with us. Telling your parents that their son and daughter were heading back to the hospital to deliver a son that wouldn't cry, a son who's eyes we'd never see open. Stillbirth

for a father and husband is like watching the love of your life getting in a car accident, knowing they were going to lose the passenger next to them. There is no surgery, there is no procedure, your wife goes through a full labor to bring a boy into the world that would not get to even experience the joy that he gave us through the first 9 months of our pregnancy. The hospital room is quiet, there are no fancy monitors or machines to hear the heartbeat. It's just you and your wife at one of the darkest moments in your life, trying to make sense in your head how this could be. Holding our son Otto was one of the best moments in my life, to see his face, lips, little nose, he was so special. I'm so happy that I was able to hold him and give him a kiss on the cheek.

Seeing my wife hold Otto was the most painful moment in my life. The pain I had knowing that all the love she would give to Otto, he'd never feel. He'd never feel the touch of her hand or the warmth of her spirit. Most people have no answers for why the stillbirth happened. We received nothing. It wasn't the cord, Otto was growing perfectly normal, we did all the tests and everything came back negative. Grieving Otto is so difficult. So few people understand what one goes through when their baby is stillborn, the pain, the anger, the confusion, the jealousy, the constant questions of why us? Why Otto? Long nights still haunt my wife and I, wondering why he isn't here enjoying a cozy Sunday afternoon with our little family. More can be done to prevent stillbirth and more should be done. We hope that this bill can be a beginning to an end so that others do not have to be a part of the terrible, not so small, club we became a part of when we lost our sweet Otto.

Kristen's Story:

I lost my baby at 21 weeks back in April due to a listeria infection and it forever changed my world. Since then, I have met hundreds of women who also had stillbirths and are living through the unimaginable. There MUST be more research done to reduce our rates of stillbirths in this country. There is not enough nationwide attention and data on this devastating, life changing event that affects 1/160 pregnancies. Please, I beg, pass the SHINE for Autumn Act. No one wants to be part of this club.

Kristin's Story:

With my whole heart I believe that if folks truly understood the devastation of stillbirth, surely, they would do something to help prevent it. Can you imagine if 21,000 50-year-olds died each year and over half of those deaths were unexplained? Or 21,000 3-year-olds? Of course we cannot fathom having those deaths go unexplained. Then why are babies like my Abby dying at 39 weeks -- and so many stillbirths go unexplained? If we don't understand why it's happening, how can we prevent it? Please, help the SHINE for Autumn Act get through -- so that many families don't have to know the same tragedy that we do -- stillbirth.

I share in honor of Abby Naylor, born 7.13.2018 at 39 weeks.

Cori's Story:

My middle daughter was stillborn in 2011, just 10 days before her due date. She would be turning 11 at the end of this month. We consider ourselves fortunate to know that her cause of death was a cord accident. Many families don't get answers and are blindsided by the news that their child no longer has a heartbeat. The Shine for Autumn act needs to pass so that we can protect Indiana families from unnecessary heartache. Research and funding is necessary to make change and this is one area that we CAN MAKE CHANGE. Families don't have to suffer the heartache of losing a child that they never even got to know. Please vote in favor of the Shine for Autumn act and support Hoosier families like mine.

Kristen's Story:

My nephew Charlie who passed due to a true knot. A death preventable with proper care and use of technology to see an issue such as this. My family will never recover from this loss but others can be saved from experiencing a similar loss.

Brittany's Story:

My daughter, Freya Emerson, was stillborn August 19, 2021. Freya was born 3 days before her due date at 39w 4d. I had a textbook healthy pregnancy. If I had had the proper education on baby's movements, I truly feel she would be alive right now. I never had a non-stress test, and no one was concerned because everything was "normal". Freya's movements changed and I was told not to be concerned since I was still feeling her move. Freya Emerson Gaspard, suffered a nuchal cord injury. With proper education and more monitoring, Freya could be alive. Many other babies could be alive. This is a gut wrenching tragedy that is happening to far too many families.

Beth's Story:

My son was stillborn at 39 weeks in August of 2017. I'll never know if his death could have been prevented but I believe if my pregnancy had been treated like a high-risk pregnancy is treated, perhaps it could have been. I am personally advocating for high-risk treatment for every pregnancy until that is the standard!

Kaitlyn's Story:

Adrian Wells Beurjey was stillborn at 40 weeks, weighing exactly 6lbs. He had beautiful blond curly hair and a little button nose identical to his older sister. His name holds special meaning as my maiden name is Adrian. Our pregnancy was so easy and beautiful; no morning sickness, no tiredness, I felt great. There were no concerns during pregnancy other than in the third trimester Adrian measured 2 weeks behind. During this time, I also expressed concern about less movement. But the doctors assured me the ultrasound and non-stress tests showed "everything was fine". On 10/25/21, I went to the hospital in labor fully expecting to come home with a beautiful new baby. Beautiful baby-yes; going home-no. When we arrived, the nurse put the monitor on my belly and couldn't find a heartbeat. I was prepped for an emergency C section, but the anesthesiologist took too long to arrive. Frantically the doctor said the baby was in distress and I needed to push. I ended up giving birth vaginally.

My son was immediately rushed out of the room. The doctor told us the cord was wrapped around his neck and he was "very sick", and they were "trying to help him". I remember being so hopeful. It seemed like a lifetime before the doctor returned and we heard the two most life shattering words, "I'm sorry". I didn't cry. I screamed and then went numb. How could this be happening? I learned a new word on October 26th....Stillbirth. Never in my educated 35 years had I heard the word stillbirth. I thought you were safe after 12 weeks, safe after a normal anatomy scan and especially safe at 40 weeks in what I was told was a healthy pregnancy. I later found out after connecting with Dr. Harvey Kliman that my son's cause of death was cord compressions, along with a small placenta that may have contributed to his death. When I went to the hospital in labor Adrian had already been gone for approximately 12 hours. Our family is forever changed. We are a family of five, but the world only sees four. My 4-year-old doesn't understand and in the first few months asked me almost once a week, "When is baby Adrian coming back?" Sometimes I catch myself also wondering when Adrian will be here because his death feels unreal, like a bad dream.

Lauren's Story:

Our first child Henry Owen was born August 2, 2022 at 33 weeks 3 days. Everything my entire pregnancy was a breeze and as perfect as could be. My only complaint was near constant heartburn. At my 20 week scan Henry wasn't cooperating, so the ultrasound tech wasn't able to get all of the needed pictures, but everything else looked perfect. I had another scan at 30 weeks to get the remainder of the pictures, which we successfully got, and he was as perfect as we hoped! A couple weeks later my husband and I got sick with a virus, but we didn't think much of it as we knew a few other people who had also gotten sick while pregnant with no complications. July 31 we stopped at the hospital to check on him since he had not been moving that day. He was usually such a wiggle worm. After trying for quite some time to find his heartbeat with a Doppler, they brought in a portable ultrasound machine and that is when we were informed they could no longer find a heartbeat. Henry was born 2 days later at 12:48pm, weighing 4 pounds 14 ounces and 18 1/2" long. We miss him so much, and will always include him in all we do. We love you Henry!



Amber's story:

In 2016, after a healthy, uneventful pregnancy, I delivered our second son, 2 days overdue. Less than 24 hours earlier, I had attended my final prenatal appointment where everything appeared to be perfectly fine. At that appointment, I had asked my provider if I could request an induction because something was feeling "off". I was told that there was no medical indication for an induction and that "baby will come when he's ready". We returned home, and when labor began the following morning, we returned to the hospital. That's where we learned that his heart had stopped beating sometime within that short window of time. After about 26 hours of labor, our son, Everett, was born. They were unable to identify a cause of death. Losing him changed myself and my family forever, and I want nothing more than to save other families from enduring this tragedy.

Amanda's Story:

Our loss story and why we need the SHINE act passed! Joyfully pregnant with our first child, we learned at our 20 week scan that our baby was measuring small. Because of this, we were referred to a local MFM (maternal fetal medicine - high risk specialty clinic) doctor for closer monitoring. As my baby's growth percentiles continued to fall on the growth charts, we were given a diagnosis of IUGR (intrauterine growth restriction), caused by placental insufficiency. We asked our provider "can you measure the placenta?" And we were told a resounding "no." This confused us greatly as it seems that they measure EVERYTHING on an ultrasound, but not the organ grown specifically by the body to sustain a new life, especially when it seemed to be causing my baby's growth restriction.

We began going for weekly checks and then twice weekly, as the baby's growth continued to fall on the charts. We continued to ask about measuring the placenta and we were consistently told "No." This of course frustrated us and again, it seemed like a no-brainer to take a simple measurement. Throughout all of this, we were assured time and

time again that we were being watched closely and that they would catch any problems before they happened. I used to think that if you were going to a high risk clinic, you knew the likelihood of something going wrong was high, but honestly it felt like the opposite. It felt like there was no way anything could go wrong, since we were being watched so closely. Even with our baby's severely growth-restricted state, the possibility of stillbirth was only mentioned to us *one* time in the course of our pregnancy care, and that was only brought up when they suggested delivery at 37 weeks. So we continued on, having biophysical profiles and non stress tests, with an induction date set at 37 weeks.

Just four days before our scheduled induction, at our last growth ultrasound, we were told the four words no pregnant woman should ever have to hear: "There is no heartbeat." Our lives were instantly consumed by grief, guilt, regret, rage, anger, and questions. How could this happen? How could our baby die, when being watched so closely? How did they not "catch" this, as they had led us to believe, and prevent our baby's death?



After 6 hours of labor we got to hold the most pretty little girl in our arms. We named her Juniper. In the happiest wing of the hospital where life is usually being welcomed, we were the saddest room, left to call a funeral home rather than excited friends and family. I physically ached holding her, afraid to fall in love with her (which was impossible), knowing that she wouldn't get to come home with us. Looking at her perfect face, taking in all her features, I didn't understand why she had died. Our tear stained faces asked for any available genetic testing, a placenta review, and an autopsy to be done so that we could find out why our little girl had died. All of these reports came back as "normal" other than Juniper being small.

Fast forward many months, I was doing what I could to turn my pain into something productive: I was speaking on a parent panel to educate nurses on how best to care for families whose sons and daughters died and then were born. Through these parent panels I was connected to another loss mom, whose son died at full term just a month before Juniper. Her son was perfectly on track for size & weight...but his placenta was not. Like us, all reports came back as "normal" but she pushed for more answers. Her pursuit helped her discover that her son's placenta was far too small to sustain him, and that if an EPV (Estimated Placental Volume) measurement had been done, his small placenta could've been flagged as an issue and a better-timed delivery would mean he could be here, alive and well. This conversation was like a light bulb going off, and I was instantly taken back to that MFM appointment where we were told that our baby's growth restriction was caused by placental insufficiency, but that "no we don't measure placentas."

This loss mom encouraged me to send Juniper's records off to a Yale researcher to get more information on my baby's placenta size and possibly her cause of death. Dr Kliman's report showed that Juniper's placenta weight was less than the 0.1 percentile. Seeing this report and that small, small size of Juniper's placenta hit me like a ton of bricks. I feel like I was lied to, that if my placenta had been measured then a more informed plan of delivery could've happened, and I could have held my living, breathing baby in my arms. I believe my daughter could and should be here.

Ann's Story:

After three living children and an uneventful, healthy 39 weeks of pregnancy with our fourth child, I was only moderately concerned when I did not feel him move the day before his due date. I just had to wait for labor to start and I'd be holding a crying baby soon, right? I went into the hospital concerned about his reduced movement and was shocked and devastated to learn that our son, Elijah David O'Neill, no longer had a heartbeat. I was induced the next morning and Elijah was born that evening on his due date, July 2nd, 2018.

It felt like a nightmare had descended on my world and I had no idea how to survive this. I woke the following morning after his birth and was initially convinced this was all a terrible dream. But it was not. Beside me in his bassinet was Elijah, still dead. On this tearful, lonely road we were loved well by the midwives and nursing staff at the hospital, fellow stillbirth families who reached out to us and knew exactly how to love us, our church, and many friends and family. We held Elijah for the last time on Tuesday, July 3rd, said goodbye to Elijah's body a few days later at the funeral home, and held a memorial service for Elijah in August.

In spite of being told that half of families never find out why their baby was stillborn, we asked for an autopsy, placenta review, genetic testing, and any testing they could do to determine why Elijah died. I was scared what the answer might be as the cause of his death, scared that all fingers would point back at me. But I was even more scared of living with regret that we didn't try to figure out what happened to him. After all tests came back, we were told by the pathologist at the autopsy meeting that Elijah's cause of death was unknown.

We were also told that there might have been a mix up with Elijah's placenta. Elijah was a large baby (3,997g, 81st %ile) but the placenta labeled for him was quite small (397g). The pathologist found this discrepancy odd, so he wondered if perhaps Elijah's placenta had been mixed up with another baby's placenta. He told me that if it was the right placenta, it was less than 10th percentile for Elijah's gestational age. I wanted to know more and asked, "How much less than 10th percentile?" and "Could that be related to why he died?" The pathologist dismissed these questions as unimportant, and said he could not help me find the answers. And he was not interested in figuring out if this was actually Elijah's placenta.

I had a million questions, and no one was motivated enough to help me find answers.

A week later, I took a walk and listened to a podcast produced by Star Legacy Foundation titled "The Placenta and What it Tells Us." In this podcast, Dr. Harvey Kliman, a placenta expert at Yale University, described the link between small placentas and stillbirth, and the importance of the Fetal:Placental ratio. I raced home, pulled out Elijah's autopsy report, and found that he had at a 10:1 weight ratio between his body and his placenta (6:1 is normal at term). On the podcast, Dr. Kliman stated a 10:1 ratio is so high that a stillbirth is likely imminent. At that ratio, a fetus cannot get enough oxygen from the placenta to be able to survive.

I was stunned that I had just learned on a podcast why my baby may have died. After sending health records, placenta slides (routinely saved in pathology departments for years), ultrasound images, and blood types to Dr. Kliman, he confirmed there had been no placenta mix up, and that it was a very small placenta that caused Elijah's stillbirth. To add to my shock, I learned that ten years prior to Elijah's death, Dr. Kliman had invented an easy and free way to measure the volume of a placenta in utero, precisely to prevent small placenta stillbirths like Elijah's. Estimated Placental Volume (EPV), had it been done at one of my late ultrasounds, could have saved my baby's life by raising a red flag, leading to an induction in week 38 or 39 of pregnancy.

Since then, we have connected with far too many families with similar stories. Our families learned, in the most horrible way, that small placentas are both a risk factor for and a cause of stillbirth. We have learned that EPV measurement is an effective, simple and available tool to flag babies at risk of a stillbirth due to a small placenta, to help patients and doctors decide when the best time is for a baby to be born. In spite of this, placenta sizes are routinely ignored in prenatal care, as well as in stillbirth autopsies and placenta reviews. These gaps in prenatal care and examination after a stillbirth are both unacceptable.

One obstacle that prevents placentas from being measured in prenatal care is that we have too few pathologists who are

adequately trained to look at placentas after a stillbirth. Too many families are asking good questions about their baby's placenta after a stillbirth, only to be brushed off by pathologists who are not trained to examine a placenta after a stillbirth. SHINE needs to pass to fix this.

I share our story of Elijah's death here to implore our elected representatives to pass SHINE and help end preventable stillbirth. The status quo is just horrendous. Families need answers after a stillbirth from pathologists, and epidemiologists need more accurate data to study stillbirth in the US.

We love you Elijah, and we miss you every day.

Erica's Story:

My son, Rhoan, died at 39 weeks after a perfect, low-risk pregnancy on March 5, 2020 due to an undetected small placenta and blood clots in his cord. We never received any answers locally in Kansas City after meeting with 5 different OBs and MFMs, until we met with Dr. Kliman at Yale.

I was not educated on fetal movement, so when my son slowed down in his final weeks, I never reported it and he died because of it.

Michael's Story:

Our beautiful daughter, Emilia Rose Carnucci, was stillborn on September 9, 2021. This is something that occurs far too often, and families are left without an answer as to why they don't get to leave the hospital without their baby. In my opinion, this is something that no parent should have to go through, and is one of the worst things that can happen in life. Other countries have managed to reduce the rate of stillborn babies, why can't we do the same ?

Nikki's Story:

To end preventable stillbirth.



Emily's Story:

Eleanor's story starts with her big brother. Her brother was born in January of 2021, and we knew right away that we didn't want our children too spaced out. As soon as my OB cleared me after his birth, we started trying for our second baby. On October 29th, 2021 I found out I was pregnant again! We were so overjoyed, mixed with the fear that comes with 2 babies expected to be just 17 months apart. We were committed to being a "team green" family, so we wouldn't find out the gender until birth. My pregnancy was difficult, but overall easier than my first pregnancy. I experienced all the aches and pains a lot sooner during Ellie's pregnancy, but was told that's normal for subsequent pregnancies.

At 27 weeks, I noticed something was off with my pregnancy. I started having cramps and contractions. I found myself being sent to labor and delivery on two separate occasions. Both visits I had an NST and was simply told they were not labor advancing contracts, so I needed to rest. My cervix was still closed and long, so we were given a false sense of comfort.

On May 7th I felt like something was off. I don't remember feeling her, but because of my previous experiences with L&D, I didn't trust my gut. On May 8th, 2022 at 31 weeks pregnant, I started bleeding heavily on our way to the hospital. That 45 minute drive was absolute agony; we knew something was severely wrong. An ultrasound by the on-call OB, whom I have never met, confirmed our baby was gone. The on-call MFM, also a doctor we had never met, then came in to see if there was anything else he could determine from the ultrasound, and he also offered to tell us the gender. At that point we found out that our first daughter, Eleanor Kay, was gone. We were confident I had a placental abruption, likely warned by the weeks of contractions and cramping I was experiencing leading up to that day.

I was immediately induced, we had a friend's sister come take our toddler so my husband and I could be together and focus on my induction and the birth of our daughter. Our parents came out from Washington and were there before she was born. After 20 hours of induced labor, my water finally broke. 45 minutes later, Ellie was born. As a group we got to spend time with Eleanor and love on her. I will forever cherish that time we had with her in the hospital. We had the most amazing nurses and doctors surrounding us with love, who provided us with hundreds of photos of our daughter. Giving her to the funeral home and walking out of the hospital without her was one of the hardest things we have done. Since losing Ellie, it has been our mission to give her a voice. We are sharing her story with anyone who will listen, and even to those who want to turn a blind eye - they're still hearing it. Our son points to things around the house that are for his little sister, to which he says "Ellie! Ellie!" Not only are we learning to parent a baby in Heaven, but our son is also learning how to be the best big brother to his angel sister.

Looking back on my pregnancy, there is so much I would do differently. I should have advocated for an ultrasound, advocated for a different doctor because I had a prior experience with the L&D doctor with my son that left a bad taste in my mouth, I should have done more research and known more of the signs of a placental abruption. I wasn't actively bleeding at those times, which is the sign they look for regarding abruptions. However, there are so many signs, one of which includes cramping. I was never warned about having a stillborn. All the should haves, would haves and could haves are overwhelming as a loss parent. This loss isn't something that only my husband and I are going through. Everyone around us feels the loss of our daughter, though we're the only ones who "completely" feel it. Nothing could ever prepare you for losing a baby, but we're learning how to move forward in our lives and take her with us in whatever ways we feel are appropriate at the moment.

Gabrielle's Story:

Our daughter, Harlow Grace, was our IVF miracle baby. After years of infertility, costly medications, and finally IVF, we conceived our sweet girl. Our pregnancy was considered "textbook". We were monitored closely with weekly ultrasounds. Week after week we were reassured that Harlow was healthy and developing perfectly. Her nursery was

ready, our families were so excited to meet their first grandchild, and we just couldn't wait to finally have our dream come true of becoming parents and living life with our so wanted and loved baby. At 34 weeks, I noticed Harlow wasn't moving like she normally did, so my husband and I went into labor and delivery to get checked. We heard the words that no parent ever wants to hear, "there is no heartbeat". I had the perfect pregnancy, I ate all the healthy foods, I exercised, I took my prenatal. We were weeks away from her arrival, but she was gone. Our doctors had no idea what happened. I labored for 27 hours and delivered my firstborn child, silently.

We never expected to meet and say goodbye to our dearly wanted baby girl, all within 24 hours. We didn't have answers and were told "sometimes this just happens". How does a perfectly healthy baby just die? We had our placenta slides analyzed, and we were finally given answers. Harlow had an extremely small placenta- in the 4th percentile. It functioned properly, but just wasn't big enough to sustain Harlow's life as she grew. Over the 10+ ultrasounds we had, this was never noticed. ACOG (American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology) currently does not list measuring the placenta as standard care. The placenta- the vital organ that literally keeps the baby alive, isn't measured. From what I have learned, measuring the placenta is an easy, quick process. It should be a part of a routine ultrasound. 23,000+ babies are dying yearly in the United States due to stillbirth. This is completely horrific and unacceptable. Families deserve better care, babies deserve better care. I hope and pray that ACOG will change their standard of care so other families do not have to go through the living nightmare that my husband and I are having.

Our daughter should be here. We need to act now. Please help us get the proper care for these precious lives.

Kaitlyn's Story:

In 2020 my nephew Oliver tragically lost his life to preventable stillbirth in Missouri. His death occurred in the county that holds the highest stillbirth records in our state. His medical team failed to diagnose his extremely small placenta, which was placed in the .04%. His weight to placenta ratio was 122 to 1 and was ultimately the cause of my sister's placenta abruption which almost cost her life - and stole the life of her child that she desperately fought for. My baby sister struggled with infertility for almost 2 years, only to be failed by her medical team and have her dreams crushed. These same professionals failed to detect small placentas and cord complications for my high risk twin pregnancy. Both of my twins were oxygen deprived at birth, growth restricted, cord around the neck with knots, and one twin resuscitated without my knowledge.

One of my twins is still suffering with issues that they suspect could be directly related to his complications during my pregnancy. This same team of professionals handled my sister's pregnancy after her loss, and continued to display a lack of regard for her care. Despite 2-3x weekly monitoring, this team failed to diagnose my sister's baby as growth restricted. They reassured my sister that the placenta was fine this time, going an extra step to monitor it with each growth scan. Upon delivery, my sister's baby who was projected to be in the 30% was born in the 4% with a placenta measuring in the 1%.

Hillary's Story:

On March 29th 2021 I went in for my anatomy scan at 21 weeks and 1 day and found out our second son Holden Michael Watson's heart had stopped. I was induced that evening and after 13.5 hours of labor he was stillborn on March 30, 2021. His autopsy showed placental blood clots that ended up causing a "cord accident."

Anita's Story:

OUR CASSIDY. In 2021 we learned that our son and Daughter in law were expecting their 3rd child! We all were so happy and excited to hear that news. Our daughter in law had decided to let the gender be a surprise, they had both a daughter and son and this baby would complete their family!

The baby was due March 11, 2022. The pregnancy was coming along fine, no problems at any of the doctors visits...all things *looked* good.

February 12 came along and the baby was very active, our daughter in law felt as if the baby was positioned for birth....February 13. NO MOVEMENT. Went to the Emergency Room. NO HEARTBEAT.
February 14. VALENTINES DAY. Labor induced. ALL DAY ENDURING PAIN OF LABOR. KNOWING HER CHILD WAS GONE. BABY GIRL. STILLBORN. HER NAME, CASSIDY ANN THOMAS.
6LB 7OZ, 20 INCHES LONG. PERFECT BABY. STILLBORN.

Cassidy's story is sad and tragic, adding to the pain is the knowledge that came with it. The knowledge that it could have been PREVENTED. THE REASON HER HEART STOPPED WAS THAT THE PLACENTA WAS TOO SMALL. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT COULD HAVE BEEN FOUND IF THEY WERE TESTING FOR IT. BUT IT ISN'T A "ROUTINE" TEST, IT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED. THIS SHOULD BE DONE FOR ALL BABIES.

SHE WAS A HEALTHY BABY AND COULD HAVE BEEN DELIVERED EARLY AND SURVIVED....IF THEY HAD ONLY CHECKED THE PLACENTA.

Too many families suffer from stillbirth, it needs to change. Thank you for listening to our stories.

Anita and Henry Thomas
Grandparents in Tennessee

Cassidy was stillborn in Nevada, where her dad is stationed while serving his country.



Melissa's Story:

Sequoyah was so wanted. So loved. We found out Christmas morning 2020 that we were pregnant again after an early miscarriage in November. He came after a lot of discord in our life. We were ready to welcome a new baby with open arms alongside our older son. No matter what life threw at us throughout the pregnancy, we held on strong knowing he was right around the corner and would add even more to our lives. My pregnancy was mostly uneventful, a bleeding scare at 12+5, and false alarm of leaking fluids around 37wks. We passed all the tests, my blood pressure

stayed reasonable. We had a perfect score of 8/8 at our biophysical profile ultrasound on Sept 17th. 9 days past my due date. 2 days before he was pronounced dead, and I was induced.

We get asked a lot why I wasn't induced around 40 weeks. It hurts to hear the judgment. I already blame myself; it doesn't help. Many women go over 41 weeks. Due dates are an estimate for when a fetus has reached full development in the womb. My midwives at the birth cottage delivered babies that late all the time. I wanted to avoid an experience like I had with my first child. I wanted a natural and more gentle approach to bringing him into the world including a water birth. I had no indications that we needed to be induced sooner. My midwife's attempt at a membrane sweep at 40 weeks was unsuccessful as I wasn't dilated enough. My midwives assured me that everything would be fine and that they have mothers go over 41 weeks and deliver by 42 all the time.

We passed that ultrasound. The next day we had friends over, had a relaxing day of video games, food, a campfire and a movie. I ached, but I was super pregnant. Nothing tipped me off that anything could be wrong. I felt him move one last time when I went to the bathroom in the middle of the night. The next morning, I noticed he didn't do his usual morning movements. I thought maybe today was the day I would go naturally, and he was settling in for the ride. I thought maybe I was just missing his movement with me moving around so much. I was 2 days from them breaking my water as scheduled. We were busy getting ready and meeting my gram to shop for last-minute baby things. I was getting more and more worried and trying to tell myself I was overthinking and all that. I had already sent in a message to my midwives' portal that morning with my concern and didn't hear back after 2 hrs and having a big lunch and cold water. I called in and my midwife told me to try a coffee and then head to the hospital for an NST because all she had was a doppler and it wouldn't tell her if there was anything else wrong.

I started crying on the way to the hospital. "Born sleeping" popped into my head. I told my husband how bad I wanted my anxiety to be wrong. My anxiety is always wrong, it's supposed to be, it's an anxiety disorder. We had conflict getting admitted to be seen and we had to fight to keep our oldest with us as we had no one to wait in the car with him and I wasn't going in alone. I tried to keep calm, it was going to be alright, they'd hook me up and tell me it was all for nothing. I got set up on the bed, the nurse put the NST reader to my belly right in the vicinity of his little heart. Static.

It was loud. I tried to keep breathing, maybe he moved and wasn't positioned the same. They moved it all over my belly over and over. Nothing but static. They rolled an ultrasound machine in and tried looking. they weren't 100 percent, so they called in an actual ultrasound tech to confirm. I called my dad, beginning to panic and crying. "They can't find his heartbeat".

I was on Bluetooth and my stepmom and little siblings were in the truck, it was my youngest brother's 10th birthday. I got off the phone to allow the tech to do the ultrasound that would confirm his heart had stopped. "I'm sorry, there is no heartbeat". That phrase you've heard of, but never imagined someone would be saying it to you. Not me, can't be. But it is. Next came reforming our birth plan, informing some of our friends and families. My two best friends who were part of our original birth plan to help with having our oldest present were on their way as my texts went through. "He's gone". When I was telling them that we were going to get checked, it was casual, one related to it with her twins. I was just supposed to be an over worried mother who was pregnant for the 1st time in 5yrs, and having to basically rewrite my relationship with my body, pregnancy, and labor/childbirth. Now I felt like the universe's fool. Ten months of excitement, anxiety, anticipation, preparation, and confidence in all my choices to care for my body and my new child. All for it to mean nothing but delivering a dead child, losing my birth plan, leaving and enduring postpartum without the responsibilities of a newborn. I have felt that I have failed our families and friends, our community. My body lied to me and failed me, my biggest fears and anxieties came true, I failed my child, failed to keep him safe, alive. What was all the point of all my hard work to create him, just to have to turn him to ashes. I called my photographer. Originally, we had planned for her to document my birth story at the cottage. I didn't know what this meant for that plan now. I shook as I tried to tell her through my tears what had happened so far. She didn't even hesitate. Ok. I'm grabbing my things, I'm coming, do you need anything? I couldn't imagine asking for anything more than for her to be there, and I don't think I would have had the courage to ask her. She was there because her soul was wonderful and her heart so big. She came and stayed through the whole night as I labored and delivered. Documenting it all. Just

listening. Witnessing. I want to say it was around 12 hrs from my first dose of oral medication to induce me and the time he was born. I went through so many emotions as I communicated and interacted with family as they came to hug me and distract me as my early labor progressed. My best friends and husband held me as I screamed and cried and collapsed in a full panic attack, my photographer just witnessing them ground me. I didn't understand why, why me, why us, why him. After everything, after how hard I love and give and try. How much I just want to be a good person, mother, wife, friend, daughter, etc. How after how strong my marriage had become, how much work we overcame trying to build our life, support our oldest through his development delays, and take part in a new community we found that year. He was taken from us. I would never hear him cry, never see him open his eyes himself, never nurse him or experience any firsts. He wouldn't be in photos, never age, never learn, grow, nothing. I rode the waves of contractions, too stubborn and wide awake to try to sleep at all. My bff's, basically my sisters, supported us, fed us, entertained our son, and rode out the mental roller coaster with me. Eerie and foreign moments of regular conversation and laughter, followed by more sobbing and groveling with the universe. As the night wore on, I started to wear down. I couldn't focus on breathing and imagining what I needed to ride the waves. I wanted to cave and sleep. I begged for pain medication and crawled out of the tub to receive it. I was checked and was at 8cm. It all mushed together quickly. At some point amongst the commotion of begging for pain relief, discussing with the anesthesiologist, and kind of blacking out, I hit transition and had the urge to push and just let my body bear down.

I wasn't able to communicate it, but our midwife could tell. She jumped into action and helped deliver our sweet boy and put him on my chest. He was born September 20th, 2021. 3:52am. 7lbs 11oz and 20.5 inches long. Silence. All the physical pain stopped. Time stopped. All I could see was the beautiful face of the vessel I grew. The boy who came with us on hikes, including Arethusa Falls at 28wks, made me crave all the spicy food I never ever cared for in my life before. The baby who wiggled so fierce in my belly startling his big brother and making us all laugh. Did dances in his daddy's hands as I slept. The little bean that grew to fill my belly again, widen my hips, pack on the weight, flood my senses and emotions with hormonal changes. He was our "just one more". It took so much courage and time to feel worthy and confident enough to bring one more child into the world; it felt like the universe was telling me I was undeserving. He was so healthy, so perfect and so damn beautiful.

I would never get to embrace him again. I tried so hard to soak it all in, all the details, the feeling of him, his smell. He was so special. It was so unfair. It still is. It was so hard and confusing and bittersweet to share him with our friends, one of my grandmothers, and my midwives from the cottage when they finally came to see us. I was so limited on time, and I wanted it all to myself but also wanted to share with him as much as possible at the same time. 12hrs is all we had till they took him for autopsy. We tried to get all the pictures and memories we could with him. The hospital had supplies to get molds for hands and feet, but they weren't prepared and didn't have enough to finish the one foot we got, so his toes are mostly missing. It's crushing. Our oldest never held him, he didn't want to, so he sat with me as I held his brother. I had my two beautiful boys, and that's all I wanted in the world. Life without him and since losing him has been very difficult in many ways. We hold on tight to each other and try so hard to keep ourselves going and holding strong. We would never wish this tragedy on anyone.



Becca's Story:

After years of trying to get pregnant naturally my husband and I sought fertility treatments. We had two failed IUIs before doing IVF. We got pregnant on our first round of IVF and were so excited, only to have an early miscarriage. We waited a few months and did IVF a second time and we're excited yet nervous to be pregnant with twins. We heard two heartbeats, we graduated from the fertility doctor to a regular practice and started to believe this could be real. I was scheduled for frequent ultrasounds due to a twin pregnancy, only to go in at 9 weeks to only find one heartbeat. Despite losing one twin, the remainder of the pregnancy was progressing normally.

At 24 weeks I went to a routine OB appt feeling fine, but my blood pressure was off the charts, and I was sent to the hospital for monitoring. I was hooked up to a monitor and heard my baby's heartbeat. The doctor was talking to me like everything was okay and I would probably just go home on some BP meds. The shift changed and another OB came on who said this was an emergency and diagnosed me with pre-eclampsia quickly making plans to transfer me to a nearby hospital with specialists and a NICU. I called my husband who was an hour away and told him he needed to come quickly.

My husband arrived right as they were finalizing the transfer arrangements, they decided to do one last ultrasound and there was no heartbeat. It was 2/19/19 we lost our baby boy (who at the time we thought was a girl). Suddenly, things were happening quickly. I was being admitted for induction. My husband had no idea what was going on. I labored for nearly 48 hours before delivering our son Jack 2/21/19. He was so tiny and perfect.

Everything can change in the blink of an eye. Those days in the hospital are a blur. I was hooked up to so many machines and monitors and on so many meds I could hardly stay awake. My husband had no idea what was going on most of the time. He was in shock yet handling everything because I didn't want to talk to or see anyone. I remained in the hospital for a few days after and the entire week is just like a crazy time warp that doesn't seem real. We've never tried again.

Lisa's Story:

Hello my name is Lisa Rowell. I live in Bossier City, Louisiana. I've been happily married for 15 years and have an 8 year old daughter. We have what you would call a picture perfect family. Unfortunately, someone is missing from our family. Her name is Julianna Grace. She would have been 10 years old this year in September. My story is one of hundreds here in Louisiana. In 2012 we decided to start trying to conceive. We were financially stable, had stable jobs, just bought our first home and had no debt. We did everything right to be responsible parents. I even made sure I was at a healthy weight and continued to work out to have a healthy baby.

Early 2013, we found out we were pregnant. I was elated. I began to prepare our home as our baby was supposed to arrive December 31st or January 1st. I cut out caffeine, ate healthy and continued doing light workouts to make sure my baby was growing healthy. My doctor was so happy with how healthy I was when I went in for my checkups. He even said I had a textbook perfect pregnancy. Unfortunately, in the beginning of September my baby, who I named Juliana Grace, quit moving. I told my husband and he said he was sure she was fine. For 3 days I did everything possible for her to move. Finally, I made a doctor's appointment. Everyone around me told me how my mind was playing tricks on me and Juliana Grace was fine. Again, unfortunately, when I got into the doctor's office my worst fears were confirmed. My doctor comes into the room soon after and tells me twice as I didn't understand the first time he said it. "Lisa, she's gone." My heart sank and I began to cry. My doctor begins to tell me what will happen next then stops. He realizes I arrived alone as I truly thought I was going crazy. The days after were a blur but I carried Juliana for about 3 days before I could go in and deliver her. I arrived at the hospital on Sunday night.

I really thought I was going to die there. I almost hoped for it too. I sat in the emergency room waiting for them to call me up to the maternity ward. I was eventually wheeled up to the maternity ward, hooked up to iv's and labor was

induced. No one told me what I was going to endure the normal pain of labor minus the joy of having a live baby. For 24 hours I endured pain, and it was unbearable. Finally, however, Monday night, September 9th at 10:30pm I gave birth to a 1 pound 5 oz, 11 and ½ inch baby girl. She had ten fingers and ten toes. She had dark hair and skin like me. She had eyebrows and long toes like her dad. She was perfect. It was then that we found what caused her demise. Her cord was torsional or twisted. I've always wondered if they saw this on the sonogram. If there was a way, they could have caught this or fixed this. The emotional pain of having her then saying goodbye so fast was horrible. No parent should endure this kind of loss or bury their own child. My life would never be the same. I would go on to find ways to help future parents who would go through the same tragedy. I now run the Juliana Grace Ministry. We give out grief baskets to families who lose children due to miscarriage, stillbirth or early infant death. We have also donated a caring cradle and a cuddle cot to local hospitals. I have helped pass Louisiana law to help with the financial burden stillbirth causes. Yes, I still had to pay all my hospital bills and mental health services I received. It's been almost 10 years now and the pain is still there. I believe with proper research we can save so many lives. Being in ministry I have heard of so many testimonials of baby losses that could have been easily avoided with more monitoring. Please help make this possible.

Rhyan Ava Dinburg

1-30-2014

My Stillbirth Story
By: Stacey Dinburg

Pregnancy did not come easy to my husband and I. We struggled with infertility for over 2 years. In 2012 I suffered from an ectopic pregnancy that resulted in the loss of one of my fallopian tubes and the loss of my first pregnancy.

I had always dreamed of becoming a mother and I was determined to make that dream come true. With some persistence, courage, and some help from science I became pregnant through invitro fertilization.

I lived the next 37 weeks of my life in complete bliss. I enjoyed every part of being pregnancy. Each pregnancy symptom I experienced was a celebration and every monthly milestone I reached was an amazing victory.

Our incredible joy quickly turned into immense pain. During my 9th month of pregnancy, at an ultrasound appointment, I found out that my child's heart was no longer beating. At first, I didn't completely register what had just been told to me. I asked the doctor, "So she's dead?" I didn't realize something like this could even occur in this day and age. No one ever warned me that this could even be a possible outcome.

My doctor began rambling about protocols and standards of care, throwing medical terms at me rather than offering me any kind of support or empathy. He left me in the room to make my phone calls with no explanation or reason. I called my husband in hysterics, he could barely understand what I was saying. I shouted, "she's gone"!

Later, I arrived at the hospital to deliver my baby that was no longer living. I was sent to the labor and delivery floor of the hospital amongst other expecting mothers, which seemed like a cruel joke. The nurses bombarded us with questions. They asked, How I would deliver the baby? Would we hold the baby? Would we agree to an autopsy? Did we want to name the baby? We were in no frame of mind to answer these questions. We were scared, devastated, confused, completely overwhelmed and frankly in shock. We asked to speak with a social worker, but the hospital was understaffed, and no one was available.

On January 30, 2014, at 10:50pm my daughter, Rhyan Ava Dinburg silently entered the world. You could have heard a pin drop in the delivery room. The silence was painfully deafening. At first, I declined to see or hold my daughter. I was scared. Petrified. However, I changed my mind after a kind nurse told me that she was exceptionally beautiful. And she was right. Rhyan was perfect in every way. A true angelic vision that took our breath away. Rhyan had her daddy's nose and my dark curly hair. She was a real full-term baby, our stunning baby girl.

A social worker finally came to visit me the following evening. She gave me my daughters hand and footprints along with a list of local funeral homes. She gave me a book that I could barely read because my eyes were so swollen from crying. She told me that the hospital had a support group, and I would receive an invitation letter in the mail.

But, there were many things she didn't tell me.

She didn't tell me that Rhyan was 1 out of 24 thousand babies born still in the United States annually and I was not alone.

She didn't tell me that my marriage would suffer and that couples who experience a stillbirth are at a particularly high risk of separation and or divorce.

She didn't tell me how to deal with the family or friends who would avoid me for months because they just didn't know how to address the situation.

She didn't tell me how the topic of stillbirth is still so socially taboo, and that even the medical community would have difficulty communicating the subject.

She didn't tell me about the flash backs I would experience or the panic attacks I would have.

She didn't tell me about all the work I would miss or that I would be laid off for exceeding my allowed time off.

She didn't tell me about the severe anxiety I would experience during subsequent pregnancies.

She didn't tell me about the tens of thousands of dollars I would spend on mental health care because my insurance company wanted to dictate my care plan.

She didn't tell me that I would spend the rest of my life honoring my daughter, memorializing her, and advocating for women who suffered this same tragic fate.

The year after the birth of my daughter was the most difficult time of my life. Depression doesn't even begin to describe the sadness I felt. Some days it was difficult to even get out of bed. I felt responsible for my daughter's death and was angry at myself for not being able to save her. There were times that I didn't want to continue living without my child. I lost faith, hope, and there didn't seem to be a light at the end of the tunnel.

I desperately searched for answers of why my baby died, why this happened to me, and how I could get support. But at the time there wasn't much available. I felt so alone.

Another challenging times was when I became pregnant again. A crippling anxiety overtook my entire existence for 9 full months. I was mentally brainwashed by my harsh past, to think that I wasn't going to be bringing this baby home. I felt robbed of the blissful yet ignorant experiences that went along with pregnancy.

Once my rainbow baby was born, I often found myself using the term "bitter-sweet" to describe the experience of caring for a newborn after loss. With each happy "first" and milestone met by my newborn, an uninvited wave of sadness entered my head. I remember breaking down into tears after bathing my little one for the first time. My mother asked, "What's wrong, why are you crying?" The joy I felt in that moment was bullied away by the painful reminder that I would never be able to bathe my first-born child. But then I would feel guilty for being sad and "ruining" my rainbow babies first bath.

The trauma of my stillbirth continues to affect me different ways. Now eight years later, as a mother of 2 little girls ages 5 and 6, I find new challenges. I have difficulty leaving my children, I have consistent catastrophic thoughts that something awful is about to happen, I'm overprotective, and a bit controlling.

Sometimes, I feel that I must act like a normal mother, someone who hasn't experienced the trauma of losing a child. It can be truly exhausting at times. There are days when it is hard to go to work, to be a good wife, or even be a good mom.

Suffering a stillbirth is truly a lifelong journey. The grief we suffer never "goes away". It is something that is always there. We learn how to manage the sadness and find ways to build an alternate life. The past 6 or so years has consisted of me accepting my situation, learning how to appropriately cope with my grief and acquiring the skills of how to live this new life that I have been given.

My true healing began once I was able to help other women and families navigate their stillbirths. Speaking about my journey and educating others provided me with the hope I was searching for. I found peace in creating a legacy for my daughter despite how short her life was.

Since the stillbirth of my daughter, I have been dedicated to telling her story, spreading pregnancy and infant loss awareness, and advocating for the empowerment of pregnant people. I refuse to allow the memory of my daughter fade or be ignored. I will continue to celebrate her short but impactful life each and every day. I truly believe my daughters passing was preventable and with the appropriate funding and research we can help prevent future families from suffering the heart wrenching effects of stillbirth.



Jackie's Story:

My husband and I lost our son, Richard, in May 2016. He was to be our firstborn, our rainbow baby after our first pregnancy ended in miscarriage. Our blissful, "textbook" pregnancy ended in tragedy at 33 weeks 5 days. I was unaware of how to count kicks correctly, nor was I aware of pregnancy outcomes like stillbirth. I never imagined that my son's decreased fetal movement was a sign to me that he was dying inside of my womb. After Richard's death, my husband and I were forced into the community that no one wants to be a part of - those that have lost a child. We went on to have two healthy daughters, but those pregnancies were fraught with anxiety and required several teams of doctors to monitor their wellbeing. Both girls were delivered via emergency c-section. It took the death of my son to ensure that his sisters were delivered safely.

No one should have to lose a child to receive adequate prenatal care. In honor of Richard, I now run the nonprofit, Start Healing Together. We support educators experiencing pregnancy loss and infertility. Although I work closely with the NJEA and support NJ families, I also work with families across the country. Stillbirth touches nearly 700 NJ families every single year and 23,000 babies are lost in the U.S. When a stillbirth occurs, it is not only the parents that are affected. Everyone that that pregnancy impacted, from the doctors to friends and family, are affected. For educators, that means dozens of students are affected as well. Stillbirth is largely a PREVENTABLE tragedy and our country needs to address it. The SHINE for Autumn Act is going to literally save lives, and I throw my entire support behind it. I hope that you will as well.

Chelsea's Story:

Four days before our due date I went to be seen on a Sunday for lack of movement when I heard the words that broke us, "no heartbeat." I was 39+4 weeks. Elizabeth was born sleeping on 1/24/23 after induction. She was our first child. We were so excited for her. From the second trimester on the pregnancy was smooth sailing. We are still awaiting some answers as to what happened. I had no signs or symptoms that anything was wrong. Our doctors and staff were/are completely shocked. She was everything we wanted. We were so ready for her. We were so close but we became parents who came home without our perfect baby girl.

Brittany's Story:

Freya Emerson Gaspard was stillborn August 19, 2021. I was in labor with her when she got tangled in her cord and died from a nuchal cord injury. This could have been prevented with routine 3D ultrasounds, correct information about kick counts and baby's movements. I was told by my nurse that babies slow down during labor. That is false. This much wanted, much loved and much missed baby girl should be an almost 2 year old. We are devastated.

Bobbie's Story:

My name is Bobbie Cohan. I live in Waccabuc, New York. On January 23, 2013 our daughter who was 35 weeks pregnant told me that the baby wasn't moving as much but she read on the internet that they didn't move as much in the last trimester. We now know that is NOT TRUE. The next morning she had a regular scheduled appointment with her OB and she invited me to come with her. The doctor asked, is the baby moving? My daughter said yes but not as much. Dr said well they don't move as much at the end. AGAIN, we now know This is not true. When the dr tried to use the Doppler to hear the heartbeat she couldn't find it and said that this machine is broken. Panic set in on my daughter's face as I stared directly at her. A look that will forever be in my mind. We went to the next room for an ultrasound where the doctor then said words no one should ever have to hear " I am sorry there is no heartbeat" So On January 24 we went directly to the hospital where our daughter was to deliver her dead baby. I had to ask the social worker "is this what is called a stillbirth?" cause no one had said the word yet. Jan 25 will forever be the worst day ever of our lives, the day our daughter delivered her first born son Oliver. Until that day our daughter and her baby had been healthy and had no complications. I recall our daughter's doctor saying to us, " This is very very rare" But when several weeks later I had the strength to go on the internet and learn about stillbirth I found out it wasn't very very rare. It happens 69 times a day in the United States, 69 times a day a baby dies in utero, mostly towards the end of pregnancy and in non risk pregnancies and twice as often to black mothers. This is the equivalent of 3 kindergarten classes being wiped out today and every day. I also found out that as a wealthy nation the US ranks 48 th out of 49 counties in annual rate of reduction of stillbirth. At least 25% and possibly more stillbirths are preventable. Enough is enough. Please pass the Stillbirth Prevention legislation and help lower the rate of stillbirth in our country. You can make a difference. It's time to end preventable stillbirth.

Alex's Story:

Michael and I lost our first child, James Robert Naclerio, on January 11, 2022, when I was 34 weeks pregnant. A week later, I was back in the hospital with postpartum preeclampsia (and the resulting super high blood pressure). Michael, my husband, wrote an essay in the immediate aftermath [recounting our experience](#), but our story has continued since his writing. It wasn't until around the 6-month anniversary of his death that we learned that James died of a cord accident. The only reason we were able to get answers was the help of two incredible organizations—PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy and The Rainbow Clinic.

Michael's essay is linked to this email. We SHINE for James and are pleading for this important piece of legislation to pass.

Jennifer's Story:

My daughter Lucy died when I was 30 weeks pregnant with her. Her stillbirth continues to impact me and my family daily. The emotional, physical, economic, toll it's taken from us over the past 3 years is indescribable and I desperately hope no other family ever goes through it. Please, please pass this act.



“Did you come here alone?” My obstetrician asked as I lay on the exam table. My 8 month pregnant belly was exposed and lathered with an anti-static gel that was cold, thick, and sticky. I nodded yes, and felt the deepest alone I'd ever felt. I couldn't talk through my sobs, swirling thoughts, nausea, dizziness, and mostly my desire to change time. If I could just go back. If I could just pretend it was a dream. If I could just ignore her and be blissfully ignorant.



I managed to audibly say my husband, Mark's name and through an ache unlike anything I've ever felt said, "emergency contact." He didn't answer. I shook so hard that I couldn't hold my phone. The nurse found his number and dialed for me. As soon as he picked up, I wailed, "She doesn't have a heartbeat."

The wait for Mark to arrive at the doctor's office was only 15 minutes, but it felt like hours. Time is relative and any point of reference stopped. Everything stopped. But my mind raced. He needed to bring our 2 year old daughter, Juliet, with him. We were in the peak of the COVID pandemic with no family nearby and no childcare. I thought of Juliet. I begged to just change time. I pleaded to not have to hear, "I'm so sorry, your baby passed." As I waited for him, I called my lifelong friend and cried with her. I texted my other friends the news. I texted my new boss of 4 weeks- I had just started a new job. How do I tell him or our team of 80 people that I never met in person? I had just penned an article on LinkedIn about getting a job in my third trimester. Did I jinx myself? I felt embarrassed. I texted my doula, the only person I knew that could tell me what to do. I removed myself from a Facebook chat with 5 of my friends whom I was going to be on maternity leave with. I was panicking and desperately trying to erase it all. I started to "handle" the situation but my mind and actions were completely uncontrolled.

When Mark and Juliet arrived, my OB went through a list of next steps, but I only heard a slew of random words. Sepsis. Delivery. Stillbirth. Time. Contractions. Today. My eyes were sore; I ran out of tears. I closed them and prayed and bargained and pleaded for this to not be real.

I delivered Lucy April 21, 2020 at 30 weeks. She was still, time was still, and so was I. A stillborn delivery is the same as a live birth. The contractions, epidural, pitocin, and pushing. But there is no small cry. No joy. The room was dark and quiet; my heart was too. I was not strong enough and I didn't want to be. The nurse brought Lucy to Mark and me. She was so small and bundled in a blanket and perfectly placed hat. I held her and cried, and the only words I could say were, "I'm so sorry." I felt as though I had an obligation to keep her safe and warm and nurture her in my womb. To ensure she grew stronger and reached the milestones for a healthy baby. I failed and I felt so gut-wrenchingly guilty for failing her. We left the hospital the next day. I was in a wheelchair holding a lavender purple box of Lucy's photos, tiny footprints, hat, and blanket. The box sat on my lap on top of a stack of discharge papers, funeral and crematory

providers, postpartum depression pamphlets, and stillbirth support group information. I couldn't help but to choke back tears and think I cannot believe I'm leaving with a box instead of our baby. I closed my eyes. They stung from exhaustion and salty residue. A reminder of the tears that would periodically flood my eyes. I can't believe this is actually happening. I can't believe this actually happened. It still feels like an alternate life, did this really happen?

The next few days were dark. We tried to handle our affairs but everything continued to be an uphill battle. Nothing was simple. Finding a funeral home was nearly impossible. There was a 3 week delay in cremation due to the increase in deaths as a result of covid. Requesting bereavement required a birth and death certificate, stillbirths don't receive birth certificates and death certificates were also backlogged. Testing to find out what happened was also backlogged. I visibly looked pregnant so, leaving the house was filled with "congratulations," "when are you due," conversations with strangers. Those resulted in me consoling them for feeling badly when I explained what happened. A year and half later, I still have these conversations. The dentist, hairdresser, barista, neighbor, the woman I met once at a volunteer event, the well-meaning colleague who asks if Juliet is my only child or how many children I have. How do you tell people your baby died? I have practiced my answers. I now use standard responses that vary by situation.

After a couple months we found out that Lucy died from congenital cytomegalovirus (CMV), a virus that most people have had before 40. It is only dangerous to pregnancy if you contract it for the first time while pregnant. I dodged a global pandemic but succumbed to a common virus I didn't even know I caught. I dove into understanding everything I could about CMV. It's more common in pregnancy than Down Syndrome, toxoplasmosis (the cat urine thing), spina bifida, and fetal alcohol syndrome. The guilt still loomed over me, could I have prevented this? Why couldn't I keep Lucy safe.

I sought help from a psychiatrist and psychologist. I felt out of control as if I was unable to touch the ground. I would scream into my pillow or in my car. I would wake up feeling pregnant. My breasts would ache, full with milk for a baby I could not nurse. Biology can be infuriating. Mentally I was breaking. It was summer but I felt as though I was stuck in fall. I bought \$500 worth of sweaters and pants while it was 90 degrees outside. Maybe money could help me change time. Fall was when I became pregnant with Lucy, before everything fell to pieces. My psychologist gave me some signs to look out for, concerned this trauma could trigger a dissociative identity disorder.

Lucy's death and birth changed me. I fortunately evaded severe depression and dissociative identity disorder. I have grown to be more kind, mindful of language and assumptions, and forgiving of myself and others. I know now that it's possible to feel a spectrum of emotions at once, and really feel them. Joy and total despair. Sad happiness. Anger and serenity. My priorities have shifted to my family and my patience only holds muster to meaningful conversations. My soul is too tired for small talk or the weather. Going through this experience has made me more vulnerable and willing to unapologetically show that to anyone. I've also grown to know a sadness that will always be with me. It's an innocence and blissful ignorance that is gone forever. Not every pregnancy results in a baby. And, there isn't always a silver lining. Sometimes things just suck and there isn't a happy ever after. Not everything happens for a reason. And that's ok too. My capacity for love and hope however has increased. I find happiness in people's stories in a way I didn't before. I pause to enjoy Juliet yelling "Mom" as she runs up the driveway from preschool with her new artwork in hand. I love my husband more deeply and fully than I otherwise could have. I think of Lucy everyday. She broke me and healed me at once. Her life and death, though brief in time, has not only given me lifelong aching but, hope too. Will this change in time? Maybe. But, time and I have an unreliable relationship.



Jennifer Loga, a native of Buffalo, NY, lives in Maplewood, NJ with her husband Mark, daughters Juliet (3), Abigail (1 month), and dog Pickles. Following Lucy's death in 2020, Jen and Mark have raised more than \$50,000 for stillbirth, pregnancy, and CMV causes.

Paris's Story:

This is my stillbirth story

January 3rd 2021. We had just finished celebrating the holiday and the new year in isolation because we were due with our baby girl in January and COVID numbers were on the rise again. We did everything to make sure to keep me and the baby safe. That morning in January, I woke up and told my husband "I have not really felt the baby move." But when you go on google it says "baby is running out of room." After all, I was 36 w 6 days. I thought to myself, I guess this baby is getting ready for labor! By 7 pm that evening I still didn't really feel the baby move at all and I started getting some cramping as if labor was coming. So I called my doctor. I remember saying to her "I'm sure it's nothing, but I want to make sure I'm not having contractions." So I left my husband behind with my toddler and went to the hospital to get checked. Upon arrival, the nurses hooked me up to the monitors. I remember them saying let's do an ultrasound to see where the baby's heartbeat is. As soon as the nurse did the ultrasound, the other nurse taking my medical history ran out of the room. I still didn't think much of anything until about 5-6 doctors and nurses came running in. I was internally panicking. They scanned me again, and said "I'm sorry there is no heartbeat". The dreaded words every loss mom is haunted by. I was in shock, confused. It didn't register yet and the only words I got out were "does this mean I should call my husband?" The nurse looked at me, held my hand and said "sweetie, get him here asap."

As soon as I heard his voice I cracked. I screamed and cried "Alex this is it, we lost the baby. It's done. My girl is gone." My husband rushed over to the hospital and I was wheeled in to be induced. They gave me an epidural and pain meds right away to keep me as comfortable as possible. My labor lasted for 16 hours. And at 10:56 am on January 4th 2021 I gave birth to the most beautiful little girl named Maria Penelope. I remember pushing that last push and feeling her body, lifeless, being born. But nothing prepared me for the earth shattering silence that followed. No cries of a newborn. No congratulations, it's a girl! That moment still haunts me. One of my labor and delivery nurses held my hand so tight as the entire room filled with tears. My girl was perfect. She was beautiful. She looked like she was just peacefully sleeping. But how? Why? There was never an answer. We did every test we could. Every autopsy, pathology. You name it. I had a completely uneventful, beautiful pregnancy with not a single indication that this would happen. So how did it go? We will never know. We miss that little girl every single day. Who she would have been. Almost 2 years old now. But we find small comfort knowing she handpicked and sent us her little sister a year and a half later. The most beautiful blessing from my baby girl who lives in the sky.

In Memory of Maria Penelope Kekatos
January 4th 2021. 7lbs 11oz - 19 inches.
Daughter of Alex and Paris Kekatos

Alex's Story:

Michael and I lost our first child, James Robert Naclerio, on January 11, 2022, when I was 34 weeks pregnant. A week later, I was back in the hospital with postpartum preeclampsia (and the resulting super high blood pressure). Michael, my husband, wrote an essay in the immediate aftermath [recounting our experience](#), but our story has continued since his writing. It wasn't until around the 6-month anniversary of his death that we learned that James died of a cord accident. The only reason we were able to get answers was the help of two incredible organizations—PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy and The Rainbow Clinic.

Michael's essay is linked to this email. We SHINE for James and are pleading for this important piece of legislation to pass.

Samanthan's Story:

Eulogy for Alana Marie Banerjee, written by her Uncle

Alana Marie Banerjee was the much beloved and anticipated first grandchild on both sides of her family. She was born still on October 4th, 2013 just two days before her due date after a totally normal and healthy pregnancy. Her life was stolen by a preventable cord accident, and she remains deeply loved and missed.

You would think that there's not much to say about a baby who died before she was properly born, but you'd be wrong.

Alana Marie Banerjee – there is a lot to say about you. I could tell you about how you got your nickname, The Bean, because that's all you looked like to us in the first photographs we have of you. I could tell you about the months of preparation put into your arrival, how you were showered with gifts, how your parents arranged their lives just to attend to all of your needs, how you had the most pristine nursery to enjoy the first nights of your life. I could tell you about the calls we all received last week, expecting the happiest news in the world, but instead hearing the worst.

But I only have a few moments up here, and seeing as I'm your godfather, I ought to give you some advice. After all, I would have given it to you anyway, whether you liked it or not, had you lived.

First, go find your family. There's nothing more important. I'm sure all the Banerjees, Durantes, and Tedeschis up in heaven have yearned to hold you just as we all have. Maybe start with your great-grandmother, Mary, who we will bury you beside today. She liked chocolate ice cream and hot coffee, in case you want to get on her good side.

Remember to watch over us, your family, but especially all of your future brothers and sisters and cousins. They may share some of your belongings, but what they'll really need is the beautiful guidance and leadership you would have given them as their big sister. Give all of us the strength, as our little guardian angel, to live with a spirit you would have been proud to call your own.

Always rest assured that you have been loved and you will continue to be loved. Your parents, grandparents, and uncles were so excited to welcome you into this world, and we'll pray for you until we leave it as well.

Before I stepped down, your parents asked me to read something to you. It's the book you'll be buried with. And how appropriate – with Sudeep's curiosity and natural intelligence, and Samantha's creative love of writing and reading, you were bound to cherish books. This one's called Guess How Much I Love You.

I love you this much.
I love you as high as I can reach.
I love you as high as I can hop.
Big Nutbrown Hare leaned over and kissed her good night.
I love you right up to the moon.

Your parents wanted me to add that they love you all the way up to heaven – and back down again, if they could.

Alana Marie, our little bean, though we were never blessed to know you, we will never forget you. And your parents, your family, we will always love you. Be at peace.

Autumn's Story:

My stillbirth was in March 2020. Bastion (Bash) was my second pregnancy & all seemed well. I went into my 37-week gestational visit, and everything was completely normal. He was perfect. I wish I felt like our system was looking out for my pregnancy. I wrote this a few months after his death...

I BELIEVE MY SON'S DEATH COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF I HAD KNOWN THESE THINGS...

I lost my healthy infant in utero during late pregnancy. Even though this has been so hard for me to write, I did it because I wish I were the one reading it last March.

MY STORY | MISTAKES MADE:

Over the weekend, I felt something was off. Bash wasn't kicking like I was used to. It was only three days after a picture-perfect ultrasound. So, I drank my water, took a break & then drank a sugary drink. I would get a kick here and there. It was just not feeling right.

On Sunday, I waited for nighttime to see if that would help because he was more active at night. While I was in bed, out of nowhere, he kicked and kicked and kicked. It was different, though. Super irregular for him, super quick, and all over the place. But he kicked, so I thought I was in the clear.

The world was in the beginning stages of the stay-at-home order for COVID-19. My husband and I knew that the hospital would be unavoidable when we went into labor. But until then, we were apprehensive about running straight to the ER. We didn't want to catch the virus at a busy hospital for something that wasn't a big deal. We called, and the hospital showed no urgency. There wasn't talk about worst-case scenarios, and I wasn't even encouraged to come in. Everything was "up to me," but I'm just a person, not in the medical field. My first pregnancy was normal. I didn't know any better.

Turns out, this was a big deal. The next day was weird again (Monday). Not so active. I thought I would give him the night again because that had worked the night before. Night came- no kicks, small movements, the Braxton Hicks were starting.

I said, "Okay, we will get it checked out in the morning." Tuesday morning, we went in, and the hospital wasn't even busy. I shouldn't have waited. There, he was declared to have no heartbeat at 37 weeks, 5 days pregnant. I was induced, and he was delivered the next day. Baby boy weighing 5lbs 9oz and 19 inches. Forever sleeping.

SO MANY RED FLAGS OVER THAT WEEKEND. I JUST DIDN'T SEE IT. I tend to think I was in some crazy denial, but who thinks, OH, MY HEALTHY BABY IS SCREAMING FOR HELP RIGHT NOW? But he was. I didn't know any better. But I could have easily been educated to know this was a serious issue.

I drove to the hospital that morning, LITERALLY telling my husband, "I know this is just a precaution; I know he's fine. I just want to be sure." He agreed. No urgency. Happy small talk on the way in. We were completely blindsided when they couldn't find a heartbeat.

In the worst case, I thought my doctors would induce me right then because they were a little worried. I assumed I would get a baby that was alive at the end of it. Little did I know... Looking back, I believe he passed while I was asleep the night when he kicked a bunch. His final movements. For a whole 24 hours at home, he was gone. But I was still cautiously feeling my baby bump and taking it easy, never rushing to the hospital. I did not know my baby was dead. At all.

2022 CONCLUSION

There was no urgency, no education, & no preventive measures. I was clueless. I will spend my whole life wishing someone had taken action before me. I hope prevention can start with me.

Cassie's Story:

In fall of 2019, after going through IVF we found out we were pregnant with twins! We were so excited; we could hardly contain ourselves. Our perfect scenario: a little girl and a little boy were joining our family. We were 35 weeks, had the names picked out (Emilia and Dion), the car seats were in the car, the hospital bag was ready to go, two pack n' plays were set up in our room. We were prepared!

I went to my 35 week checkup, talked to the doctor about the plan. What if things went "wrong" with the delivery and I needed a C-section; what if the twins need NICU time? She answered all my questions, and I looked at the screen, eager to see what my little ones were up to. "Baby A is doing great!" she said. "Heart rate is 143, he's head down still, and looks like he's getting ready!" And then she moved over to check on our little girl. Silence. There was nothing. She was gone. Another doctor was called in to confirm. They sent us to a specialist to make sure. "I'm so sorry, there's no heartbeat for Baby B." And in that moment, our entire world shattered.

5 days later, we gave birth to the twins, one wriggling and crying and one still and silent. The trauma and heartache this has caused myself on my family is not something I would wish on my worst enemy. Just on a practical level, people who have gone through stillbirth are less capable and productive members of society. Before Emilia died, I absolutely loved my job as a healthcare worker pouring myself, my time, and my energy into others. Now I use every bit of energy I have to get through the day. Helping others heal is not something I am able to do anymore without significant harm caused to myself and my mental state. Society will be better as a whole when the 23,000 families affected by stillbirth a year are able to take those babies home, to thrive instead of survive, and to remain functioning members of society.

Diana's Story:

Penelope was stillborn, on October 26, 2022, in Mooresville, NC.

On October 24th, after finishing work, I went to my room and lay down on my bed. I was concerned because I didn't feel Penelope moving as always. I thought that because I was busy and concentrating on working, I just missed her moves. After being in bed for a couple of minutes, I was still unable to feel her. My sister called my husband as she saw me worrying and crying. My husband got home in less than 5 minutes and told me to stay calm and that everything was okay. He gave me a cold orange juice to make her move because that is part of the myths and misconceptions the medical providers and the internet said. He also laid down in bed with me, but she was still not moving. So he called our OBGYN office, and the doctor advised us to go to the hospital. In the meantime, the doctor will call the hospital for them to be waiting for us.

We arrived at the hospital; it took us forever to get to the maternity floor because the instructions on how to get there were not clear enough. My husband even went back to the ER receptionist to ask for instructions on how to get there again. Finally, we were able to get into the maternity area. They took us to a room where a nurse started asking my questions and, after who knows how much time, began to try to find Penelope's heartbeat, but she could not. I started to get very nervous. The doctor arrived and looked with an ultrasound machine. He looked at my husband and me and told us that there was no heartbeat. My whole world was destroyed at that moment. I just wanted to be having a bad dream and that nothing was real.

The doctor gave us the option to deliver Penelope that night or the next day. We decided to come home and be with our family and sleep with Penelope in our bed for the last time, as we did for 9 months (39 weeks). That night was really hard. We lost our baby, and I needed to prepare myself for an induction, knowing that I wouldn't hear my baby cry like all the other moms and that she would never come home with us. The following day, October 25, we went to the hospital in the morning. I was lost. This is the most painful experience a human can go through. The induction started as the pain of the contractions got stronger and more painful. They had to give me an epidural. After 20 hours

of labor and 40 minutes of pushing, on October 26, I delivered Penelope. She was the most perfect baby. Many dreams died with her. My husband and I will never know the color of her eyes, her crying, or her voice tone. We will never celebrate her first steps or take her to school.

We held Penelope's lifeless body for almost 6 hours. I cleaned her, and I dressed her. That was the first and last time I could do it. Those 6 hours will always be the most priceless time. I'll remember my baby for the rest of my life.

This was just the beginning of this traumatic experience. Getting the results of all the tests made has been devastating. She was a healthy baby. But her placenta was 10th percentile smaller, and she was a big baby. I was always told that my pregnancy was a high risk, but it was not treated that way. I believe that if more ultrasounds were done, she would be here. If the doctor's office had used the EPV (estimated placenta volume), something could have been done to save my baby. OBGYN offices should use only ultrasounds instead of doing stress tests to hear the baby's heartbeat. We were never informed of the importance of counting kicks or noticing changes in Penelope's moves. The medical system has to change, and OBGYNS MUST provide better pregnancy care. Ultrasounds should be the ONLY tests used to check the baby's heartbeat as it also allows the doctors to see the baby and identify any placenta or umbilical cord problems.

Joseph, Penelope's dad.

From the minute I found out I was going to be a Father it was the most important thing in my life. I had new drive and a new goal. It was a shield around me when I lost my father 7/6/2022. I knew I could get through it. Every Dr. we saw said everything was perfect even with our increased risk of age. Wish we would have been more informed from them but I would not pass up on 39w 2days of playing with my daughter in her comfortable space. Laughing and dreaming of my beautiful daughter Penelope. The worst part wasn't we lost her full term. The worst part was she never existed. We have no birth certificate. No actual death certificate. In the Charlotte area they would not do a autopsy to confirm without a doubt what our Dr's are telling us the reason. How do you go from a healthy daughter ready to join you in life to zero heartbeat? There needs to be a better way. This has to stop. I'm lost now.

Diana & Joseph, Penelope's parents.

Ana's Story:

After 31 weeks and 2 days of a perfect "textbook" pregnancy, I went to the ER in the middle of the night because I thought something was different with my son's movements being much weaker than normal (I had no idea this was a potential sign of an impending stillbirth but I had a terrible feeling). I was reassured when we heard my son's heartbeat (my husband stayed home with our daughter as it was late at night and he was listening over speaker phone). However, after an hour I had a crash c-section without notice when the on-call doctor finally arrived. I was dragged into surgery as my son's heart rate was plummeting, so I was terrified and alone as I was put under, afraid for both of our lives. Inexplicably, our perfect son, Owen Nathaniel, was not able to be resuscitated. Owen was handed lifeless to my husband when he made it to the hospital. When I awoke to the terrible news that our son died, I let out the most piercing guttural screams. We, like many of the parents I have come to know, didn't get a cause of death but we were able to finally find out from specialized research on his placenta 6 years later. Turns out Owen's death was caused by cord compressions that occurred for several days prior (our son's death certificate however is incomplete with his cause of death filled out immediately after as unknown - fetal demise, which does nothing for research or to help improve care).

Although our OB was dismissive of our questions and told us "sometimes healthy babies just die" and the NICU doctor who failed to be at the delivery immediately after his birth talked us out of autopsy we believe there were warning signs prior to the moment when our baby died, so there were opportunities to save him that were missed. Cord experts that have done more monitoring on the cord during pregnancy than is standard (especially for low risk pregnancies that get the bare minimum in terms of care) show these are possibly preventable deaths. Not just cord "accidents" as they are known by the community of doctors that seem complacent about losing babies to stillbirth.

I have been told many baby save stories that involved noticing a change and having a reactive OB deliver their baby quickly (many actually had cord knots and nuchal cords). Perhaps if someone had made me aware that stillbirth could happen to anyone, even us in our low risk pregnancy (which statically more common in actuality), maybe we would've known to pay closer attention to a change in movement and gone in sooner when he was still able to be saved. Through the stillbirth prevention non-profit, I am a founding member and Co-Director of Communications of, PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy, and Count the Kicks we share tips to encourage pregnant parents that prevention is possible, however we need legislative and systemic change of the healthcare system to ensure all babies get a fighting chance to survive. We can't keep letting the lack of proactive efforts to prevent stillbirths continue to take babies like our son.



Nothing is the same for us now in the “after” as we grieve for who our son would've been and who we used to be before his death. Both my husband and I suffer from PTSD, anxiety and depression (grief). I stopped working after Owen died and we have had to make due with one income. We are also very anxious parents who can't parent our two living children the same way others do. For example we rarely go out together without them because we don't truly trust anyone with our living children. Sending them to school is difficult especially now during covid. It's our ongoing fear of something terrible happening again that keeps us from ever truly being happy and carefree.

Nothing helps to ease the pain and trauma of our loss, but we do hope that we can save many babies in memory of our son who should be here too. Please prioritize stillbirth prevention and pass the SHINE for Autumn Act, so fewer families will be blindsided like we were and can hopefully avoid this nightmare.

Thank you,
Ana and Joshua Vick

Alexa's Story:

We found out we were expecting our third child in February 2021 and soon learned we would be meeting our first son in October. We named him Hudson Daniel Gearhart and his two big sisters could not wait to meet him. My pregnancy progressed normally just as my first two had in 2014 and 2016. We prepared his nursery, put the pieces in place for maternity leave from work and we were counting down the days until his arrival.

At 37 weeks, I felt as though Hudson wasn't moving as much. Something was wrong. I did what they tell you to do and I scheduled an appointment to be seen. I was either an over anxious mom or my instincts and observations were telling me something was wrong.

When I arrived at the office, I sat down in a room with a cozy chair for an NST. My nerves were calmed when my doctor came in following the testing and shared that he was a “textbook baby”. All of the readings came back normal and we decided to meet for my appointment the following week. The nurse encouraged me to come back if I felt anything was wrong. I left assuming I was that over anxious mom - he was a “textbook baby” I told my family and friends.

Well, we didn't make it to my next appointment because in the wee hours of Tuesday the following week, I couldn't feel movement again. This time - it wasn't less - I couldn't get him to move. I doubted myself as he was “textbook” but reality set in as his still heart and lifeless body were on the ultrasound screen later that day. At 38 weeks, my son was gone.

We delivered our beautiful son on October 13th, 2021 and our lives are forever changed by his passing. How does a “textbook baby” wind up in a funeral home just a week later?

The umbilical cord knot that took his life wasn’t visible on his ultrasounds. His growth was on track at his last ultrasound at 32 weeks and his fluid looked normal too. For the 20 minute duration of the NST Hudson seemed ok, yet he was far from it.

An ultrasound at 37 weeks would have revealed his growth restriction and low levels of fluid. A follow up appointment that week may have caught him in distress. Closer monitoring of my weight gain and belly measurements may have indicated a problem. A different standard of care in the US - and our son might be in his car seat, a rambunctious 1 year old, on the way to celebrate the holidays with our family.

Mandy’s Story:

My son Phoenix James Sheehan was born the day before his due date at 5:19 in the morning on Thursday, September 17th 2020. He weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 21 inches long. He had a head covered in the finest peach fuzz and looked like his daddy and his big sister. He was placed on my chest immediately after his birth where I covered him in kisses. He was perfect and beautiful and loved.

Seven hours before his birth, my son Phoenix died – suddenly, unexpectedly, and traumatically. I had just kissed my husband goodnight while laughing at the movements of our son. I laid on my side, snuggled up to my husband, and closed my eyes. Moments later, I felt my water break and let out an audible chuckle realizing our son was likely making his arrival that night. When we turned on the light, we were horrified to find our bed soaked in blood. There were blood clots the size of golf balls and more blood kept pouring from my body over the course of three minutes. At the time we didn’t know if it was my blood or our son’s. What we did know is that something was very wrong and we were terrified.

We drove to the hospital 45 minutes away and while my husband tried to park the car I was told by the doctors that my son no longer had a heartbeat. Seven hours later, Phoenix was born. His perfect lips were the darkest shade of mahogany. He was born with his umbilical cord wrapped tightly around his neck – so tightly that the midwife had to cut it while he was being born. We learned once he was born that Phoenix had hemorrhaged to death due to an unidentified velamentous cord insertion that had led to one of his umbilical vessels severing when my water broke. He had died in less than five minutes of my water breaking.

I truly believe that if I had been informed about the importance of tracking my son’s movements then Phoenix’s death could have been prevented. I would have known to rush to the hospital when I first felt increased movement for a few moments just five hours before his death while snuggling my daughter. Instead, my son is dead. I left the hospital with a cardboard box holding eight photographs, his footprints and handprints, and a folder about stillbirth – a term that had never once been mentioned as a possibility in either of my two pregnancies.

On the day of my son’s birth, I gave him every kiss he would ever receive. I gave him his only bath. My husband and I held him, talked to him, and loved him. And then, after ten hours, we had to make the impossible decision that we were ready for his body to be taken away so that we could return home and tell our daughter the heartbreaking news. Today, Phoenix’s ashes are on a shelf in our house. We speak his name. We look for signs of him in the world around us. But mostly, we grieve for him each and every day.

Tomeka's Story:

I got married at 38 and we tried to get pregnant for over a year. We were thrilled to find out I was pregnant at 40. I went to the obstetrician/gynecologist that I had seen for years and he put me on low-dose aspirin because I was at high risk of preeclampsia due to my age. Nevertheless, I had the easiest pregnancy, no morning sickness at all, singing to him in the shower, and we named our son Jace.

The first sign that there was anything to worry about was at my 33-week appointment on May 4. The doctor told me Jace was measuring small, so he wanted me to go to see an MFM (maternal-fetal medicine specialist) for an ultrasound. The results of the ultrasound were inconclusive – they said he was moving too much, and they couldn't see what they needed to see.

At my next appointment, the following week, they performed an NST (fetal non-stress test to measure the infant's heart rate). Jace failed the NST, so they sent me back to the MFM for another ultrasound.

That time he scored eight out of eight – perfect. Reassured, I went about life as usual, but four days later, on Monday, May 14, I woke up early – 2:30 or 3:00 A.M. because my stomach was really, really hurting. I tried to go to the bathroom, but I couldn't. I threw up and that made me feel better, so I thought everything was fine and went back to bed.

The next morning, when I woke up, I was super sore. I thought that maybe it was from throwing up, so I decided to stay in bed that day. The thing is – I never miss work – and my husband knew that, so he asked my friend to come over and just stay with me. Thankfully, she did. Later that afternoon I asked her to help me get up and go to the bathroom, and as I stood up, I just passed out.

She called 911 and they rushed me to the hospital where we met my husband. At the hospital, they did a Doppler check on Jace and no one said anything. It was 7:50 P.M. when they did an ultrasound. It got really quiet, a weird, eerie quiet. A doctor walked in and said,

“Your son died in utero.” It was kind of brushed off, and then they are like, “You have HELLP Syndrome,” and we were – what? – What is that? “We need to induce you.” I was overwhelmed. What are they saying? My son is dead? I can't wrap my head around it. And I can't imagine having to deliver him, so I asked for a C-section. They say 'no' but no one explains why not.

They tell me they are transferring me to a larger hospital. I am in a small hospital and they are not prepared to handle this.

Meanwhile, I am not okay. My heart rate is between 130 and 150. I have tachycardia, but they don't seem to have anyone monitoring my heart rate. Even though they tell us Jace is dead at 7:50 P.M., they do not do a CT scan of my liver until 9:59 P.M., and I don't actually leave the hospital until 10:43 P.M. (I know all this from reading my medical records.)

While in the ambulance to the larger hospital, one of the residents at the larger hospital reviewed my CT scan and realized I was bleeding internally. She called the old hospital to alert them, but I was already on my way, so then they called the ambulance and told the EMTs, “prepare to rush her into surgery.” No one says anything to me. I have absolutely no idea what is going on, and when we get to the second hospital, they rush me straight into the operating room. The last thing I remember is one of the doctors saying, “we're getting ready to do a C-section.” I found out later that there was a liter of blood in my abdomen and a softball-sized blood clot on my liver. They could not stop the bleeding, my liver was rupturing, and they stuffed me with absorption material.

The doctor told my husband, “IF she wakes up, it will be Thursday or Friday.” This was early in the morning on Tuesday. I shocked them all when I woke up the next day – on Wednesday. My mom was there, and she asked me if I wanted to hold Jace. I was swollen and had doubled in size, I didn't have my glasses or my contacts and because I was intubated, I couldn't talk, so I was playing charades, but I said 'yes.' She handed him to me, and I held him. I could barely see him. I held Jace, but it was for less than five minutes because they came in and said they needed to get him to the morgue. Jace had been with me in my room the whole time. I never really got to say goodbye. I stayed in the ICU for a week. They embolized my liver (where they inject something to block or reduce the blood flow) and part of it ended up dying

off, then I had an infection and seven surgeries within forty-five days. I had to have a “wound vac,” (a “wound vac” is when they apply a foam bandage over an open wound and use a vacuum pump to create negative pressure around the wound. This negative pressure pulls the edges of the wound together). I had a drain from my lung, a drain from my liver, and I lost like 80 pounds of fluid. It was literally the hardest thing I have ever experienced – so unexpected because I had just been at the doctor’s four days before and they told me everything was fine.

After finally being released from the hospital I remembered one of my friends asking me while I was in the ER if my obstetrician had been testing for proteinuria (urine samples) during my prenatal care and I said, “no.” My friend works case management for the city and is a labor and delivery nurse. I never knew what those urine samples were for...when people talk about preeclampsia, they always talk about high blood pressure, never protein in your urine. The highest my blood pressure ever got was 122/80 when it is normally 110/60 or 70 but never ‘preeclampsia high’ (more than 140/90). I did not know anything about HELLP Syndrome and after a review of my medical records, I realized my obstetrician did not request a single urine sample for me the whole pregnancy, even when Jace was measuring small. I have no answers. I am not an angry person; I went to every appointment and did everything they asked me to do but we don’t know why...we still don’t. No one ever reached out and had a conversation with me. After my near-miss, I learned that there was a black maternal health crisis in the USA. When I read Kira Johnson’s story (found out more on Instagram at 4Kira4Moms), I cried like a baby, and told my husband ‘We have to do something,’ so we started a nonprofit, Jace’s Journey. An organization passionately working towards eliminating the disparities in maternal and infant health through education, advocacy, and community engagement. No one ever told me that death was a possibility in pregnancy. If I had known that I would have prepared myself better.

Kara’s Story:

In 2015, we were expecting our second child. We struggled for many years with infertility, and ultimately we conceived our baby after 6 or 7 rounds of IVF. We loved this baby from the very moment of her existence. I say “her,” but the truth is that we opted not to find out whether we were having a son or daughter, imagining instead the perfect moment in the delivery room when our doctor would excitedly pronounce, “it’s a girl” or “it’s a boy.” We figured this additional element of surprise would only add to the joy that had eluded us for many years. Our baby was a live wire from the start. She moved and rolled and hiccupped constantly, and I decided that she did so to reassure her anxious mom that she was doing just fine. So when an hour passed one evening and I did not feel her despite my desperate poking and prodding, I panicked. I drove to the labor and delivery unit, running every red light along the way. At the hospital, I stared at the ultrasound screen, and I could see that our baby was not moving or breathing. I remember thinking that this was so unlike those ultrasound photographs the technicians had previously captured of her patting her face, sucking her thumb, and even waving her tiny hand.

From there, we were escorted down the hall, and I remember the sound of newborns crying as we walked to the room where I knew I would deliver a baby who would make no sound at all. The next day, after a long labor, our daughter arrived. There was, of course, no happy “it’s a girl!” announcement, only a forlorn moment in which our nurse lovingly handed me my tiny daughter, Madeleine Ava. “Madeleine” was the name we had agreed upon for our first-born daughter long before we married, back when we spoke dreamily of our future together and the children we would raise. The thing about stillborn babies is that no one gets to hold or see them, so it’s hard for friends and family to understand that they were real, that they existed. But I promise you, Madeleine was real. She had long fingers, and I think that, had she lived, she would have been a talented piano player like my grandmother. She had black hair, the same color as my dad’s and mine. And she had a dimple on each of her shoulder blades, dimples I have only ever seen on the backs of her brothers.

We buried Madeleine a few days later after a short service with just our family and a few friends. Her casket is Carolina blue, the color of my alma mater, and inside is a letter I wrote to her and the teddy bear I slept with well into my teenage years. Her gravestone bears a line from my favorite e.e. cummings poem: “I carry your heart with me(I carry it in my heart)”. Madeleine, and babies like her, were born still. But still, they were born.

Courtney's Story:

Henry Joseph Fitzpatrick is unrepeatable.
He was born on September 10th, 2021 at 5:18pm in Raleigh, NC.
8lbs, 14.2 ounces of perfection and love.

A head of dark hair, starting to curl up at the bottom.
The cutest little chin I've ever seen in my life.
An adorable button nose.
Perfect fingers and toes, all ready for their first trim!
A loving family and amazing friends ready to love on him for his whole life.
A nursery and home setup and ready, just for him.
He arrived on his due date, timely like his mama.
He wasn't given much time with us here on Earth, but he's made a big impact in so many lives.
He's brought us light, love and lessons on the hardest days.

This is Henry's story. And part of our family's story.
But it doesn't have to be the story of other babies and families in the future.
And we need YOUR help.

Henry passed away on September 12th, about 30 hours after he was born by emergency c section. There aren't any answers as to 'why' a textbook pregnancy ended in his heart rate plummeting during labor but we now know, from pursuing further testing on our own, that Henry's umbilical cord had a hemorrhage between his cord and placenta. The reason for his death is considered to be under the stillbirth category, labeled under a "cord accident". He was not getting access to what his body needed to survive over days, or possibly weeks, with zero indication of that occurring. "Oh he's a big boy, he's running out of room" is what I was told when I mentioned a change in movements in the 39th week of pregnancy. With more education and prevention measures in place, my hope and prayer is that moms will no longer stand for this as an answer from a provider.

We've had to hear words [autopsy, decedent services, headstone, casket] that I wish upon no one to have to encounter when it comes to their child's life. It's completely heart wrenching. We continue to rely on our faith to give us strength and comfort on the days where we grieve, question, cry and wonder WHY.

I am Courtney. First and foremost, I am mama to our angel Henry. All I've ever wanted in my life was to be a Mom. To receive this sacred title as I was also saying goodbye to our baby boy and handing him back to a nurse to be sent to the hospital morgue - well, that is a truly unexplainable and heart wrenching experience to even attempt to put into words on this screen.

I am now extremely passionate about women/mothers talking about pregnancy and infant loss. The statistic tells us that 1 in 4 pregnancies will end in loss. While I don't believe that I am defined by that statistic, or the loss of Henry, I do believe that becoming his Mom has permanently changed me, as I'm sure every mother can understand as they think of their own children. Henry's life has impacted mine and so many others' lives, even though his time here on Earth was short. Henry, and other angels, matter and deserve to be honored and remembered.

Also, other babies and their precious LIVES deserve our attention and ACTION. There are ways to prevent stillbirth from happening. There are families that we can help ensure that they don't feel this pain or immeasurable loss in their lives. It does NOT have to be a taboo topic. We can empower moms and EDUCATE families on how to monitor their baby's normal movements and get immediate medical attention if a change in fetal movement is noticed. I have

friends who have learned that their babies died in utero because of a small placenta that could have been measured, detected, monitored and hopefully still delivered a healthy baby when it became too much of a risk to the baby's life.

But why isn't this being prioritized?

In the initial hours after we lost Henry, I thought we were a unique story. It turns out...we really aren't. The more I talk to others, the more stories I hear about women who have lost a baby at full-term, with NO issues in pregnancy and NO real reason as to why they lost their baby. This is unacceptable. We must change this.

I have learned that women whom I've known my whole life have babies in heaven. And I never knew. They have graves that they visit. They have memory boxes in their closets that they pull out on their child's birthday. Loss, especially pregnancy and infant loss is so hush hush in our society. It's not a happy subject. It is uncomfortable. It is painful. When I bring up Henry to someone I don't know, I've seen countless jaw drops, gasps, and "I am so so sorrys" infinite times in the months surrounding his death. It's not quite the cocktail party topic that you feel like leading with yet it's the only thing on your mind and the worst part about any conversation is NOT acknowledging Henry or his life. AND I can't help wanting to share with every pregnant person that they must stay vigilant and be an advocate, even when it's hard or uncomfortable.

Pregnancy and infant loss may be uncomfortable, but it IS one packed FULL of so much love. AND packed full of families who want to SHINE the light of their baby's legacy into action and make sure more babies make it home into the arms of their loving family members.

I urge you, please pass the SHINE for Autumn Act. Today. Babies cannot wait.

Mackenzie's Story:

My daughter Amanda was stillborn at 34 weeks in October 2018. No parent should have to bury their child. More research into stillbirth will mean fewer families have to leave the hospital with a memory box instead of a newborn.

Pat's Story:

My son Christopher was born still on Sept 26, 1978. We were told he died for no known reason, but with research we should learn in the next ten years what causes stillbirth. It has now been over 44 years with the loss of over a million sweet babies, yet we are still in the dark asking for simple data to be collected so adequate research might be possible. Please help lift our bereaved families up by allowing this bill to be enacted.

Jessica's Story:

It is tragic that in this day and age there is so little known and done to prevent stillbirths in this country. My son was born with no chromosomal abnormalities, not knots in the cord and no known medical issues and absolutely no idea why this happened. No parent should have to endure what parents of stillborn children have to go through, compounded by the fact that no one can tell us what caused it or how to prevent it.

Jenn's Story:

This bill means so much to my family because our lives were shattered the day our daughter was born still at 37 weeks after a perfect pregnancy. If protocols for monitoring movement, cord blood flow, and measuring the placenta were standard care My daughter would be a lively toddler. Instead, I continue to share and shine for Nora Claire Knight so no other family has to experience this level of trauma.

Jessica's Story:

My first daughter Camryn was very unfortunately and unexpectedly stillborn at 36 weeks on February 20, 2016. At the time, I had no idea stillbirth was even a possibility. Nobody talked about it. I had no idea it was as common as 1 in 160 births until it happened to me and my daughter. This bill is so important for not only raising awareness for stillbirth, but in preventing it as well. Knowledge is powerful.

Mary's Story:

As a woman who not only struggles with infertility, but also experienced my daughter being stillborn, this bill is important to me to ensure research is done to reduce and prevent stillbirths, but to also improve care for women like myself who already struggle to become pregnant naturally.

Alison's Story:

I live in Charlotte, and I lost my daughter, Bridgit, at 32 weeks this year. I had a textbook pregnancy, I'm extremely healthy, and there was "no reason" for this; I had what is called an "unexplained stillborn death." Please make this bill a priority, losing a child is something no one should have to experience.

Rachel's Story:

I am a midwifery student and Labor & Delivery nurse in North Carolina. I have taken care of many patients who have suffered the loss of their babies, and I have also suffered the loss of two baby boys. This legislation will change lives- more research and awareness is paramount to bringing stillbirth out of the darkness.

Jess's Story:

This bill is important to honor my work with a birth mom G and her stillborn baby named Paris. Additionally, this type of loss has affected other family members and could affect me personally, other friends or family.

Lily's Story:

It is beyond words that this still happens in our country but even more devastating is the fact that parents that suffer this loss do not have their babies acknowledged by form of birth certificate and/or death certificate. It's completely inhumane. Please, let's change this!

It is beyond my comprehension how these mothers have to go through the normal birthing process yet they do not qualify for maternity leave. Nothing about how this process is handled makes sense. Not only do these parents suffer such a tremendous loss but to add to their trauma, they have to endure financial loss and no acknowledgement of their baby. I can't even fathom their unspeakable pain. It's not right, it's traumatizing, it's demeaning, it's demoralizing, it's ungodly not to recognize a human being. I implore you for your support and beg you to change this. Thank you

Beth's Story:

I have lost family members to stillbirth and supported clients and friends who have gone through this unbearable grief. As a therapist I understand and see daily the impact that such a loss (and its resulting grief and hopelessness) has on the health of a family.

Suzanne's Story:

I am a nurse-midwife and I have cared for too many mothers who have suffered this devastating loss. Bringing a dead full term baby out into the world in my hands and comforting parents for the days and weeks and years after a stillbirth is a horrible part of my job as a midwife. We can do better for moms and babies in this country, and we must. Stillbirth must be better understood. Please help get this bill over the finish line.

Latanaya's Story:

I am a CNM and see firsthand how these families are tragically affected by stillbirth. This happens too often and the trauma it causes is unimaginable. It is my duty to try and help prevent these losses anyway that I can. Your support on this bill means your support for all childbearing women in NC and their families. Together we can make a difference.

Laura's Story:

I am a retired US Navy Midwife currently working at a Federally Qualified Health Center in NC. I care for women who are marginalized by race or socioeconomic class. They are far more likely to be impacted by this loss.

Mandy's Story:

My son Phoenix James Sheehan was born the day before his due date at 5:19 in the morning on Thursday, September 17th 2020. He weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 21 inches long. He had a head covered in the finest peach fuzz and looked like his daddy and his big sister. He was placed on my chest immediately after his birth where I covered him in kisses. He was perfect and beautiful and loved.

Seven hours before his birth, my son Phoenix died – suddenly, unexpectedly, and traumatically. I had just kissed my husband goodnight while laughing at the movements of our son. I laid on my side, snuggled up to my husband, and closed my eyes. Moments later, I felt my water break and let out an audible chuckle realizing our son was likely making his arrival that night. When we turned on the light, we were horrified to find our bed soaked in blood. There were blood clots the size of golf balls and more blood kept pouring from my body over the course of three minutes. At the time we didn't know if it was my blood or our son's. What we did know is that something was very wrong and we were terrified.

We drove to the hospital 45 minutes away and while my husband tried to park the car I was told by the doctors that my son no longer had a heartbeat. Seven hours later, Phoenix was born. His perfect lips were the darkest shade of mahogany. He was born with his umbilical cord wrapped tightly around his neck – so tightly that the midwife had to cut it while he was being born. We learned once he was born that Phoenix had hemorrhaged to death due to an unidentified velamentous cord insertion that had led to one of his umbilical vessels severing when my water broke. He had died in less than five minutes of my water breaking.

I truly believe that if I had been informed about the importance of tracking my son's movements then Phoenix's death could have been prevented. I would have known to rush to the hospital when I first felt heightened movement five hours before his death while snuggling my daughter. Instead, my son is dead. I left the hospital with a cardboard box holding eight photographs, his footprints and handprints, and a folder about stillbirth – a term that had never once been mentioned as a possibility in either of my two pregnancies. Today, instead of going home to snuggle a one and a half year old, I will drive to a therapy appointment where I will talk about my son.

On the day of my son's birth, I gave him every kiss he would ever receive. I gave him his only bath. My husband and I held him, talked to him, and loved him. And then, after ten hours, we had to make the impossible decision that we were ready for his body to be taken away so that we could return home and tell our daughter the heartbreaking news. Today, Phoenix's ashes are on a shelf in our house. We speak his name. We look for signs of him in the world around us. But mostly, we grieve for him each and every day.

Rachel's Story:

Our firstborn son, Harvey, died unexpectedly at birth during a normal induced labor at Summa Hospital Akron, OH. He was a perfectly healthy 7.5lb baby boy and I had a scheduled induced labor at 39 weeks and 5 days. The NICU resuscitated him for nearly 45 minutes, then pronounced him dead and laid him on my body & baptized him. My healthy baby was silent, he was gone, and we never heard him cry. After an autopsy report, we discovered that many medical mistakes were made, my labor was mismanaged, and it ultimately caused his death. After hiring a lawyer to further investigate, we discovered that another couple experienced something similar about 7 months prior - at the same hospital and with the same doctor, their firstborn daughter died the following day.

Our family & lineage is forever changed. We drove home with empty car seats to an empty nursery. The deep suffocating grief when your child's life is taken from you, is unexplainable. The PTSD and memories from a traumatic birth & then your child's death, is something no one should have to experience. Stillbirths aren't just a natural occurrence. At term, nearly 50% are preventable. The stats are shocking. The mismanagement that occurs in hospitals is shocking. As a first world country, our ranking is embarrassing. We have to research. We have to do better.

Meredith's Story:

We found out in February 2021, the day before Valentine's Day to be exact, that we were expecting a baby due October 18th, 2021. This would be our first child and after trying to conceive for a year, and we were ecstatic. We had our first appointment at the end of March 2021. I had to go alone due to Covid. My husband, Jacob, sped to the doctor's office from work to sit in the parking lot for the duration of my first appointment. At this appointment, everything was perfect...just as every single appointment that followed. Even the appointment on September 21st, 2021...the day before we found out we had lost our baby. On September 22nd, our lives changed forever. Hattie was a mover! I would lay in bed at night, and she would be having her own little gymnastics routine. But, on that night, I had not felt her move for a while, which was not normal. After talking with friends who had been pregnant, I ate a popsicle, chugged ice-cold water, jumped up and down...nothing. When I told my husband, he insisted right away that we head to the hospital just to make sure. When we got to the hospital, the nurses who checked us in were extremely sweet and optimistic. "Oh, this far along...she's probably tucked in there somewhere just being difficult." I changed into a gown, laid on the bed in the triage, and a nurse checked for heartbeat. It was taking her a while to find it... I could tell something was wrong. She told us that she was going to get us a room and call in the doctor to do an ultrasound. We switched rooms and the doctor came in. She did a thorough ultrasound, and then we heard those words... "I am so sorry..." I will never stop replaying that moment in my head.

I gave birth to a still Hattie Jean at 8:37 pm on September 23rd, 2021. At 36 weeks, she was born 21 inches long and 5lbs 14.9 oz. with the longest legs and biggest feet! The best, yet worst day of my life. I would give birth a million times over if it meant I got my sweet Hattie back. The hospital staff was amazing. We are forever grateful for every phlebotomist, nurse, and doctor and for those nurses and doctors who still check in on us. We are also humbled by the friends and family the hospital allowed in to visit and meet Hattie. We were able to spend the night with our baby. On the 24th, our 10-year dating anniversary, we said goodbye to our first child and left the hospital with a box and without our baby girl. We had an extensive autopsy done. After weeks of wondering what went wrong, why we lost our baby, we received the results that told us nothing was wrong.

Hattie was perfectly healthy and so was I. We have no answers as to why we lost our baby and that really hurts. This is why I am focusing my time on advocacy for stillbirth research and prevention. No family should have to experience this loss.



Nicole's Story:

My name is Nicole Kraus. My husband, Jason, and I found out I was pregnant in January 2018 and we were all so very excited! My pregnancy was uncomplicated and I felt great for the 35.5 weeks I was pregnant. Jason, the kids, our coworkers, friends, and family showered baby JJ with so much love. After a friends/family baby shower, sports family baby shower, and finally a work baby shower- I was ready and so excited to welcome JJ to this world.

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JJ was always a very chill baby. Yes, he moved around but nothing crazy. No limbs jutting out from my belly... just sweet little tumbles and gentle kicks. At one of my regular doctor appointments I asked my obgyn about kick counts. Her response? "Is he kicking?" Me: "Yes" My doctor: "Then you don't have anything to be worried about". Although this conversation happened weeks prior to JJ's death, it without question played into me doubting myself later.

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On September 11th I was home after work and realized I hadn't felt JJ move much that day. I had an appointment first thing in the morning on the 12th and convinced myself that I was being paranoid. You'd think working as a grief counselor and hearing countless stories of miscarriage and stillbirth would have made me drive to the hospital. However, I was still so naive as to how common stillbirth was and also convinced I was overreacting.

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On September 12th my husband left for work and I got ready for my appointment. I knew something was wrong but kept telling myself I was crazy. 30 mins before I needed to leave my husband told me he left work, was coming home, and taking me to the appointment because he could tell how nervous I was. He was confident everything was okay but I was not.

**

When I arrived at my doctor's office I went back with the nurse and told her I hadn't felt JJ much. She asked me to go to a different room than normal and started looking for JJ's heartbeat. Nothing. Silence. More looking. More silence. She excused herself and got my doctor. My doctor calmly came in and told me she was going to take a quick look. I was already dying inside. After what seemed like forever she said what I already knew, "I'm so sorry, Nicole. There's no heartbeat". My husband said he could hear me screaming from the waiting room.

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I don't remember much after that except Jason coming back to the room and us sobbing. My doctor told us to go home and pack what we needed for the hospital but we could take our time. I remember thinking what the hell does someone need to deliver a dead baby? But also thinking, why is she telling us to take our time? JJ is alive. She's wrong. We need to get to the hospital to fix this.

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I cannot say enough about Cleveland Clinic's Fairview Hospital. From the moment I walked in to the moment I left I was treated with such compassion. Upon arrival the receptionist took me immediately back to a quiet room and helped my husband hold me up as my legs gave out walking through the labor and delivery floor. The nurses were kind, gentle, and patient with me. The doctor who delivered JJ was exceptional. She sat with me for what seemed like forever. She allowed me to decide how I'd like to deliver JJ. She checked on us every day of my hospital stay- walking the halls with husband and holding my hand as I cried uncontrollably. The anesthesiologist stroked my hair as I bawled during my c-section. We met with multiple maternal fetal specialists, all of whom cried with us and reassured me there was absolutely nothing I could have done. They gently explained I suffered a catastrophic maternal/fetal hemorrhage, much like what they'd expect to see in a horrible car accident. They had no answers as to why it happened but told me it was so fast that even if I was at the hospital the moment I stopped feeling movement, they wouldn't have been able to save JJ. For some odd reason, that brought me comfort. My postpartum nurses also brought me such comfort. They took pictures of JJ, our family, and asked to hold him. One nurse made us sweet signs with poems and his name. The last nurse we had was an angel. There is nothing that can prepare a parent for leaving their child at the hospital. I truly believed I was going to die from the pain at that moment. That nurse promised me she would stay with JJ, personally transport him where he needed to go, and not take her eyes off him. Fairview Hospital was nothing short of amazing.

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The days, weeks, months, and even years after were impossible. They did not feel livable. I was not functional. I stopped being a wife, stepmom, friend, and family member. I just existed. A coworker spent hours researching the best

trauma counselor who specializes in infant loss and my husband took me. That was the very slow beginning of my return to this world.

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Jason and I have gone on to have another son, Luke, and I like to think I'm much more present and finally reconnecting with pieces of my old self. None of this would have been possible if it weren't for our support system. I am so grateful for my coworkers who organized JJ's memorial and planned every single thoughtful detail. For my best friends who have not left my side even though I was incapable of being a friend to them. To my oldest friends who came swooping in when I needed them most. To our new friends who provided us with a meal train and left thoughtful gifts and cards with each meal. To our family who has grieved alongside us. To the new obgyn and maternal fetal specialists who got Luke here safely and cared for me with grace and kindness. To all the loss families I've met along the way who made me believe I could survive this. To all the people who continue to say JJ's name and make sure I know he will always be remembered. My world crumbled the day I became 1 in 4 and the only reason I'm still here is because of those who allowed me to be broken and loved me anyway. I am so thankful for those who sat with me in the darkness, withheld judgment, and didn't try to convince me to see the light. I will forever tell anyone who will listen that going through the absolute worst time of our lives has illuminated the very best in the people we love.

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It is now my life's mission to make sure being 1 in 4 is not only defined by despair. I wish to live in a way that makes my son proud, work to make sure every pregnancy has a happy ending, and help other loss families feel the love and support that we felt

Meghan's Story:

It was the morning of September 10th 2020, I was in the beginning of my third trimester with our second son. I had ordered a couple of new baby things and went back to being busy with work, not really thinking about the fact that I hadn't felt him move all morning. I already had an appointment scheduled for that afternoon, so I figured it was fine to wait. At an appointment two weeks prior, I had been told that he was starting to run out of room, so his movement was probably changing.

That afternoon at my appointment the nurse was struggling to find the heartbeat, which for some reason didn't worry me. He was always in the bottom left corner of my belly and I joked with the nurse that he was just hiding. She smiled and said we were going to try seeing him on the ultrasound. I was honestly excited to see him again! Looking back, I can't believe I hadn't put things together by then. At this late stage of pregnancy, you are just so sure everything is going well and you will soon be bringing home a baby.

After she began the ultrasound, the technician went silent. At that point I blurted out, "Something's wrong, isn't it? He's not moving." It felt like an out of body experience. With tears in her eyes she said, "No Meghan, I'm so sorry. There's no heartbeat." My doctor rushed in and asked if someone was with me. Thankfully my husband got home early from a trip and was waiting in the car. When my husband arrived by my side, the doctor told us these things happen sometimes. They didn't know why, and it wasn't my fault. I hated that answer. I needed an explanation, but the only things they could offer me were hugs and some water before we were literally walked out the back door. My husband and I just sat in the car, staring out the window for a while in silence. What were we supposed to do now?

I was scheduled for an induction the next morning, but I went into labor naturally just hours after we left the doctor's office. With our first son, Patrick, I had a scheduled c-section and I had spent this second pregnancy hopeful to experience labor and try for a VBAC. Not in a million years did I think this was how that would happen. As the contractions were growing stronger and closer together, I put Patrick to bed at my in-laws and quickly packed a hospital bag. On our drive to the hospital, Chris squeezed my hand and said "Charlie. That's his name." Charlie was the name at the top of our list, and we couldn't imagine not using it for him.

On September 11, 2020 at 5:30AM, at Summa, Akron City Hospital, Charlie Hamilton Stevenot was born. He was 2 pounds, 10 ounces and 16 and a half inches long. He was perfect. He had thick dark red hair. He looked like an exact copy of his big brother, but with Chris' feet instead of mine. We took turns holding him all day, studying his features and talking about what life would have been like with our two boys. I told him how sorry I was over and over again. Just 24 hours after receiving our painful news, we were released from the hospital with empty arms and some bereaved parent gifts. This wasn't the way it was supposed to be.

Not having an answer has been such a hard part of this grief journey. The doctor that delivered Charlie speculated it was a cord accident but we still are not sure. I go back and forth between telling myself that everything happens for a reason, and wondering if this was a preventable accident. I have had to rely heavily on my faith and the desire to honor our son's short life any way we can. Shortly after Charlie died, my best friend said to me, "He was warm, safe, in the most loved place in the world." I'm not sure if she knew the magnitude of that, but it has helped me immensely. As a mother, I thought my job was to protect my children. When your child dies, especially like this, you feel like you failed at your only job. I think really that our one true job is to love our children, and for the entire time my son's heart was beating, he only knew love.

Samantha's Story:

I am the mother of a precious stillborn son. He was our first child, after many years of debating whether or not to have children. The pregnancy wasn't easy, but not overly complicated and all milestones were being met. One evening, after a joyous and busy day, I realized that AJ hadn't been moving as much. I called the on-call OB at the hospital and followed their suggestions. After 30 minutes of no movement, I knew something was wrong, so we left for the hospital immediately. The entire car ride, I was praying that he would kick or move - he didn't.

It was the night before Mother's Day and I was 32 weeks. When we got to the hospital our greatest fear was confirmed. AJ had died. My husband and I spent my first Mother's Day telling our overjoyed families that their first grandchild had died. I was induced the following day and labored for over 34 hours. We were fortunate to have 25 hours with our AJ before we had to say goodbye, thanks to our hospital having a cuddle cot to slow down his decomposing. Our son may be gone, but he forever lives on in our hearts.

Lexi's Story:

Cooper Allen Dunlap, by Lexi Gordon, Cooper's mom. Central Oklahoma. March 6, 2022 was my 40th week of pregnancy with little Cooper Allen. The week was full of anticipation, excitement and nervousness. The morning of March 6th, I began packing our hospital bag for our induction at midnight. Upon mothers intuition I felt something wasn't right. Our worst fears were confirmed, as I sat in the emergency room, silence filled the room as they tried to find my perfect baby boy's heartbeat.

Cooper was gone.

Cooper Allen Dunlap was born still, at 11:22 PM March 6, 2022. He weighed 7 pounds, 6 ounces and 19.5 inches long. He has a head full of auburn brown hair. The perfect button nose like his big brother, and chin shaped like his sissy's and of course his daddy's ears. Cooper was his fathers first child, my (his mothers) 3rd. Cooper was anticipated, loved, and planned. Weeks prior to his birth and death, I noticed changes in Cooper's movements, they were less frequent, however they were up to "standard" of 10 kicks in 2 hours, with a little effort on my end. I would hesitate when I was asked how his movements were, but again, he always met the 10 kicks within the 2 hour period, so I figured it was fine. It wasn't fine. That standard was inaccurate. That standard was a factor that led to his death.

I received no answers after he was born. Just the blanket statement of "These things just happen for no reason." I was lightly persuaded not to pursue an autopsy because most of the time you never get an answer anyways. For weeks,

guilt consumed me. I laid in my bed and hoped my body would be sucked in the mattress and never emerge. Was it the toasted subway sandwich that I craved? Did he die because I kept falling asleep on my back? Was it my fault because I took Tylenol too often? Did he suffer from my poor choices? Did he die because I wasn't good enough? Did he die because he was better off dead than being with me?

It was a horrible existence to live in. Consumed with grief and immense guilt. After several weeks Cooper's daddy and I reached out to Dr. Harvey Kliman at Yale University, in hopes he could provide answers since nobody else seemed to care. In 13 short days from the start of the paperwork we received answers. Cooper's death was a very obvious cord accident. He was born with a nuchal cord x4. We knew about the cord being around his neck at least one time since 32 weeks due to a growth scan. We were assured it's fine and it happens often, most of the time moms don't even know about it. I took those words, and trusted them. I listened and my baby died.

The United States ranks #48/#49 countries to decrease stillbirth rates. Cooper counted. Cooper mattered. Cooper was a perfectly formed, perfectly beautiful, genetically perfect boy, whom I believe was failed by our healthcare system. I held my son before I said goodbye and quietly promised him I would keep his name, and memory alive.

If his story gets one single mother to have her baby checked, or reminds a momma to stand up and use her mom voice, then my son's life had a meaning. Cooper's life was more than his death.

Courtney's Story:

My name is Courtney and my baby boy Hendrik Otto Clark died at 39.5 weeks gestation and was stillborn. I had a normal pregnancy and no signs that anything was wrong until my world crumbled at my final ultrasound appointment.

April 5th we went in for a final ultrasound and they could not find a heartbeat for baby Hendrik, he had passed away. I was induced and Hendrik Otto Clark was born April 7th at 3:01am he was 7lbs 13oz and 20 inches long. He was perfect in every way.

We were heartbroken. Walking out of the hospital without him was the hardest thing we have ever had to do. Baby Hendrik wasn't meant for this world, but we will always carry him with us as our firstborn. Our baby Hendrik was already loved by so many. We miss him everyday and the hole in our hearts will never be filled. We have learned through blood tests that his death was caused by a spontaneous massive fetomaternal hemorrhage.

Hali's Story:

MAYA DYLAN. Like many of us, my first pregnancy was a dream. My husband and I got pregnant our first month of trying and everything was textbook perfect until around 34 weeks when I was standing in my kitchen and said to my husband "ya know, I haven't really felt the baby today."

I pushed the thoughts of worry aside because what could've happened? We had just had our 34 week ultrasound the day before. But then I started to use Dr. Google as to what "decreased movement" might mean and "stillbirth" came up as a result repeatedly. I just didn't want to believe that. It seemed so ridiculous.

Eventually I succumbed to the feelings of worry and called my doctor who had me try every way to get the baby to move. She didn't. We rushed to the ER and three different individuals could not find her heartbeat. All I remember hearing was my own heartbeat and the palpable feelings of remorse from the resident about to deliver us the news. "I'm sorry, I'm not seeing what I should be".

Fast forward to a 30+ hour induction, the greatest silence I've ever experienced and the most beautiful little girl I've ever seen. My dream came true. All five pounds and one ounce of her, Maya Dylan came into this world already too perfect for it on March 1, 2019. Life has never been the same since that day.

Danielle's Story:

My entire world stopped turning on March 25, 2016 and I'll never forget it. There was a routine check up. My older son Sam, who was 5 at the time, was with me. He went to all my appointments and he especially loved the ultrasound ones, as did I of course. We're listening for Ben's heartbeat and the doctor can't find it at first, which is quite normal at this point because babies like to snuggle in the womb and they're not always in the ideal position to catch that little lub-lub sound. After a few minutes of trying, and joking that he's being a stinker, Doc pulls out the belly ultrasound machine to get some clarity. At this point I had my phone out recording because I didn't want to miss an opportunity to capture my boy moving about, but after a few minutes it became frighteningly clear to the doctor that Ben wasn't moving and no longer had a heartbeat. She remained calm because I hadn't yet realized the gravity of the situation and I also didn't want to upset Sam. All she had to say next was that she couldn't detect any movement and that I needed to head to maternal fetal medicine. Doc was trying to be hopeful, explaining that their machines were better and things could still turn out fine, but right then I began to full on panic and yet not show it outwardly because I had to be brave for Sammy AND still drive to the other office.

I shook the whole way. And I prayed. I prayed with every fiber of my being that this was just a scare and Ben was alright, still growing, still alive. Somehow I thought to call my husband so he could meet us at the maternal fetal doctor. The wait to get into an ultrasound room was endless and dread filled. I prayed some more. I held my belly. We were called into a room that was already dimmed and felt like it was designated for bad news. I have no idea how many doctors and nurses were with us but every one of them was somber from the start and I imagine it was because they knew already. They'd probably been here before with other parents, delivering terrible news instead of delivering a healthy baby. The ultrasound ensued and what those doctors and nurses had to tell me was no different. I started crying finally. I had held out because I was busy holding out hope instead, but there was no more of that left in me.

Nothing made sense and I never wished I could turn back time and do something; anything; differently more than I did that afternoon. Almost everything from that point on became a cloud. Decisions had to be made but I felt so damn lost. I remember someone telling me that they were checking if there was a room in the hospital to admit me right away. Otherwise I'd have to go home and wait to deliver Ben. No... no no no no, I told them, and begged them to admit me immediately. No way could I go home and sit around with my dead child inside me, not growing or moving. No, this train had to keep moving immediately because I think waiting would've landed me in an asylum. There ended up being room so off to labor and delivery I went.

Sitting up in that Labor & Delivery room was very surreal. It was eerily quiet in my room and I sat for a very long time just reflecting. Every once in a while a nurse or my doctor would stop in and check on me. During one visit I asked the doctor if she believed in miracles, because maybe when she went to deliver Ben he'd somehow still be alive. Stranger things have happened, right?

The compassion this doctor; this... beautiful human being; had for me was incredible. She replied that she'd honestly never witnessed such a miracle herself but she hoped if she was ever afforded the blessing it would be for my baby. Her words inexplicably comforted me a little and, even though I knew there was no chance, I pondered the minute possibility for a long while. I was sitting in a chair that faced the side of the room where the baby would go after being born to get cleaned up and weighed. I don't recall when this occurred but at some point I requested the partition be closed so I didn't have to see my lost hopes and dreams permeating from that area of my somber room any longer.

As the hours ticked on I was prepped for induction and asked if I wanted an epidural. I only had to get to five centimeters but I figured why the hell not, I earned that comfort at the very least and I already felt numb inside anyway. As we moved through the process I was functioning on autopilot. No feeling or emotion coursing through me, just emptiness for the duration of my hospital stay. My family visited at some point, maybe as I was laboring. I remember that only my husband and I were in the room with the doctor when the actual delivery occurred. We wanted it that way.

When Ben finally made his appearance he was completely wrapped in his umbilical cord. We made the decision not to dig any further into the cause of his death because that was reason enough and no testing or speculation would bring

him back, anyway. Plus, we'd been through enough and were still enduring the aftermath: the cute little tune played throughout the maternity ward when other babies were born, the paper leaf taped to the outside of our door so staff wouldn't accidentally enter the room thinking there was something to celebrate, the deafening quiet at my bedside as the nurse took Ben to be readied for me to hold for the first and last time simultaneously.

One of the nurses prepared me for what Ben would look like because, even though he was a perfectly formed baby already, he was going to look almost alien-like and raw since his skin was still very thin and uncolored. She said that it could be unnerving but I knew that no matter what he looked like I was ready to meet my angel and keep on loving him. He was presented to me in a knitted blanket with a tiny hat on his head. And he did indeed look kind of like a raw piece of flesh with limbs and a face. He'd begun the decomposition process before I delivered him so he almost had a melted look to him. His fingers were perfect and I held them with my own. I stared at his face, looked into his eyes. I talked to him very softly for a while and rocked him until I felt ready to let him go forever. Nobody rushed me or pressed me to give him over, but if I'd held him any more than I did I may never have released his body from my embrace. Thankfully I somehow knew when it was time to say goodbye.

I spent three days in that hospital room. They graciously let me take an extra day because, like me, they knew what leaving meant. It meant getting myself dressed and out the door without also getting my baby dressed. Without packing up diapers, complimentary items, and necessities. And without putting him in a car seat to cautiously chauffeur him home. It meant taking a soul sucking, hellish, deafening, dreadful walk down the hospital corridors with only a thoughtful memory box that was given to me by the staff as a heartfelt gesture. This was absolutely a walk of shame in its own right and it was incredibly painful. I felt it throughout my whole body weighing me down. I had to force myself to keep walking and not run back to that lonely hospital room and just die there myself. I don't really know what kept me moving forward but I imagine I thought about Sam and how he still needed me. Possibly also how going back wouldn't actually bring Ben back. Or maybe I just thought of nothing; let my head be as empty as my heart was at that moment in time.

I don't remember the days following, and I had help arranging most of the pertinent tasks like the pastor that had come to give Ben a Rite of Commendation, which is done when a baby passes away before she/he can be baptized. We'd also decided to cremate him because I couldn't imagine leaving him in some cemetery all alone. He needed to be with me, to stay in some physical way a part of me. The funeral home was extremely kind and charged us very minimally for everything. I never thought I'd be in one of those facilities for my child. And after Ben's ashes were given to us that was kind of it, life just had to move forward. Time had stopped for what seemed to me like an eternity but in reality it was only a couple of weeks. At first I just existed. One day ran into another. I stopped working and remained hollow for several months. Then, when I felt the pressure to, I masked my pain because the world expects grief to have an expiration date.

No parent ever gets over or moves on from the death of their baby. We cope, we survive, we even feel positive emotions again. But our hearts aren't fully intact and our lives are forever tarnished by something that just makes no sense.

Emma's Story:

My name is Emma DeVanzo and I live in Coatesville, PA. About 2 years and 8 months ago, my world changed forever. On Friday, April 10th, 2020, I walked into my 39-week prenatal appointment alone, my husband at home. It was my first appointment ever without him by my side because he wasn't allowed in the office due to COVID. And all alone in that room, I learned that our baby's heart had stopped beating. I was in shock and disbelief. There were no other doctors in the office, so they couldn't officially confirm it. I needed to wait to receive confirmation that our baby was gone at the hospital, but I knew that wasn't necessary. They were gone. We had lost them.

I left the appointment, sat in my car, and called my husband. Thankfully, he had just gotten back home from a morning run around the neighborhood and answered the phone. I tearfully told him there was no heartbeat. I don't remember what he said but I remember he was still breathing heavily from his run. I told him the plan. Get showered, grab the hospital bag, and I will be home soon. I love you. He said he loved me too.

After the most difficult drive home and then to the hospital, we arrived and were taken back to Labor and Delivery. We were put in the very first room on the left of the long hallway. Maybe that was why we never heard another woman in labor or a baby crying while we were there. The doctor came in with the ultrasound and confirmed there was no blood flowing through their heart – it was still. They drew my blood to run as many tests as they could to figure out why this was happening. They tested me for COVID.

An IV was placed with Pitocin to start the induction. The contractions grew strong and 2 minutes apart very quickly, but they were nothing compared to the emotional pain that I was blocking out. At some point, we called our doula and she talked me through every contraction for the rest of the delivery. Less than 7 hours after the IV was placed, we learned that we had a baby boy.

Austin Parker DeVanzo, 6 pounds, 11 ounces and 21 inches long. The cutest chubby cheeks, just like me and his cousins when we were all born. We kissed his forehead, wishing there was anything we could do to bring him back. His lifeless body felt so heavy in our arms. We told him how much we loved him and how sorry we were that this had happened. We shared our hopes and dreams that we had envisioned for his life. How we would support him no matter what path his life took. We said our tearful goodbye to Austin. The kind of goodbye that you don't ever want to imagine. We said goodbye to our first baby. We said goodbye to our old life, the life before knowing this kind of loss. We left the hospital the next morning with empty arms to go back to an empty house filled with all of the items we had carefully prepared for his arrival.

Our parents showed up shortly after we returned home. They packed away all of the baby things and shut the door on the nursery. And then we opened the memory box that the hospital staff had prepared for the first time. We found a lock of his brown hair, casts of his hands and feet, and his light blue hat which I had asked for. I didn't want to take his blanket away because I wanted his body to stay warm and wrapped up in the cold morgue. Once our parents left, we were all alone. Just the two of us in an empty house. The only cries heard were our own as reality sank in. Beyond the pain of losing Austin, we just wanted to know why. The lab results from the hospital didn't give any definitive answers, and we waited weeks for the final autopsy and additional labs. I became obsessed with trying to find the cause, reading every medical textbook and research article related to stillbirth I could find. But nothing gave me the answers I was looking for. And nothing I did was going to bring him back to us.

Two days after saying goodbye, as I laid in bed unable to sleep with silent tears streaming down my face, I couldn't stop replaying every detail of that day and the days leading up to it in my mind. Was there something more that we could have done to save him? Was there something I did during my pregnancy that led to this? A million what-ifs ran through my mind. I wanted to be able to go back in time and change whatever the offense was so that I could bring Austin back.

I read about the stages of grief. I looked for suggestions on how to honor your baby. I looked for resources for parents of stillborn babies to help navigate us through. At some point in my research, I came across the idea of journaling and writing letters to your baby. I don't know why, but this idea resonated with me. Three days after losing Austin, I wrote my first letter. The first two words, Dear Austin, took me almost an hour to write. I could barely say his name at that time, let alone write it. The pain was so deep.

I poured my heart onto those pages every single day for the first two months after losing him, some days spending hours writing. I processed all of my emotions in those letters, saying all the things I wanted to say to him if he were still here. I thought about what he would say to me if he could. I didn't think he would want me to cry and be sad the rest of my life, but the thought of not living in my grief made me feel guilty. I felt guilty the first day I didn't write a letter. I

felt guilty the first day I didn't shed a tear. I felt guilty with any glimmer of happiness I felt. There was so much guilt with every step of progress, which led to setbacks along the way. With each setback, I would just continue to tell myself that Austin would want me to be happy. He would want me to enjoy life, living it in his honor, carrying his memory with me.

My husband and I went for many walks. We felt connected to Austin in nature – in the sun and wind, in the birds and flowers. It wasn't until about a month ago that we learned his body was cremated and his ashes spread at sea with other babies who had died. We found organizations that we resonated with. Organizations that supported further research of stillbirths so that future parents wouldn't need to feel this kind of pain. Organizations that helped other parents going through similar losses. Organizations that raised awareness and didn't shy away from loving our angels or saying their names.

The pain of losing a child at any age is unimaginable until it happens to you. I hope my words can give you a glimpse into the grief we experience as parents of a stillborn child. Please support the SHINE for Autumn Act of 2022, so that other parents may be spared from this never-ending heartache.

Maggie's Story:

I gave birth to my still daughter, Sloane, on 10/22/22. Over the past three weeks I have immersed myself into the stillbirth community, read grief books, listened to podcasts, and followed organizations such as Measure The Placenta and PUSH and the Shine for Autumn Act.

I never imagined something like this could happen to me. I am a high risk patient but unfortunately after my 36 week scan I was told my pregnancy looked fine and I did not need additional appointments with MFM. I continued to go to my weekly appointments where I was told my "big baby" was fine and hopefully I would deliver soon. On 10/21 I started to have early labor contractions, which continued for most of the day but I was able to go to the food shop and prepare for Sloane's arrival. By midnight I realized my contractions had increased slightly but I tried to get some sleep to rest for my soon to be labor. I was awoken at 6 am with stronger contractions and my husband and I began to get ready to head into the hospital.

We arrived just around 8 am, nervous but excited to see our little girl. During admission I was greeted by my friend, who would also be my delivery nurse. After checking for a heartbeat, she said she needed another monitor and at that moment my heart sank. I knew something wasn't right. Another nurse and doctor entered with an ultrasound monitor and proceeded to tell us that our daughter did not have a heartbeat.

I decided to have a natural delivery and at 5:45pm on 10/22 we welcomed our beautiful, silent daughter - Sloane Jacqueline.

At this moment we are still waiting for the cause of death. It has been mentioned to us that perhaps it was that my placenta detached and ruptured, or it could have been the cord wrapped around her neck 2x. But I want answers so we are awaiting results from Dr. Kliman. Healthy babies don't just die, and it doesn't just happen. I am a healthy mother, who should not have to go through this loss.

Regardless of the outcome, I want to ensure other moms do not go through the heartache that I am currently enduring and will continue to have for the rest of my life.

In memory of Sloane, who should be with me, celebrating her third week in my arms.

Katherine's Story:

My name is Katherine Hoffman from Pittsburgh, PA. My daughter Everly was stillborn at 40 weeks on November 1, 2021. This is our story:

It was the morning of February 20, 2021, my husband Seth and I had been trying to start our family for several months now. I was due to start my period, but it never came. I said to myself, "This could be it!" I proceeded to take a pregnancy test and sure enough, it was positive! We were pregnant! I screamed out loud waking my husband. "What's wrong, what's wrong" he said. With tears in my eyes, I took the positive pregnancy test over to him and said "we are going to be parents!" Tears quickly filled his eyes as well. To say we were excited was an understatement, we were ecstatic!

Weeks soon became months and a bump became a full belly. I couldn't believe how fast time was flying. I felt great! You hear all the horror stories of being pregnant: all day morning sickness, aches and pains, swollen feet, etc. I didn't have any of it. I loved being pregnant and this was the best I had felt in my entire life. I was truly glowing. Each doctor's appointment was one step closer to the baby's arrival. Every check-up and ultrasound showed a healthy growing baby with no cause for concern. We decided to keep the gender a surprise as I always said it is one of the only true surprises you could have in life anymore. Boy, was I wrong as I was about to receive the worst surprise of all.

October 29th was our last OB visit before the baby's due date. A healthy heartbeat and I was starting to dilate! We knew we were close and the baby would be arriving any day now. We were planning an induction with the OB for the following week if the baby decided not to come yet. The following evening, my husband, Seth was talking to the baby about how excited he was to finally meet him or her. A huge strong kick immediately followed. I thought, "oh my gosh, baby is excited to meet you too!" Little did I know that was the last time I would feel my baby move. The next morning, the baby's due date, I woke up and immediately knew something was off. I had breakfast. Baby wasn't moving. Babies always moved a bunch after breakfast. I called the doctor. They said have a drink of juice, blah, blah, blah and if the baby still doesn't move come into L&D triage. I had already done all of those things, we found ourselves in a L&D triage room not long after.

The nurse said, "let's get you hooked up to a baby monitor and check things out just to be safe." She had trouble finding the baby's heartbeat. I said to my husband "She's not looking in the right spot; the baby's heartbeat is always on my lower right side." Next thing you know, another doctor comes in with a portable ultrasound machine. My heart began to sink. I said, "Is everything alright?" The response I heard was, "I'm going to be honest. I'm not seeing the movement I would like to see." She left the room. Minutes later, another doctor arrived with her, and they looked at the ultrasound again. "I'm so sorry" the 2nd doctor said.

WHAT?!?! How can this be? Everything was perfect. Our world was shattered in a matter of minutes. My husband immediately burst into tears. I was silent, shocked really. I couldn't believe what I had just heard. We were given a few minutes alone and then given the options. We could either go home and schedule an induction for a later date or start the induction process as soon as a delivery room became available. I chose the latter. I couldn't bear to go home with my dead baby in my belly.

14 hours of labor, 3 hours of pushing all while still hoping for some miracle to happen and that the doctors were in fact wrong. A silence struck the room. "It's a girl," my husband said to me. That's when it all hit me like I just fell off a 100 story cliff. I instantly started hysterically crying as they placed my still daughter on my chest. This was real, my daughter was never going to cry, open her eyes or smile. She was gone. Everly Ayres Hoffman, was born still on November 1, 2021 at 11:40am. 7 lb 15 oz, 20.5 inches long. She was perfect. We spent the next 2 days making as many memories as possible with her knowing that this was the only time we would have with her. We took over a thousand pictures before we finally said goodbye. As I write this, it has been 6 months since we lost Everly and we still have no answers. Her cause of death remains "elusive." Surviving a stillbirth not only shatters your world, but breaks your heart into a million little pieces knowing that they will never go back together. A large piece will always be

missing. Someone once said, "Stillbirth is something that you have to actively participate in even though you don't want to." You have no choice but to give birth to your dead baby. This doesn't even begin to describe everything else that you go through after birth. The guilt, the shame, the painful leaking breasts because your milk has come in only you have empty arms and no baby to feed. The grief, the bleeding, I could go on and on. You not only lose your baby, but you lose all of the birthdays, Christmases, and family vacations you had planned. You lose the wedding and the family she will never get to have, as well as all of the life milestones you had planned to share together. You lose your sense of identity, your sense of safety, your innocence, friends, hopes and dreams. No family should have to experience pain like this.

My daughter, Everly, was stillborn, but she was **STILL BORN**. Just because she is no longer here, doesn't mean her life won't make a difference. I chose to continue to mother her the best way I can, by fighting for change in her name so that more babies can go home healthy. This is why the SHINE for Autumn Act is so important. Please join me and help to support the SHINE for Autumn Act and push to end preventable stillbirth!

Maggie's Story:

SHINE is important to me because I want to honor my daughter, Sloane, who passed on 10/22/2022 due to a small (undetected) placenta



Stephanei's Story:

It was July 22, 2019 and I was 39 weeks pregnant with my second son Colin. My pregnancy was healthy and I felt confident. My first pregnancy and delivery was totally normal. I started getting contractions at 1AM and woke my husband up to take me to the hospital. I was excited on the way there and remember thinking that my life wouldn't be the same with 2 boys under 2. We got to the hospital by 2AM and were told the worst news. There is no heartbeat. Those words don't sink in. They must not be able to find it. I yelled to get someone else to check. It took 4 people to confirm. Our baby boy was not alive anymore. How? Why? This didn't make any sense. I have heard of miscarriage, but could not understand how a healthy baby had no heartbeat at 39 weeks. I just felt him kick earlier that day. The realization that I was about to deliver my baby boy that was not alive, was absolutely frightening. My labor progressed and I was 10 centimeters tall. I did not want to push. I wanted to keep him with me. I did not want to face this. It all felt like a bad dream. I thought one last time, maybe the doctors were wrong. I delivered Colin and he did not cry like I so wanted. He was gone. My OB told us that the umbilical cord was wrapped too tight around his neck and that he looked like he had passed within 24 hours of coming to the hospital. I screamed out, What did I do.. What did I do... How could this happen? He was blue with white around his neck. He was warm, chubby with a full head of dark hair. He was beautiful and looked a lot like my other son Ben. The doctor placed him on my chest. I felt pure love, helplessness, confusion and extreme sadness. We cuddled and bathed Colin. We had family in to meet him. We dressed him up in his take home outfit and took pictures. We received the best love and support from our families and the nurses at Women and Infants. We had to say goodbye to Colin. I still don't know how I had the strength to say goodbye and walk out of that room.

I went from having a baby to immediately planning a funeral and burial. My milk came in and I had no baby to feed. I had to fight overwhelming anxiety, I was supposed to take care of a baby and there was no baby with me to care for. I frantically scoured the internet to make sense of this. There were many stories of stillbirth and other moms to connect with that had similar stories. My doctor provided very little information. I thought back on how there was lack of movement my final week and that my doctor said the baby was big and there was little room. I wish I had taken this more seriously. I played every "what if" situation in my head and felt so guilty. Stillbirth did not even cross my mind as an adverse pregnancy outcome. The shock of not having our baby with us and the wonder of what he would be like is so deeply painful.

Thank you for hearing my story. I hope this encourages change so that pregnant moms are more aware of stillbirth being an adverse pregnancy outcome, so that potential warning signs are taken seriously. Data Collection on stillbirths would be so helpful to reduce preventable Stillbirths.

Desiree's Story:

My son Turner Ashby Crocker was unexpectedly stillborn at full term on March 25, 2017 after 38 weeks of a flawless and beautiful pregnancy. He was our 5th child and 3rd son. He and I were both healthy. I had a doctor's appointment the day before he died and an NST (non-stress test) was performed due to his movements being slower than normal. The standard of care only states that 10 movements in an hour is normal, and he moved 4 times during the 25 minutes they assessed him. My providers considered this normal due to the standard of care, but for him he should have moved close to 40 times in that same timespan as he was a very active baby. They sent me home and I thought everything was fine due to the results of the NST. By the time I would wake in the morning my son would be dead as he passed away in-utero sometime in the middle of the night while I slept. When I woke up, I immediately recognized my son was no longer moving. I tried to monitor him with my at home doppler, but could not pick up a heartbeat. I immediately drove the 30 minutes to the hospital with my 3-year-old in tow, and my husband met us there. They tried to find his heartbeat, but couldn't, and confirmed via ultrasound that my son had died.

After receiving this life altering, and soul shattering news, I was induced to give birth to our son. I labored for over 10 agonizing hours knowing the entire time I would give birth to my lifeless son. I will not ever be able to accurately

describe the kind of hell that is for a mother to experience. At 5:02 am on March 25, 2017 I delivered the most beautiful and perfect baby boy. I fully expected him to start crying at any moment due to how perfect he looked, but there would be no cries except our own. Turner weighed 6lbs 2oz and was 19.5" long. He was perfect in every way, and an umbilical cord compression (wrapped tightly around his arm in the crease of his elbow pinning his arm to his chest) along with an undetected smaller placenta took his life. We were able to spend 12 hours with our son, and our children and extended family were able to meet him before handing over his body to the funeral home just 12 hours after I gave birth to him.

Yoli's Story:

I was 37 weeks 2 days. On July 1st I couldn't feel my baby move. I drove to my OBGYN as fast as I could. They were pretty quick and took me to a room where the nurse tried the doppler for around 6 minutes. Then they moved me to an ultrasound room where they confirmed that my baby didn't have heartbeats. That's when my life stopped. I delivered her on 7.2.22 at 11.51 am. She was beautiful. She came with the umbilical cord around her neck and stomach. The doctor determined that was the cause of death. Her name is Emma Valentina. Forever 37 weeks.

Adriana's Story:

I'm Adriana and live in Greenville, SC. Married to my husband. Mom of two precious children here on earth, and one beautiful star in the sky. I'm 28 years old, African American, pretty healthy, and have always had the best pregnancies and deliveries. My first two were overdue, chunky, healthy, almost 9 pound babies. Both delivered naturally, with no medication, and one was a home birth.

I expected my third pregnancy and delivery to go about the same. But it didn't. No where close to it. At 24 weeks pregnant, I was admitted to the hospital for high blood pressure. I was at Prisma Health Greenville Memorial Hospital where they immediately started me on magnesium to help bring my numbers down. The doctors told me to get comfortable because I was going to be there for the long haul. Meaning I was going to stay in the hospital for a few more weeks until they felt it was safe enough to deliver my daughter.

After a few hours and a few tests, they realized that my liver was not doing well and that I was starting to develop HELPP syndrome. It was decided that MY life was now in danger and so I was going to have to have a C-section in 48 hours. Wow! Imagine the shock I felt. Plans changed fast. Later that day, we met with the NICU team to discuss all of the steps that would need to be taken in order to give my micro-premie daughter the best chance at life. She had a chance. Statistics show that African American girls have the best outcome in the NICU. So we had hope, so much hope. Everything was set and the C-section was scheduled for the next day at 10am.

I remember talking with my therapist earlier that day and she told me to really cherish those last few hours of being pregnant. To really enjoy her kicks on the inside before she's on the outside. I took that to heart and did just that the remainder of the day. The last thing I wanted to remember was hearing her heartbeat from inside the womb. Before going to sleep that night, I asked the nurse if I could hear her heartbeat one more time...

That is when we heard those crushing words: "I'm sorry mama, I can't find her heartbeat." It was at that moment that everything I had ever thought about life changed. My faith was crushed. My hope was gone. My heart forever shattered. All my husband and I could do was just collapse into each other's arms. It wasn't supposed to end like this? How did this happen? After two perfectly normal pregnancies? No way it could happen to me! I believe that's one of the things that stabbed me the hardest was that I was so naive. I had very little knowledge about stillbirth and the statistics. Because no one ever thinks it can happen to them, but it can happen to anyone. There is absolutely nothing like going through 8 hours of labor and contractions to push out a lifeless baby. It's gut wrenching. The unexpected loss of our beautiful daughter Adele has deeply impacted our entire family. I suffer from PTSD and postpartum depression on top of the grief as a result of the trauma. My husband and living children are also grieving in their own way. It has turned our world upside and we will never be the same.

Laura's Story:

My story is about three losses I experienced second hand, but that were nonetheless beyond painful.

The first loss occurred in 1980. My sister, Pam, was pregnant with her first baby. She went into labor in the middle of the night and drove to our small town hospital with her husband.

When the doctor finally came to the hospital 6 hours after my sister, she found the baby boy had no heart beat. He was in the transverse position and his shoulder had compressed the cord. What was odd was she had seen my sister in the clinic just the week before and found no problems. The pain of this loss is still remembered today.

The second loss occurred in 2013 with my daughter Sarah. She was pregnant with her first baby when at 35 weeks she developed preeclampsia in the middle of the night. She thought she had a stomach bug. The baby boy had no heartbeat when they arrived at the hospital and spent two nights in the ICU, had multiple blood transfusions and other treatments. She had received no education from her doctor about signs of preeclampsia. She had protein in her urine two weeks in a row in the clinic, and had weight gain of five pounds in the clinic, for two weeks in a row. These are specific clinical symptoms of preeclampsia, yet the doctor ran no additional tests or made any additional recommendations. This was an OB/GYN physician yet didn't know the basic symptoms of preeclampsia.

The third loss occurred in 2021 with my daughter in law Erica. She was pregnant with her second baby, and first boy. She had seen the doctor on Friday and had a sonogram. It should low amniotic fluid. Saturday night Erica went into labor. When she and my son arrived at the hospital the baby had no heartbeat. It is guessed the demise was due to a "cord event", also called cord compression. Three babies, three moms and dads. With better assessments, three preventable losses would not have occurred. The pain of experiencing a baby's death is almost impossible to explain. I pray these efforts save babies in the future.

Cindy's Story:

My Daughter in law has a picture-perfect pregnancy of her second child, a baby boy. At 33 weeks, we discovered the baby John Robert Munson no longer had a heart beat. My daughter in law and son started on this horrible and tragic journey of needing to give birth to their stillborn baby boy. Hearing healthy babies cry in the room next door on the maternity wing of the hospital. Planning a funeral and having no clear answers on why this happens. This was no obvious sign of what happened to John Robert. John Robert was delivered on September 24 and buried on September 29th with only close family in attendance. We have learned that very little money is given to this problem. I am hoping you will vote for this bill in the memory of John Robert Munson and all the other stillbirth babies. They are all so loved by their families.

Sydney's Story:

On the morning of February 14, 2021, my son Adam McLain Mayhew was born sleeping. During the peak of the north Texas winter storm, I felt my innocence disappear in an instant.

My husband and I had tried to get pregnant starting in early 2020, pre covid. In May of 2020 I found out I was pregnant after the help with clomid medication. Unfortunately, that pregnancy was not meant to be, and I shortly experienced my first miscarriage. Heartbroken but still eager to be a mother, my husband and I tried again the very next month. On June 4 th , I took a test and excitedly showed my husband who was working in the garage. Just days later my fertility doctor confirmed with an ultrasound and blood draw to make sure my HCG levels continued to climb, they did. A few weeks later my doctor released me to a referred doctor to watch over me in my pregnancy and off we went. The first half of my pregnancy seemed normal. I did the regular checkups that were never more than a few minutes long to check the heart beat and ask a few questions. I never really ever had concerns up

until 26 weeks. In November 2020, at a routine checkup my doctor asked if I had any concerns. I stated "I have lost my smell", and when he asked if I had got a covid test, I stated I had taken 2 of them but they both were negative. Unconcerned, the doctor blew off my concern and told me "you've gained too much weight and are overweight, which is causing pressure on your nasal, that's probably what's affecting it." I trusted his judgment and moved on with no concern after. The pregnancy went on and appointments came and went. Again, no more than 5 min appointments checking the heart rate for all of 10-15 seconds. At 39 weeks, at my now weekly appointment, my doctor asked if I had any concerns. I at this point requested to be induced due to not being able to sleep, sit, lay down, I was extremely uncomfortable. The doctor then told me "being uncomfortable is part of pregnancy and what I was experiencing was normal." I then asked again if I could be induced, the doctor then told me "we can do whatever you want but your baby would be safer inside you." Not once did the doctor offer to take a look into any of my complaints of being uncomfortable. Me being a first time mom I felt I should trust my doctor and went home. At 39 weeks and 6 days, I decided to go to the hospital for some contractions I was having. They weren't painful to me but they were every 7-10 min. I asked to be induced while I was there and since I was having contractions. The nurses seemed annoyed and stated they called my doctor who told them to send me home. Their reasoning was because I was not "progressing with dilation". Disappointed again, my husband and I went home.

The next day was my 40 week appointment, and when the doctor walked in the first thing he said to me "well you tried to go into labor but it didn't work did it." I didn't take to this well and when the nurse had me lay down to check the heart rate she checked it at "126" I was taken back by this and asked if that was ok because his heart rates had always been between 145-155 never any less. She stated "it's normal for a baby's heart to drop before labor" uneasy by it. I requested again for an induction. The doctor irritated me and said "we will do the induction but we will not do it today, and will not do it tomorrow" I said that's fine I just want it done. Later that day after both of us left the room frustrated because all I wanted was to feel heard and not ignored. I was done, uncomfortable and couldn't handle it anymore. The doctor made me out to be a bad mom for even suggesting an induction. Later that day we received a call that I would be induced at 8am on February 14 th , we were relieved.

On the morning of February 13 th at 3am I woke up with extreme contractions and finally thought "THIS IS IT!!" I started counting and found my now painful contractions were 7 min apart again. I called the hospital to let them know and I asked to come in. They asked how far apart my contractions were, I told them, they told me to not come in until they were 5 min apart. Again disappointed, I felt pushed aside, I wasn't important, I waited all day long until 7:15 when my husband begged me to go to the hospital anyways because I was exhausted and roads were getting bad again. Living only 5 miles from the hospital it took almost 40 min to get to the hospital due to the roads. After finally arriving at Texas Hugely Hospital I can remember my husband walking in with me holding my hand saying "this is it, we are gonna have our baby." Between the car and the L&D room I had 3 more contractions. I got changed and the nurse started putting on the monitors. That's when she said "you know something might be wrong with this one let me change it", she changed it with a new one. Then switched to a hand held Doppler. I looked at my husband and remember very vividly stating "if something happened I will never forgive myself, I am so sorry". Shortly an ultrasound tech came in, silence, no one at this point would talk to me. Soon a charge nurse came and brought me a Nokia phone saying the doctor would like to speak with me. Confused, I took the phone. The doctor introduces himself "hello Sydney, my name is doctor Neef, I am the on call doctor but due to the storm I am not in there at the time unless needed. From what the nurses have told me, I hate to be the one to tell you this but there is no heartbeat." I remember feeling so hot and screaming, absolutely screaming. I begged for them to get my son out and save him, I begged for a c section to try to save him. The doctor then told me for my safety because they do not know what's wrong and I was in active labor they could not give me a c section.

I was told I needed to calm down that I was making other moms scared. I didn't care, my child was gone. I was given some pain killers, and medication to calm me down then waited. I waited and watched the snow fall all night long. With every contraction I prayed to God to bring my baby back to me. I had at one point asked a nurse coming to check on me "when I deliver, will they try to save him." She didn't really give me an answer, and told me I would know when I needed to push. At roughly 7:20 am the next morning I felt my body naturally want to push. The staff came in and with just a few pushes my son came into the world at 8:01 am on Valentine's Day. The same time we were supposed to be

induced. I reached for him, the room was silent and wailed. I cried like I have never cried before I begged God to take me with my son. I felt a complete piece of me die in that minute. The delivering doctor Prayed over all three of us as I cried and just held my son, lifeless. Over the next 4 hours my husband and I spent time holding our son. A perfect 7lbs 14oz. and 21 inches long baby boy. Memorizing every little feature we could. We only got 4 hours with him because the hospital at the time did not have a cuddle cot which is a bassinet built to get a baby's temp so families can spend more time with their passed child. 4 hours, that's all we got, and we left with a box but not our baby. All because a doctor wouldn't listen to me and just take a few extra minutes to address my concerns.

When Adam was born one question I asked the doctor if it was a cord wrapped around his neck. He stated "the cord was around his neck but it wasn't tight it wouldn't have caused his death. I did notice your placenta looked "dimish" and lacked color. So I have sent that off for testing". In the later weeks we got the call back from the doctor stating there was an infection in the placenta as well a small blood clot found in the cord. Either could have caused his death but it didn't explain the reason why the placenta looked lack of color. I didn't return the doctor that had overseen me for my pregnancy. I returned to my fertility doctor for my postpartum appointment. I was too traumatized to have a visual and did not want to be touched. But Dr Aboukahair instead just asked me to go through everything step by step with all the issues I had brought to him. The moment I stated I had lost my smell he had my blood tested for the covid antibodies as well as tested me for MTHFR (a blood clotting condition). Both came back positive. I have a copy of each genetic mutation for MTHFR, one for C677T and one for A1298C. A study later came out on the effects of covid on pregnancy and the placenta. How covid would actually limit the oxygen to the placenta. Suffocating the baby inside. I know in my heart that all three somehow played a part in my son's death and due to the lack of care and urgency of the overseeing medical team, my son died as a result. All issues could have been prevented had someone had taken the time to address any of my concerns past "your overweight", "its normal" "babies slow down before labor".



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As you can imagine it has not been an easy life moving forward without our son. We went home to finish a complete nursery only to shut the door and not open it until we got our son back. But this time he was in a small box with his name and birth date. I laid him in his crib next to what was supposed to be his blanket with a cute little dog on it. My step daughter who at the time was 6 was left without the sibling she had waited so patiently for. By October the grief of losing our fourth family member consumed us and we sold our home. Packing up all of his belongings to never unpack again. My daughter is now in ongoing grief therapy to understand death and sibling loss. My husband and I can't celebrate any holiday the way we used to, especially Valentine's day. How can you celebrate when your child is not here to be with you? For me personally, I do not get excited for pregnancy announcements, baby showers or even birth announcements. I am filled with a jealous rage that these women don't know the pain of losing a child during childbirth while at the same time praying they don't have to experience the same pain that was bestowed on my family. We recently welcomed our rainbow baby girl to our family on September 1st. I kept the pregnancy a secret for 24 weeks. Each appointment was filled with anxiety ridden tears and complete fear I would walk in and the doctor will give me the bad news again. I made it a point to have 2 female doctors because my trust in the system has been stripped away. I had more ultrasounds due to pure anxiety just to check to make sure that the cord is getting the correct amount of flow to and from the baby. Each day and night I spent hours counting kicks and checking the heartbeat at home. Paying attention to every single pain in my body. A woman shouldn't have to live life this way. I should have been able to enjoy the life I've created inside me, but that was stolen from me. I find peace only in talking about my son and bringing awareness to those who don't know about stillbirth as well as making sure to correct nurses as they try to tell me "babies don't move as much at the end of pregnancy". I did not breathe until I finally got to hear cry after my scheduled c-section that I had to push for at 37 weeks and 2 days. It wasn't until then I realized it wouldn't be three weeks until my daughter was the "same gestation" that my son was when I lost him. Why couldn't he have had that chance to live? Many have asked if my baby girl "fixed me" or "made it better", when they

fail to realize my son is still missing from the picture. I NEVER will get a picture of all of my children together, my family will forever be incomplete. My daughters will never get a brother, my husband will not have a son to carry on his name, and I will never get to raise a young man. We need better health care for our women, we need to be heard...the first time. It is the only way we can prevent stillbirth rates from rising. We as women shouldn't be told anything is "normal". We should be having our doctors and government supporting us in our basic health care.

Liz's story:

We waited 38 weeks and 6 long days for a baby boy.. reverse a few days actually first things first Fernie's birthday party the 25th.. I heard JJ's heartbeat that night.. he was moving less though but my dr told me that it was normal because I was almost due.. (NOT TRUE BABIES DO NOT MOVE LESS TOWARDS THE END) okay now.. the 27th I was feeling contractions which I was confusing for movement so I would feel relief once I felt that.. but I don't think now that it was movement.. I referred back to what they had told me the day before and my drs appointment was the next morning so I waited... June 28th 2022.. gam rolls around I waited over an hour to be seen.. I told every single nurse and receptionist that I had hardly felt the baby move and I needed to have them check his heart beat for me.. When my midwife finally came she kept trying to talk over me and finally I stopped her "please check his heart beat I haven't felt him... please" she grabbed her machine.. I could hear the static and that was it... then silence and more silence then I'm asking her what's wrong.. "my machine is broken" WHAT then she grabbed the ultrasound machine, turned the screen away from me and grabbed my hand..

I asked her again.. "can you please just tell me if he's okay. why couldn't I hear anything" she told me "my machines are broken it's me it's my fault goto labor and delivery and they will try again there.." I asked her if I could go home to get Fernando or if I should rush over there.. she told me to go home and get him.. I knew in my heart jj was gone idk what happened much after that but I was on autopilot. I grabbed Fernando, dropped Fernie off with Kenzie and dipped to the hospital.. we went up the same elevator that we took when I was pregnant with fernie.. knowing but in denial it was my last moment with jj close to me... when they asked me "what brings you in" I told them "they can't find my baby's heartbeat..." Usually there is a wait.. even when you think you're about to pop.. they opened the doors right away and took us back... they did one last ultrasound and explained that he was gone... (there was a lot more in between honestly but very traumatizing) I was so in shock I feel like a crazy lady now but I just kept asking what was next.. what was going to happen next and then what and then what.. basically they induced me into labor (I was full term & I delivered him) I got the epidural but as soon as she was done hooking it up my water sack dropped to the bottom...

I felt every moment and I wouldn't have it any other way.. she had to break my water and he was right behind there.. I pushed only once or twice and there was his handsome perfect face.. sibs room... the first words out of the drs mouth were "oh honey...that is why". JJ's cord was wrapped around his neck 3 times and his abdomen twice.. our Angel got stuck before I ever went into labor my cord was extremely long it was the same with Fernie.. but with jj my placenta was extremely small.. he had no room basically (THEY DO NOT MEASURE PLACENTAS OR CORDS DURING ULTRASOUNDS AND PREGNANCIES) they told me he had passed within 48/24 hours.. I did skin to skin with my son and then they cleaned him off and they dressed him for me.. I held him we spend a few hours with him.. said our goodbyes(I have no idea how we did that or do I remember how or when was the time).. they took him.. then they put his items in a box for us... they got me out faster than if he was there I was able to walk so I did have to stay 24 hours.. which sucked.. being stuck there without my son. and then we left... down the same elevator as we did with Fernies car seat.. with JJ's memory box.. it took me a while to share his story but it is extremely hard to tell it over and over again bc I've been putting this off since he hasn't been here... every moment I've lived since he's been gone I've been making sure to do my best to honor him and Fernie.. I have TWO sons and I love speaking about both of my kids.. if you have any questions I'm an open book I would love to stop this from happening to anyone else... Thank you for reading and thanks for being patient with me if you're still a part of my life. This is absolutely one of the darkest things and I wouldn't wish this on my worst enemy. Johan Jalisco Novoa Born June 28th 2022 @ 9:00pm 5lbs 10oz Perfect black hair he should be 5 months in 10 days.. missing you

Emily's Story:

I lost my baby boy, Luke, to stillbirth last year. My heart is broken. Please help fight for future moms to have their babies alive in their arms. Words can't describe holding my lifeless baby in my arms after delivering him via c-section.

Beth's Story:

I am writing today with empty arms and a broken heart. My daughter Ella Mae Stevens was born via c-section on 10/15/2021 - a perfect 7lb 11oz baby girl with brown hair and perfect fingers and toes. I carried her for 41 weeks and had a healthy pregnancy, but she died before she was born. Her death was not caused due to an umbilical cord accident (i.e. true knot or wrapped around her neck). She had no genetic disorders or clear indicators of why she died before she was born. Her death was completely unexpected and has left our family with a hole in our hearts and family where she should be.

Ann's Story:

Eleanor Betty Bunnell was born still 10/22/21, just 4 days before her scheduled c-section. She was 36 weeks and 3 days. None of the tests have found a cause so we suspect a cord issue. She was already in a high-risk pregnancy due to a history of preeclampsia/HELLP syndrome with her big sister so I was getting weekly BPPs. She passed a BPP on a Tuesday and died on a Thursday. In hindsight, I watched her in distress and dying. No one had ever told me that abnormal movement was just as concerning as decreased movement. Her movement that Thursday morning was abnormal but I wasn't worried until that afternoon when I realized I hadn't felt her move in a while. We found out she did not have a heartbeat that night and she was born early Friday morning. We spent Friday and Saturday with her. Her big sister, grandparents and aunt and uncle were able to come meet her and to say goodbye. We had a funeral for her a week after she was born. It was standing room only. She was buried in a receiving outfit that I embroidered with her initials and wrapped in a blanket so she wouldn't be cold. Eleanor was a beautiful baby and perfect in every way except that she didn't have a heartbeat. She was born with a full head of hair, my nose, and my husband's family chin. She looks a lot like her big sister and her new baby brother who was born 2 months ago. We miss her every day.

Hazel's Story:

On July 28 2012 a silent tiny little boy came into the world and our lives shattered completely. On July 19 I began bleeding and was put on bedrest. The doctor didn't seem concerned because he said my age and level of activity made it possible for me to have some bleeding. Plus at an earlier ultrasound my placenta was placed low. During my bedrest I begged my baby to stay. I had a routine ultrasound on July 26 and was so excited myself, my husband and my 12yr old son all went together. My husband was excited for a baby and my son for having a younger sibling and then we heard the words no parent wants to hear. There is no heartbeat. I screamed as my son jumped into my arms and my husband was frozen in place as our world's crashed down around us. The next two days were a blur of phone calls and being admitted to have my child. There were forms and blood tests and more forms. We were led to believe that we had to have our child buried with other stillborn babies no one told us he could have his own funeral. That added to the heartbreak. Hospital staff themselves were saddened and had to deal with a mom begging for answers they couldn't give. Matthew was born July 28 2012 buried August 23 of the same year and I then spent the next 5 months fighting for his certificate from the state of Wisconsin that says certificate of birth resulting in stillbirth. We had to fight to get his details registered to get his autopsy done, everything that may provide some answers. Some parents don't have it in them to fight so the actual registered stillbirths is probably higher than what we know because there is nothing saying it has to be reported as such. My son mattered my sweet Matthew Aaron mattered and deserves to be remembered

Nyerr's Story:

My husband and I met our son, Julius, on August 15, 2024 - just one day before his big brother's sixth birthday. At 28 weeks, Julius Wood was born still. I went into the hospital concerned about lack of movement on August 14. By then, he was already gone. We had just 8 weeks until my scheduled C-section. Our worlds were turned upside down. I don't know and will never definitively know if Jules' death was preventable. By all accounts (autopsy and placenta pathology), he was healthy with a fully functioning system around him. But what I do know is that the blindsided feeling I felt was preventable. As someone who had been dealing with secondary infertility for four years, with three miscarriages before this incident and at advanced maternal age (I am 40), this possibility should have been discussed, in addition to a conversation about all of the factors that can contribute to stillbirth. I feel let down by my doctors.

We are heartbroken, but dedicated to helping make sure our experience can help others.



Melissa's Story:

Our firstborn son, Jackson Owen, was born still at 24 weeks on Monday, October 19, 2020. My husband and I last felt Jackson's strong kicks on a rainy Friday night. Over the weekend, I didn't feel movement but kept reassuring myself that at 24 weeks and with an anterior placenta, kicks aren't yet felt consistently. I called my OB on Sunday and she said I could go to Labor & Delivery to get monitored but also wasn't overly concerned because up until that point I had a normal, uncomplicated pregnancy.

Going up to L&D, I was afraid I would have to go alone because that had been the rules for COVID. When I got up there, the feeling that everything should be alright was a general consensus at check-in and I found out my husband could come up. We were excited to think that he could see Jackson's ultrasound in person for the first time. However, when I settled into the triage room and I was hooked up onto the monitor, they had a hard time finding his heartbeat. We heard something but I was quickly told it was mine. It was then we heard the dreaded, "I'm sorry there is no heartbeat". In that very second our lives were forever changed. We cried uncontrollably, we called our families and told work we wouldn't be coming in and we were told how the next few hours would go if I decided to be induced. We signed so much paperwork, we were told about making arrangements with a funeral home, we were told we could decide to hold the baby or not - at that point, we didn't even know we were having a boy. Around 5 am Monday morning, Jackson was born. We held him for as long as we could, giving him our love and kisses that he should have received for a lifetime, not for only a few hours. He was so small, but I remember feeling the weight of him in my arms. We didn't want to leave him but there was no choice in the matter.

We later found out that Jackson had a partially circumvallated placenta and fetal vascular malperfusion. We were "lucky" enough to have an autopsy and a review of his placenta. We hope that the Stillbirth Health Improvement and Education (SHINE) for Autumn Act will help provide a more comprehensive understanding of why stillbirths occur and put an end to preventable stillbirths with better data collection, research and public awareness.

Kathleen's Story:

It's 5:32 AM, September 23rd. About nine hours ago I delivered a beautiful baby boy, Scotty Michael Jeffers. He was perfect. So perfect. He had a head full of dark hair, the most beautiful lips, and HUGE hands and feet. He was so much more than I ever imagined him to be. My baby boy. Around six hours ago his daddy and I said goodbye to his lifeless, but perfect body. I can't even begin to process the hell we've been living in. On Friday, I went into my 28 week appointment, drank my glucose drink, made small talk with the Doctor and Nurse and a half hour later was told my baby didn't have a heartbeat. No reason. He was so, so healthy. Nobody has answers. Nobody can tell us why. It wasn't long ago that his little heart stopped beating. They tell me it's not my fault. Steven and I, along with our parents who have stepped in to take shifts between taking care of us and Lyla, have been in a fog of hell.

Yesterday Steven did the hardest thing any parent has to do- make arrangements with a funeral home. A few hours ago my body did the hardest thing a woman's body can endure- childbirth. And now, we wait. We wait for this pain to dull over time but never go away. I'll hold onto the time I had with him forever. His life was nothing we imagined it to be, he was meant for so much more. And as the last kiss I gave his sweet head lingers on my lips, I know his life will never be forgotten and instead, Scotty Michael's memory will be what fuels our family in the seconds, minutes, and hours to come.

Maureen's Story:

Blodeuwedd means "flower face" and is a legend about a woman who is turned into an owl. It is also the name of my daughter. Blodeuwedd Roann was born at 22 weeks' gestation. She went suddenly still at 21 + 5 and I labored 2 days later. No one would tell me what happened, what I had done wrong, or what could have been done to prevent this. The nurses were lovely and stood in the background as I held her, but I didn't feel like there was going to be enough time in the world to prepare me to leave with a box of memories instead of a baby. And there wasn't. I searched every part of her for some reason, in between kissing every part of her and burning her image into my brain. I sang to her and told her about her dad, her grandparents, what I had planned for her future, and what her room looked like. I counted all of her fingers and all of her toes, 10 of each. She looked perfect to me. She didn't appear to be malformed in any way, aside from having a grayish cast to her skin and her eyes not being open. I never did get a solid reason for why this perfect baby was still in my body. I got vague terms such as "umbilical cord problems," and "placental issues," but at the end of the day the only real answer was that what started out as a normal, healthy pregnancy ended in a tiny coffin and a memorial shelf on my mantle. I

t's been 34 years, and her birthday never passes without me thinking of my tiny girl who turned into a white owl in my womb and flew away before I got a chance to even know her. I absolutely feel like this could have been prevented. I was on Medicaid at the time, and I don't think that I was given the proper care. I know a lot of my concerns were brushed to the side, including spotting throughout the pregnancy that was ignored or called first time Mom Hysteria, high blood sugar that was attributed to eating too much citrus fruit despite it continuing after I cut out citrus fruit and then fruit all together, and many other instances of my concerns being ignored or laughed at. I am by no means knocking the Medicaid system, it is a godsend for the poor and the financially struggling working poor. But nobody should laugh at a pregnant woman's concerns. All of them should be taken seriously.



Haylie's Story:

I support the SHINE for Autumn Act for Magnolia Elaine lost at 33 wks 03/20/22. There needs to be more research done on stillbirth and stillbirth prevention. Especially research done on small placentas which is why my Maggie died. I had to do my own research and find that out. Doctors need to know these things.

March 17th 2022 I had my last ultrasound on my living daughter Magnolia Elaine. Everything was looking great, heart rate great, practice breaths looking good, she was even practicing sucking. March 18th 2022 she was gone. No reason. I gave birth to her on March 20th 2022. She looked perfect like a newborn sleeping baby. We decided to give birth and be induced naturally at our birth center. It was the most peaceful, beautiful birth, the only thing I would do differently is have her alive in the end. We took her placenta home and after about a week I got on social media. The first video I saw was something about how Covid was affecting placentas. I had it just after conceiving her, so I immediately made it my mission to have hers tested and I dove into research. God just kept opening up doors to give me answers, but I had to search for them because her cause of death is not widely known. My midwife just

happened to have a class on placentas shortly before I contacted her about getting Maggie's tested, it was in my freezer. She found a placenta pathologist in our area and I brought it to her myself. Since hers was frozen and not fresh we weren't able to get as much information as we'd like. There was clotting but she stated there's no way to know if that was before or after birth. She stated that her cord was hypercoiled, though it was less coiled than I've seen in a lot of live babies. But basically she was diagnosed with a cord accident. I spent so many days researching all the words on

the pathology report and finally I found a group for small placentas. I went and looked at hers and sure enough it said she was less than the 3rd percentile. She was born at 33wks 1day, she weighed 1700 grams and her placenta weighed 190 grams. That is a ratio of 8.9 that puts her placenta in the 0.021 percentile. She had no chance. Why aren't we measuring placentas???? Dr. Harvey Kliman created a tool to measure them starting at 7 wks pregnant.

Crystal's Story:

We had a hard time getting pregnant. I have PCOS, which is basically an endocrine disorder which throws off your hormones. I was on all sorts of medications, and finally, we got pregnant for the first time. My husband and I were so excited. The pregnancy was pretty smooth, although I was super sick and had sciatica, but nothing out of the ordinary. At our 20 week ultrasound, we found out that it was a girl! We had multiple baby showers and loved putting together her nursery. Towards the end of my pregnancy, I started having this feeling that something was wrong. But the only thing I was taught in my childbirth class was that if you are not bleeding, everything is fine. So I assumed everything was fine. Her movement started to decrease, and I also assumed this was fine because that's what they tell you; that the baby will run out of room and won't move as much. This, I have learned since with multiple pregnancies, is false.

The feeling that something was wrong wouldn't go away, and I would go most of the day without feeling her. I finally decided to go to the hospital and have her checked out. I was 35 weeks along. They strapped a monitor to me for several hours, said everything was fine, and sent me home. The feeling stayed with me, however, but I knew that my 36 week checkup was coming up and I could make it until then. The day before my 36 week checkup, I went into labor. We were so excited! We had our hospital bag all packed with cute baby girl outfits and the carseat was all installed ready to go. We drove to the hospital calling our parents on the way.

We got to the hospital, where I changed into a gown, and they strapped that heart monitor to my belly again. Nothing. This is common, they said. Multiple tries. Multiple nurses. They then sent for an ultrasound machine to find the heartbeat. Ultrasound technicians can't tell you anything, but the way she looked at my nurse and shook her head, it was all I needed to know. Our beautiful, perfect, 8 pound Molly Sue Thomas was born on July 3, 2014 stillborn. She was absolutely perfect. Lots of beautiful black hair. The doctors were stumped. They sent her for an autopsy, which came back perfect as well. We don't know what happened to our baby girl, and we never will. Not a day goes by that I don't think about her and all of the what ifs. Was it my fault? Why didn't I know more about these kinds of things? If only I had been more educated, I wouldn't have felt so guilty and alone. I have since found a beautiful community of support and education that has saved my life through this, and I do all I can to give back. I truly hope that this Act will help ease some of the eternal pain bereaved parents go through.

Tiana's Story:

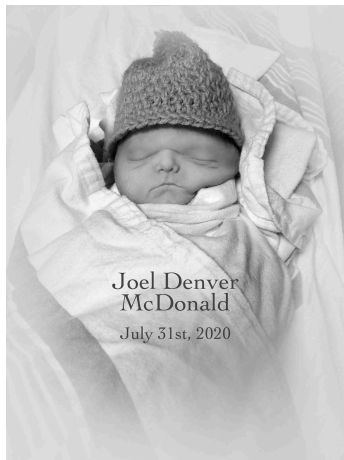
On 11/28/2022 my daughter Peyton Olivia Miles was born without breath. I was 29 weeks and 3 days pregnant with the daughter I dreamed of having my entire life. The exciting moment we had been waiting for to bring our daughter into the world was instantly shattered when we learned she had passed. We will never know why our daughter was taken from us so soon but will honor her and love her the rest of our lives. We pray that this act helps to prevent other families from experiencing the heartbreak we endured.

Miki's Story:

Miki Terasawa - I had TFMR 13 years ago. I have been participating in several studies as I hope issues, such as grief, communications to parents, and mental support, are better addressed. Would appreciate your support for the bill. It will help future mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, medical practitioners, and the whole community. Thanks.

Shannon's Story:

My son Joel was stillborn for unknown reasons at 32 weeks gestational age on 31 July 2020. I was a healthy 27 year old pregnant with my first baby. There were no warning signs and my pregnancy was considered low risk. My OBGYN never told me to count kicks or sleep on my side. She was uneducated about stillbirth because as she said "it's rare." But to me, it's not rare, it's reality. I noticed decreased fetal movement, but didn't know that it was an issue. I support this bill because adequate stillbirth risk education and best practices may have saved my son. Instead, my family and I are left forever grieving the life Joel may have led. Even two years after his death, my husband and I still struggle to cope at times. It's time to lift the veil of secrecy from stillbirth and start saving babies' lives.



Crystal's Story:

My precious daughter, Sienna Grace Midlik, was born into this world on January 16, 2022 at 10:12 PM. She was beautiful and absolutely perfect, weighing 8 lbs 10 oz with curly, dark hair. Tragically, she died during delivery and was pronounced stillborn.

I carried her for 41 weeks. I had a healthy pregnancy with no complications. All along, she had a strong heartbeat, consistent movement, and appropriate growth. We even had genetic testing done, and she had no abnormalities. How does a healthy pregnancy end in this tragedy? And when will we do something to make it stop? The SHINE for Autumn Act can shed light on the causes that amount to over 23,000 babies being stillborn each year in the United States.

Sienna Grace is my only child, and I will continue to advocate in her name. I shine for Sienna and urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,
Crystal Midlik
Sienna's Mama
Newport News, VA

Olivia's Story:

Quinn and I found out we were pregnant with Teigen on January 11th, 2016. February 4th, we found out we were 9 weeks and 4 days, at our first ultrasound, where we got to hear his very strong heartbeat. We'd waited a long time to hear that sound. The day came when I had to do the glucose test. I called to clarify if peanut butter toast would be okay for breakfast because I was already struggling with morning sickness and didn't want to get sick from having a sugary drink on an empty stomach. This was my first pregnancy and I had no idea what I was doing. I was told that would be fine. My OB called me the following week and told me that I had gestational diabetes. The weekend prior, 4th of July weekend, we had to put my cat down so I was already not having a good day. I didn't believe I had gestational diabetes because we had a pretty good diet so I asked to take it again. The morning of the second test, I called again to see if a bagel and cream cheese would be an okay breakfast and again, was told that would be okay. I was told again that I had gestational diabetes and that I would need to take the 3hr test this time. After all of that, I was told I had gestational diabetes and would need to start having appointments at MFM, in addition to my normal OB appointments. At one of my appointments, they told me that the umbilical cord had one artery instead of two and was assured that babies are born healthy all the time, even with this.

I went to most of the appointments by myself because Quinn had just gotten his job in March doing medical billing and we were dealing with the court system over a traffic violation, so most of his paid time off went to attorney and court appointments. Two weeks prior to our due date, I told Quinn that I was scared that the longer Teigen stayed inside of me, the less I could protect him. I told my mom the same thing the following week, the day after my last checkup, just a few days before our due date. The OB had me do a non stress test, then had me go across the hall for a Biophysical Profile exam because they didn't like how little he was moving towards the end of the pregnancy. I remember watching him yawn a few times during the exam. The doctor told me that he had passed his BPP and that if he hadn't, she was going to have me go to labor and delivery to be monitored for an hour. What a difference that hour could've made. I'd been having contractions for a couple of weeks by this point but nothing else was changing so I was carrying on with life, continuing to get ready for his arrival. Sunday, September 4th, we did what we usually do on Sunday, we went grocery shopping. I was huffing and puffing around the store and Quinn asked if we needed to go to the hospital but I said no because again, nothing was changing. I kept waiting for my water to break and it never happened. After getting home from the store, I told Quinn I wanted to take a bath to see if that would help relax me and maybe help progress something, my due date was the next day after all. I sat in the bath, still feeling uncomfortable, when all of a sudden Teigen made the most violent kick I'd ever witnessed. It was like he was trying to escape from my stomach.

I remember laughing and saying, "not that way, buddy, you've got to go down". After I got out of the bath, I told Quinn and he shared the chuckle that I'd had and putting his hands on my stomach, told Teigen we'd get to see him soon enough. We had a plan. If I continued to feel uncomfortable and nothing progressed by midnight, I'd call the nurse's number. We reached that point, nothing was consistent with my contractions and I was uncomfortable. The nurse was offering to give me a number to call when my voice changed and she asked if I was having a contraction. I said, "I think so", and she told us to come in. When we got to the hospital at 12:30am, we were met by a nurse with a wheelchair and taken to labor and delivery. When we got into the room, they set me up on the table and hooked up the ultrasound machine. The two nurses in the room looked at each other and then at the screen again before saying they were going to get a doctor and a newer ultrasound machine, saying that that one was a little dated. When they left, Quinn and I looked at each other, he came over to me and we started talking to Teigen. We put our hands on my stomach and felt movement so we weren't sure what was going on. When the doctor and nurses came in with the new machine, they faced the screen towards us so we could see. I didn't even need them to tell me that his heart had stopped; I could see that the four chambers of his heart were completely still. The doctor looked at us and said, "I'm sorry, you've had a fetal demise". We were so confused and told her how we had just felt him kick while they were getting her. She asked if I was having a contraction at that time and when I said yes, she told us that the contraction was moving his body. Quinn came back to my side and held me while we sobbed.

After a couple minutes, I asked the doctor what the next steps were and she said that we'd be going to a room to be induced and wait to deliver our son. I asked if a C-section was possible and she told me that I would need to deliver

naturally. As we started to get set up in the room, our first OB, the one who had given us our very first ultrasound and let us hear that strong heartbeat for the first time, came in and hugged us and told us how sorry he was. A chaplain came in and talked with us. We told him about everything we had planned to do.

How we were planning on getting married the following March on our anniversary and that Teigen was supposed to be the ring bearer. How we wanted to take him to Glacier National Park one day and show him where we've adventured and go on new adventures. At 6:30am, our nurse, Joan, asked us if we'd contacted any of our family or friends to let them know we were at the hospital and said that we shouldn't be there alone. I didn't know what we were going to say. I tried to call my mom but she was working. I got through to my stepdad and he was the first person I told. "We lost him", was all I could say before I broke down. He said he'd get in touch with my mom and that they'd get there as fast as they could. Quinn called his sister and she had her husband who was working in the ER come check on us. We called the family members we needed the soonest; our parents, our siblings and a couple close friends. Joan talked to me about an epidural. I started to think about doing it naturally and she said that because of the pain I was already in, it would be better to do the epidural, so I did and there were no issues there. We had brought music to listen to. We love music. It was an upbeat playlist that was on my phone. Michael Bublé's "Haven't Met You Yet" came on and Quinn changed it, without a word, and then apologized. I understood and appreciated it. That was the first time our parents had met. Everyone but my sister had arrived before he was born so the delivery room had to be cleared out. I only pushed a few times and he was out, perfect and still.

The doctor placed his body on a nearby cold steel table. I screamed Teigen's name while the doctor pushed on my stomach to help work out the placenta. Stella, one of the other nurses, grabbed my phone and started taking pictures. While Stella took pictures of Teigen on the scale, I heard one of the other nurses, Karen, commenting on how small the placenta was and saw her looking it over with another nurse. When he was cleaned off, they placed him in my arms. He was so small and perfect. I changed him into what I'd picked out for his going home outfit, being careful with every motion, trying to take in every detail.

We were alone with him for about 15 minutes before we said it was okay for our family and friends to join us. Quinn was holding him when my sister came in and hugged me for what felt like forever. The rest of our family came in and there was a photographer that was capturing as many moments as they could. His outfit had a little hat that I kept adjusting because I wanted him to stay warm; he had so much hair. When I was holding him, I remember my mom stepped out into the hall and let out a wail I don't think I'll ever forget. As he went from family member to family member, I just watched everyone else take him in and soak up what they could. He had long legs, he was 20 inches long, 5lbs 11 ounces. As I watched everyone in the room take their turn, Stella came over to me and told me that I didn't have to be as strong as I was. I told her I didn't know what else to do. I was always the happy, optimistic one in my family; I didn't know what else to do. They all had been waiting for him just like we were. I wanted everyone who wanted to hold him, to have that chance. It was the only one any of us were going to get. I felt bad that I got to have him all to myself for 9 months so I let everyone have a longer turn with him.

The doctor came in and let me know that there'd been no complications and that I would be able to have more children when ready. I looked at Quinn and told him that I would be willing to try again, just in hopes of a different outcome. We spent a total of 5 hours holding him. His skin started to turn a dark purple and it became unbearable to look at him. We didn't want to remember him like that so we said our final goodbye and watched the nurse take him out of the room. Jill, our night nurse, was amazing. I can't be more thankful for the medical team we had that day. I only wish it would've been a day of true celebration, instead of being a birth and a death on the same day. Before we left the hospital, they told me that I could let my milk continue to come in or I could get cabbage leaves to put in my bra and compress my breasts to make my milk dry up. They'd given us a keepsake box that had a memorial certificate that included his feet and handprints, a lock of his hair, a candle and a journal. They also gave me two necklaces; a porcelain heart with the middle piece missing and a smaller porcelain heart that completed my necklace, for Teigen to wear. We didn't see him before we left, we chose to do an autopsy and were told it wasn't a good idea to see him afterwards. We didn't want to go home. Everything was ready. His bassinet was in our room. His clothes were all washed and put away. As we were leaving, Quinn's best friend, James, called to see what was going on; he didn't know

yet. Quinn told him. He didn't have much to say, what can you say? He asked what we had named him, we hadn't told anyone, we wanted it to be a "surprise". "Teigen James, we wanted to name him after his uncle". And I wanted to call him TJ. We spoke with three different chaplains and one of the cofounders of the Forget Me Not Foundation there in the hospital between the time we'd gotten there and the time he was born, 13 hrs later. Carolyn Ringo, the cofounder we spoke with, made us a mold of his feet and thanked us for sharing our story and our Teigen with her.

We chose to have him cremated so that he can be home with us. His urn is a silver baby block, with the inscription "Too Perfect for Earth" because he truly was. We miss him every day. There's not a day that we don't think of him or cry because of how much we miss him. I wouldn't wish this life on my worst enemy, having to move forward every day because that's all you can do. He will always be our first and he will always be loved and missed. Thank you again, for this opportunity to do something bigger with our grief.

Crystal's Story:

My name is Crystal Potter and I live in Pinedale, Wyoming. My daughter, Briley, was stillborn. I was 40 weeks pregnant, 3 days past my due date, when I finally went into labor. I was in a hospital in Worland, WY, and my placenta abrupted. But, given this was a rural hospital where there was only one functional and staffed operating room, one room in which someone else was currently already in the middle of a knee surgery, I was unable to receive my emergency C-section in time to save my daughter's life.

I support this legislation that helps shine a light on the stillbirth crisis that is affecting not only our state, but also our country, and I would appreciate the support of our local leaders for the Shine for Autumn Act, for my daughter, Briley, her story... and all babies lost too soon.

Terrell's Story:

My son, Kegan Christopher, was stillborn at term. He was 38.5 weeks along, just 10 days before his due date. He was 6 pounds, 10 ounces and 20 inches long and was perfect in all ways, save one - he was perfectly, breathlessly, silent. Kegan's cause of death was a blood clot at the site of a twist in his umbilical cord. His cord was thinner than usual, due to it only having one artery instead of the usual two. He was classified as an isolated single umbilical artery baby, a condition so benign ACOG didn't even list management guidelines for it and SMFM said, at most, one additional scan may be warranted 'to reassure the mother.' Prior to our son's death, iSUA was not acknowledged in the US as a contributing cause for stillbirth (we have since petitioned SMFM to change this, and it is now acknowledged to contribute to stillbirth). Notably, other countries allow iSUA babies to be delivered at term (37 weeks), but not enough data has been collected in the US to support this for iSUA babies. We asked for delivery at 37 weeks and were denied it, based on this lack of data and fundamental misunderstanding in the US healthcare system of isolated single umbilical artery pregnancies. It kills me that had I been pregnant in a different country, our son likely would have survived.

The US is currently ranked as one of the lowest developed nations in the world at reducing our stillbirth rate - we are literally one of the worst developed nations when it comes to assessing and fixing our own medical shortcomings when it comes to stillbirth. Stillbirth is not inevitable - it's not 'just one of those things that happens.' It can be prevented, but we have to collect data to understand it first. My son's death destroyed our family. It destroyed my life, it destroyed my husband's life, and I can only hope it does not completely destroy our daughter's life. Stillbirth changes everything, forever, but up to this point, our country has chosen to look the other way instead of addressing this huge public health crisis. We can't prevent what we don't understand - we have to start collecting data and conducting research to prevent stillbirth. No mother should say to herself, if only I hadn't been pregnant in the US, my child would have lived. Please support legislation to collect data on the causes of stillbirth.

With sadness,
Terrell Hatzilias, PhD

Jennifer's Story:

My name is Jennifer N. Brown and I live in Seattle, Washington. 18 years ago I gave birth to my first and only child when I was 28 weeks pregnant. I had severe preeclampsia and HELLP Syndrome. I did not know at the time how serious our situation was. I had an emergency C-section at the UWMC in Seattle. My son weighed 1141 g (or 40 ounces - that is 2 1/2 lbs). His due date was two days after the inauguration in January and he was born two days after the election in November. He spent 9 weeks in the hospital (between the NICU and special care nursery) before we brought him home a few weeks before his due date. I learned later we had both been within a day of dying. So I am no stranger to complications in pregnancy.

This past spring, my husband and I were expecting our first grandchild through his daughter (a bonus daughter to me). We did not rush to tell our friends because we knew that all sorts of things can go wrong early in a pregnancy. When my bonus daughter approached her third trimester, it seemed as though she was out of the woods, and we could look forward to our granddaughter. Unfortunately on St. Patrick's Day, we learned there was no fetal heartbeat. It was crushing, even more so knowing that our daughter had to be induced and deliver her baby without a heartbeat. We got to meet our stillborn granddaughter. It was the hardest day but I am glad and we were honored to hold her. Our greatest sadness was for her parents and their personal loss. They wanted this baby. At the time we had understood it was an umbilical cord accident. Later a researcher looking at her placenta shared a report that told us her death was preventable. It was another crushing blow all over again that brings fresh tears to my eyes as I think about it. We learned the baby had an insufficient placenta. In 2022 in the United States I would not have imagined this problem. We need to invest in and improve maternal and fetal care to improve outcomes for other families and end preventable stillborn deaths.

Jennifer's Story:

My son, Harrison was stillborn at 37 weeks from unknown causes. It was my 1st pregnancy. I was 34/35 years old. I was so excited. I never feared losing him. That was something that happened to other people. The father was in his final years at medical school and I was the head of household working sometimes 50 hours per week as a dispatcher for a concrete company. We weren't married. I knew nothing about pregnancy nor how to deal with pregnancy with full time employment. I was told at my hospital that all patients needed to rotate through each OB so we nearly saw a different doctor at each prenatal appointment. It was a lot to go through. As the pregnancy went on, funny things started to happen. The father became more abusive, work became harder, and, everyday the pregnancy progressed, the more I couldn't shake almost a dark cloud over his little life. I felt him move at 9 weeks and 1 day. He was so active. I never loved anything the way I loved him from the beginning. It was such pure love.

I heard it all though. From others telling me I was having twins to people feeling it was acceptable to say they weren't having children because they deemed it "selfish". I was told I gained too much weight, that I needed to choose between a prenatal appointment and work, and how stupid I was by the father daily. That was the nicest way he would put it. I continued to go to work and support him for 1.5 years total. Harrison kept me holding on. He was the only thing that mattered. At what I believed was my 34th week prenatal appointment, the doctor couldn't find his heart rate at the end of it with the doppler. He moved it around trying to hear that 151 bpm which Harrison always was but it never happened. He said he was going to check to see if anyone was in the ultrasound room so we could check in there and left. When the door latched shut, I realized he was going to come back in and tell me my son was gone. I felt numb.

We walked to the ultrasound room where it showed my baby, laying there, not moving, a flatline heart rate bar at the bottom, and silence hit the room. The doctor said, "I'm sorry. This is very very rare. He is gone. The next thing we need you to do is deliver him. You don't have to go tonight. Go to the hospital no later than tomorrow. Do you need me to call anyone?" My mind was racing. I told them to call his father. While I waited, the ultrasound tech, Bambi, was

sobbing. She hugged me so tight which is when the tears came and said, "This just* happened. I have done this for over 10 years and this just happened. I feel so bad for the babies when you can tell they were gone for some time." I still don't know what to say about that. She was kind. That's all I knew. I let the father know our kid was gone. I told work. I told my family. I drove home alone. I went into the hospital that night. They induced me and broke my water. They said the amniotic fluid was normal, no sign of infection. I laid there for 2 days crying, waiting to dilate. My life felt like it went with his. On Sunday morning, I finally reached 10 cm and pushed maybe 4-8 times and whispered "ok" and he was here. I loved him. All I knew is I looked at him and I loved him with all my whole heart. He was perfect.

Harrison was born on September 16th, 2018 at 11:37 am. He had a full head of dark brown hair and my eyes. He was 19.5" long and 6.5 lbs. I'll never forget how he smelled. He smelled like home. When he started to turn blue, I asked if he could be put in the freezer. I couldn't handle that. I requested an autopsy. The results came back that he was 2-3 weeks older than they thought. His death was ruled unknown causes and I was handed a card stock version of a birth certificate that looked nothing like what alive babies received. I hated that. It said to me that he didn't matter because he never took a breath outside of me. As if that mattered. He could feel pain because of that age. He could feel me cry. He could hear everyone outside of me. He knew my voice. I was the only one who knew him so I guess that's why no one seemed to care like I did. It's a very strange thing about humanity to protect ourselves from the pain. Ignorance seemed to be preferred over allowing such tragedy to wash over us and let us feel something profound. Once again, I found myself alone in a heartless world.

The father ordered a paternity test because he had convinced himself I cheated on him and a baby that didn't live couldn't possibly be his. When the lab guy came, they brought Harrison to me and the freezer had done wonders. He wasn't as swollen, his skin looked like my skin, and I could see him fully. As the lab person collected fingernail clippings and a cheek swab, I traced my eyes over everything millimeter on his face hoping to seer it into my memory for all eternity. I'll never forget that 10 minutes where it was just him and me after the lab guy left. It is the only time we had alone before his cremation. Needless to say, the paternity test came back 99.999999% the fathers son. I've never cheated on anyone. Looking back I can't believe I allowed that. Not on such a sacred time. I regret that.

The hospital gave me 3D clay hand and foot molds. They are the greatest treasure of mine beyond his urn. Having to order the pet or dog sized urn was demoralizing but, I think most people just don't want to say "baby" size. When I went back for our postpartum appointment, the delivering OB said something I'll never forget. She said, "It's hard to know had we delivered him sooner, he'd likely be ok." How do you live with that? The week after I was discharged, I ran 3-5 miles a day and beat the hell out of my body. I cried for weeks on end while chatting in online support groups for months. I started seeing a therapist 3 times per week, quit drinking because my therapist said it makes grief worse, and, finally the father eventually left me. I wanted to do a funeral but couldn't afford it. His urn rests on a shelf in my bedroom. Life went on without me. I celebrate all of his birthdays by doing something I know he would've loved for his age. Last year I went to the zoo and the Milwaukee Art Museum. We had a small party at my parents house and that helped me heal a lot. I'm 35 weeks pregnant with twins today and married to a kind man who loves me. There isn't a day that goes by where I'm not terrified the same thing will happen to these little lives. These doctors won't let me go past 37 weeks due to Harrison and lack of reason. I have combed over my medical records and everything I could've caused this to happen running it by the OB each time. She assured me I did nothing wrong. I did what we all do as parents and blamed myself. I think I still do.

I changed my number and haven't spoken to Harrison's father nor anyone he knows since he left that spring. I was disgusted with him. He never shed a tear over that baby and acted happier after his death. I finally paid off labor and delivery charges this winter, over 4 years later. I left my job around his first birthday when I was having the worst time. Anniversaries are so hard. I had doctors notes but my grief wasn't in their best interest. Sometimes, silence really is best. I've found epithets usually only comfort those who give them. There isn't a day that goes by where this doesn't touch my life and my heart. I think about who he would've been at 4 years old. I wonder what he would've looked like. I bet he would be so excited to be a big brother. For now, I will talk to my son in the space between yesterday and tomorrow where neither time nor space exists. I'll see him again. It will forever be not soon enough. Why I am here is to speak on behalf of the lack of information tied to my son and babies all across the world that are chalked up to "we don't know". That's not good enough. Did you know we can perform intrauterine heart surgery on a baby? That's

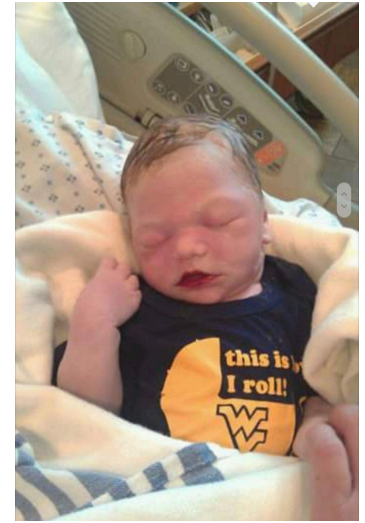
amazing. Why are so many lives being lost and stamped with an "I'll never know"? Does anyone realize the weight these mothers carry for the rest of their lifetime blaming themselves even though they were true to their child? It's earth shattering. I've never known pain like this. Furthermore, I don't want to see anyone experiencing this kind of pain. I cringe when I see more and more people waking up to this nightmare. Thank you for taking a moment and stepping into mine and attempting to empathize. I know it's not easy. I know it's not the feel good story everyone wants but, it is the raw truth of our lives for the time we had together. Thank you for your time. Let's help where it is needed the most instead of hemorrhaging resources to where it's just a battle between sides. This is the unspoken cause that doesn't get enough attention.

We should be able to access how many stillbirths a hospital had in a year. We should be able to access affordable prenatal care of our choosing. We should be able to receive a birth certificate for all stillborn babies instead of some cheap cardstock I could've made at home. It's incredibly insulting. We should be able to sit with our child without having to turn them over to a freezer after an hour with the help of at least one cuddle cot (TM) at each birthing center. We should be able to afford labor and delivery costs after delivering a stillborn baby. We should be able to return nursery and childcare items still in original packaging at cost when nurseries are not needed and the mother breaks down at the sight of even a onesie. We shouldn't have to become so septic after delivery of a stillborn child that we are now afraid for our life as well. We should educate employers on the mental toll losing a child to stillbirth can cause. We should raise awareness to this issue as a whole for society. We deserve to have protection under the law to freely attend all prenatal and postpartum visits without fearing losing our jobs. We deserve to know why our children died. We deserve a happy pregnancy. I support this because of my son, Harrison Rasmus who was 37 weeks stillborn from unknown causes.



Jami's Story:

October 15th, 2010 was the happiest day of my life. Little did I know, in 8 1/2 months, my son, Tyler Noah, would be stillborn. This isn't something you are told or something that is talked about during your pregnancy. It's not talked about until it's too late and you're a statistic. You're on the hard side of being a mother, being a mother in the silence, with only your tears your wiping and not your baby's. As you sit in the rocking chair you picked out for their nursery, your arms are empty. THIS is what no one talks about and that needs to change today! From the time that I found out I was pregnant until I delivered, I had a textbook pregnancy. No complications, medical issues, NOTHING! My ultrasounds, bloodwork, all of that were all within normal limits. At my last exam/appt. with my Dr., she said everything was normal and to be expected. She checked my cervix, measured my belly, and listened to the baby's heartbeat, all normal. We had even scheduled my induction date. The day after my appointment, I felt fine/was normal. My son, Tyler had been moving around/kicking me all day just as he had all during my pregnancy when I started feeling him. 2 days after my appointment I noticed Tyler's kicking/moving wasn't as often, but still moving. I figured he was just getting further into the birthing canal like my Dr. said he would do the further along I went making it harder/more difficult to feel the kick/movements. My Dr. assured me this was all normal towards the ending of your pregnancy. By the evening, Tyler hadn't been kicking/moving like he normally does and that's when I called my Dr. just to check & make sure everything is ok.



I go to the hospital to get checked in & looked at, the nurse gets me hooked up to the ultrasound machine & tried finding the heartbeat, but said it kept cutting out, that this was an older ultrasound machine and she was going to call for the Dr. to come in & double check to make sure everything is ok and going to get a newer ultrasound machine. The doctor comes in and takes her time leaving no part of my belly unscanned. With a blank stare, she turns to me and says, "I am so sorry, but I can't find your son's heartbeat." The words NO mother EVER wants to hear. By then, it was too late to do anything. I wish I had known about measuring your placenta & counting the kicks. Maybe Tyler would be here if I knew about this during my pregnancy. Maybe Tyler would be here if we started taking the extra mile and measurements on ALL expectant mothers so no other Mom, Dad, Grandparents, brothers and sisters have to go through this pain. Every day I live my life without one of my children. No mother should ever have to go on in life without their baby. Spread knowledge & awareness. Break the silence. Speak up. Speak out. Offer maternity leave to those who don't get to bring their baby home so they can have time to deal and process everything and most importantly HEAL. Don't forget that when people lose a baby they aren't just losing a newborn. They are also losing their toddler taking their first step. Their infant started to read. Their son is graduating High School. Their own child getting married to the love of their life. They are losing every magical moment. In the blink of an eye, the future was erased. You were born silent. Perfect and beautiful. Still loved. Still missed. Still remembered. Everyday. Stillborn. But Still born.



Joellen's Story: A Grandmother's Story

My youngest daughter had been trying to get pregnant to no avail but was able to go through IVF to become pregnant. Very exciting, expecting my first grandchild! In March I was having lunch with a friend in Seattle; (I live 30-50 minutes south in Auburn). When we had finished lunch and a nice walk around her neighborhood I checked my phone. There

was a missed call from my son in law, Bridger. Since he usually never calls me I knew something was up and was dreading that that something was about Gabie and her pregnancy. I immediately called him back and he was sobbing saying the baby was dead at 34 weeks. The feeling was of ice melting into the floor and me with it. I don't want this to be happening to my child.

Quickly told Bridger I would come. Shaking, told my friend what had happened and that I would drive to Montana immediately. I called my neighbor in Auburn and told her of my plan. She was concerned about me starting off for Gabie and Bridger's in Columbia Falls since it was a nine hour drive from Auburn and it was getting close to 6pm. Some sort of huge fire in me burned with determination to get in the car and head over mountain passes to be with my daughter. Luckily my neighbor said she would go too to keep me awake on the dark drive. We arrived at the Whitefish hospital around 4am. I also sent for my oldest daughter (Gabie's sister) and her Dad and his wife to come.

The next 24 hours were the most horrific I have ever experienced; having to see my daughter hurt so badly and the struggle to go through giving birth to a stillborn child. Harlow Grace Deschamps was the most beautiful baby! Glossy thick wavy curly hair, round cheeks and such perfect deep red blossom lips. How could she be dead? Both sides of the family held vigil at the hospital, taking turns giving Gabie and Bridger support. My oldest and I went in together and I held my first grandchild in my arms, tears just flowing.

Because of Harlow's death, I became more aware of the tragic issue of so many stillbirths in this country. Gabie has become much more involved, searching for information to the unanswerable "why?" I am really proud of her tenacity even during her deep grief to reach out to help others and to share Harlow's story so perhaps in the future more attention and care will be given to this issue. And in fact more attention given to all of women's health care.

Kelly's Story:

Here is the story of my first son, William. On April 28, 2021 I gave birth to my first son, William James. He weighed 6lbs, 2oz and was 20 inches long. I never got to see his eyes and I never got to hear him cry. Will was born still at 36 weeks.

My pregnancy with Will was completely normal. He was a perfectly healthy little boy. I had a growth ultrasound on a Thursday 35+2 and Will looked great. He was so wiggly that we couldn't get a good picture of his face. On Saturday and Sunday I had 2 virtual baby showers. I asked my family and friends to send their favorite children's books with a note written to Will instead of sending gifts. While on Zoom in the nursery, my loved ones told me why the books were their favorite and I told everyone how excited I was that I was going to be meeting him in just a few short weeks. On Monday morning I woke up early in the morning and couldn't go back to sleep. I decided to get up and start my day. I was making breakfast when I suddenly had this realization that I didn't remember the last time I felt Will move. I woke up my husband and told him we needed to go to the doctor.

At my OB's office, the nurses tried to do a Non Stress Test but couldn't find a heartbeat. They brought in a Nurse Practitioner with a Doppler and she couldn't find a heartbeat. Then we had to wait for an ultrasound room to open to confirm that our worst fear had indeed come true. When I saw Will on the ultrasound, I knew immediately that he was gone. Our first baby had died. We went home and waited for our doctor to call us. We had to call our families and tell them that we wouldn't be bringing a baby home. I was told I had to give birth to a baby that had died. On Tuesday morning, we drove to the hospital to start the induction process. 28 hours later at 12:45 pm on Wednesday April 28th, Will was born. He was placed on my chest and I got to hold my first son, who never got to cry. He was perfect and looked exactly like my husband. We spent some time with Will and took some pictures with him and discharged home without our baby within 6 hours of me giving birth. We left the hospital not knowing why our son died and unsure if we would ever have an answer. We had an autopsy done and his cause of death was listed as unknown but it was noted that his placenta was extremely small. We sought out a specialist at Yale who examined Will's placenta. Dr. Kliman found that Will's placenta was 0.3% for his body weight. Will's death was preventable. Had his placenta been

measured throughout pregnancy he would likely still be here. Had I been educated on the importance of kick counts and knowing Will's normal movement pattern, he would likely still be here and I wouldn't have had to leave the hospital with a box instead of a baby. No family should have to endure the lifelong devastation and heartbreak of losing a child. I'll never stop fighting and demanding change to end preventable stillbirth so that no other families have to bury their babies.

Lauren's Story:

I support the SHINE for Autumn act for my son, William Derryberry-Romaine Jr. My husband and I are healthy 20-year-olds and unfortunately lost our son to stillbirth. We live in a suburban area outside of Washington, DC, have good jobs and strong healthcare insurance. Our experience could have been 100% avoidable and I truly believe our doctors could have done better and we could have had more information at hand. It's 2022 and more should be done to educate and there should be way more resources than there are.

Cheyenne's Story:

Kaokee's story...

I was 19 when I became pregnant with my first daughter, though it was 4 months before we officially knew, as I'd always had irregular periods, but I had begun feeling flutters and so we suspected I was pregnant. My fiancé felt as though he knew before I did but was reluctant to say anything to me! Me and our daughter was spoiled beyond belief. My fiancé would get up practically almost every night/morning at 3 or 4 am to fix us homemade french fries. The best part is that nobody knew, she was our secret, until his mother looked at him the night I went into full labor and asked if we would be having a baby, and we said yes. She tried to tell us that our little girl was going to be a boy, normally she's correct on guessing the gender of babies, but not this time!

Unfortunately, our little girl was born sleeping, June 28th, 2020 at 4:26 a.m. due to being breech. I was at 41+5 weeks when I went into labor with her. When we first arrived at the hospital we got to listen to her heartbeat for the first time, due to the Covid pandemic we couldn't get to all of our prenatal appointments and checkups. When the doctor checked us over she was in the correct position for delivery, but after a strong contraction, he reassessed and she had flipped back around to breech position. He tried to turn her but failed. I ended up delivering my baby girl, and after at least 20 minutes of attempted resuscitation, my fiancé got the heartbreaking news. He came over to me, but I knew she wasn't alive. Other than being breech there was no indication for concern, her lungs were clear, and she hadn't aspirated during delivery. We named her Kaokee Stream (Kay-O-Key).

Our second loss...

Here is my daughter Keokee's story:

I was 23 years old, and we lost our special rainbow baby, Keokee Dream. I was 24 weeks pregnant, and we lost her October 18, 2022. My pregnancy had been going really well just like my first had, and it was being led by midwifery care. We went for an ultrasound which measured me at about 21 weeks 5 days, and we were scheduled for another ultrasound October 17th. I had my 24 week appointment and when I got there they checked my vitals like they normally did, and when it came to my blood pressure they were having a hard time getting a measurement, and when they finally did it showed my blood pressure was a bit high. My midwife told us I was in the beginning stages of preeclampsia. I had to give a urine sample which indicated signs of a UTI or preeclampsia. We got to hear Keokee's heartbeat, and it was strong and beautiful. Morgan, my midwife, asked if we were ready and excited for our second ultrasound, we said yes, and I was prescribed medication for my blood pressure and UTI. The day before my ultrasound appointment I barely felt Keokee Dream move, but I didn't think too much of it as I wasn't feeling too well and so I thought we were both run down and exhausted. But my instincts started to pick up as the day went on. We attended our second ultrasound the next day, and all seemed fine and normal to begin with. The ultrasound tech didn't act like anything was wrong, when he got up he shook my tummy and told us that he was going to give her a moment to move and he would be right back, and that he was going to get my midwife. He returned, and I tried to make a joke to lighten the situation, but when my

midwife arrived she had this look on her face that something was wrong, and that's when she told us that Keokee no longer had a heartbeat. She told us she most likely passed away recently, within 24 hours. ❤️ I watched my partner break down in tears and my midwife told us that she'd like to induce me right away and I could either go up to labor and delivery or go back home and get stuff and come back. I made the difficult decision to go up and get situated and for them to start my induction. They began the induction that day about 3pm, and I delivered her the next day at 2:21 pm. Once she was born, we discovered her cord had wrapped tightly around her neck, and it had cut the oxygen supply off, known as a "true knot".

Joanna's Story:

I've been sitting here for a while trying to piece together my thoughts and words. I want to share Andelyn's story, but find myself wondering where that should even begin. Is it during my pregnancy, or is it before? Is it the moment her heart stopped beating, or is it after? I can promise one thing, her story does not ever have an ending. After Andelyn is just the beginning of a new chapter.

Andelyn's entire short life was inside of me, but her story started long before those two pink lines. Two years of longing for and praying for the missing puzzle piece to complete our family. Two years of failure after failure, and slowly coming to terms with being a family of 4. Two years of struggling with infertility and I still remember the shock when I took that test. Just days before planning when to schedule my egg retrieval for our IVF journey, our life pivoted down a new path with our little miracle. With zero interventions, we were pregnant. The excitement then followed when we found out that this little miracle was a girl. The missing piece to complete our family. I grew and nurtured my baby girl for 37 weeks. I loved her from the second I saw that test, before I even heard her heart beating inside of me. She was a force. The way she moved around inside of me made me never feel alone. She'd wake me up multiple times a night ready to party. She danced up a storm to Philharmagic in Disney, exactly like her brothers did when they were in my belly too. She loved ice cream. She loved to kick her brothers when they would fight over who got to feel mommy's belly. She loved hearing her daddy's voice and made sure he could feel her as much as me. She was so strong and made her presence known. We could only imagine the personality she would have. She was so wanted. She was so loved.

After you make it past the first trimester, you're supposed to be in the "safe zone." You breathe a sigh of relief when everything is perfect at the anatomy scan at 20 weeks. And another, when you reach 24 weeks. The relief that your baby will probably live even if they're born sooner than you were hoping, thanks to amazing NICU care. Past week 32, the anticipation grows. You wonder who they will look like. You get their nursery ready, and make sure everything is in place for their arrival. You get your hospital bags packed and the car seat installed. You're ready, and just waiting for that beautiful day when they will decide to come into your world. Then you're blindsided. The risk of stillbirth is less than 1%. A thought that I'm sure never even crossed your mind when you're pregnant, as I know it never crossed mine. December 7th. We had an ultrasound that went perfect that very morning, in the same building that we would be back at just 3 hours later. We made it to 37 weeks and 2 days. Everything was perfect... until it wasn't.

Contractions start and I feel an excruciating pain on top of them that just won't let up. I lay on the floor in the bathroom in pure panic that I'm going to have my baby right there. I was due to have a repeat c section but knew she was head down, so I immediately thought "omg what if I need to push?". Looking back, I wish that was the worst of my worries. I can't get off the floor. "Just get up. Get in the car." Words I would keep telling myself. Thoughts that still haunt me. Next thing I know, I'm being laid on a stretcher, kissing my boys goodbye. I hear the EMT say, "Looks like mama is having a baby today!"

The pain; indescribable. My first time in an ambulance, scared out of my mind. Of all the thoughts that went through my head, never could I have been prepared for what was about to happen. I'm wheeled up to triage, alone, because Eric wasn't allowed in the ambulance with me. The nurse is questioning me about why I'm supposed to get a c-section. I remember yelling "I'm not pushing. She's head down and coming. PLEASE just get me on the OR table now." I remember feeling like she was judging me and probably just thinking I was a girl that couldn't handle labor pains, as

her meaningless questions just kept coming. They put the monitor straps across my stomach. I immediately hear nothing. I can still feel how hard they pushed and moved the sensors around frantically in all I can describe as sheer panic. "Lower her volume next door!" ... as if it really could have been a volume issue. Time stood still. They roll over an ultrasound machine. I turn to Eric before anyone has uttered a word to me. "They can't find her heartbeat." I can't believe I even spoke those words. I spoke to them and knew, but still held on to hope that I was wrong. One doctor scans, a second doctor scans. "I'm so sorry. There's no heartbeat. Your baby did not make it." Words you never imagine hearing, and I pray you never will. My entire world stopped. How could this even be real? She was perfectly fine 3 hours earlier! The out of body experience I had is something I will never be able to describe.

Focus was immediately switched to me, as the patient and quickly an emergent situation. We didn't even have a second to grasp what just happened and I'm giving consent for blood transfusions and the possibility of losing my uterus and surrounding reproductive organs. I was bleeding internally, my BP 85/48. At this point they didn't know for sure what actually happened, but were thinking it was a uterine rupture, just based on the knowledge that I had a previous c-section. I was unstable and at risk for DIC. I remember being moved to the cold, metal operating table, and everyone moving so quickly around me. I remember looking around for Eric and not seeing him. Thinking about the fear he must have felt in those moments, not knowing if he was also going to lose me, breaks me all over again. I remember hearing them say "let's wait until she's fully under". A huge fear of mine has always been to be put to sleep for surgery; I didn't even have a second to realize that that's what was happening. Next thing I know I'm waking up in recovery, Eric's hand in mine, tears down his face. Coming out of that, and waking up from what felt like a nightmare, for a split second I thought maybe none of it really happened. Oh, but it did. This nightmare was just beginning.

Our world shattered. Our baby, gone. 37 weeks of a "low risk" pregnancy, our perfect Andelyn, never got to take a breath. A maternity room that normally is supposed to be filled with the sound of crying, and "congratulations" from everyone who walks in, quickly felt like an entirely different place. Instead of our newborn daughter's cries, it was ours. Instead of congratulations, it was "I'm so sorry."

My doctor came in to talk to us about what happened. Placenta abruption. The two words that will haunt me for the rest of my life. While most abruptions are found early on because of visible bleeding, mine was completely spontaneous and concealed. The severe pain was the only tangible sign I had that anything was wrong, and at that time I had thought I was just in a quickly progressing labor. During surgery, a 500mL blood clot was found behind my placenta, where it had separated from my uterine wall. I suffered a hemorrhage of nearly 2000mL blood loss and subsequently needed three units of blood. My doctor talked about the risk factors that cause abruptions, and I had none. There's a 1% chance of a placenta abruption happening. In that 1%, about 15% of babies do not survive. This was our lightning strike.

Nothing could ever prepare you for the moment you meet your baby in this scenario. We had no idea what to expect or how long we would have with her. They wheeled her in, and she looked like a perfectly healthy, sleeping angel. She was placed in my arms and I was screaming inside. Begging for some miracle and for her to just wake up. I touched her perfectly soft skin, grazed her tiny button nose, and ran my fingers through her thick black hair. I would have given anything to hear her cry and to see her eyes looking up at mine. Tears streamed down my face, onto hers while I kissed her. The aching I felt inside of my heart was crippling. I felt like I couldn't even take a breath in, from the weight of this immense love that was immediately transformed into grief. Eric held onto me, as we both held her. Our nurses were amazing and grabbed my phone to take pictures. I am forever indebted to them. You don't know what you're supposed to do in these moments, and because of them, we have these beautiful memories of our daughter. The only pictures we will ever have of her. The only way we can share her with everyone. They cared for her as if she was living and breathing. They talked to her, they dressed her, they told her how beautiful she was. They were so gentle and kind with her. These nurses who were complete strangers, made such a lasting impact on my heart.

Eric's heart was so broken, and there was nothing I could do to fix it. I couldn't comfort him anymore than I could comfort myself. I have never seen him in so much pain before, and I couldn't help but blame myself. "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry." Words I kept saying to both her and to him. I felt like my body which was supposed to protect her, and did for

9 months, completely failed her. Completely failed them both. I heard a faint cry from somewhere else on the floor. The pain. Do they know how truly lucky they are? Why were we the ones chosen to face this immeasurable pain and loss? The questions didn't stop, and I don't think they ever will. That night into the next morning was a blur. I barely slept. I remember waking up multiple times, just sobbing. The morning came and in that instant I looked over at the bassinet, a ray of sunshine beamed into the room and onto her. It felt surreal. At that very moment life felt perfectly normal. Just my newborn baby girl, peacefully sleeping next to us. I close my eyes now and I'm taken right back there to that moment. That moment where time stood still and it took a few seconds for my brain to catch up to the reality of this nightmare we were living. This nightmare of holding onto our lifeless baby. This nightmare of moving forward without her. How do we tell her big brothers that she's finally here but she isn't coming home with us? We didn't know what was right or what was wrong, but my nurse pushed for the hospital to allow the boys to come see us. Under normal circumstances, siblings under age 12 are not allowed to visit. We chose to have her out of the room, to spare them.

"Daddy, why are you crying? Daddy, what's wrong?"

"Mommy, where's Andelyn? Is she here?"

My poor boys. My heart breaks for theirs. Being touched by such a big loss and such grief at such a young age. We talked to them and tried to explain in the best way we could that Andelyn wasn't coming home with us. That something terrible had happened, but that it was all going to be okay. We told them it was ok to be sad, and angry, and ok to cry. We promised them we would all get through this together. We showed them pictures of her. Their little brains were turning and they innocently asked if she was still here, and if they could see her. At that moment, we both agreed it was best, and I am forever grateful that we made that decision to bring her back in. They held her, they kissed her, they cried. They would have been the absolute best big brothers.

We weren't expecting visitors, because who knows how to act in all of this? But they came. Our family, our friends. They didn't know what they were walking into. They didn't expect to meet her, they just wanted to be there for us. Being thrown into something so big, something so hard, you would never have known. The way they showed up, and how they acted with her, again as if she was living and breathing. Talking to her, holding her, kissing her. Admiring every little detail of her. It was such a beautiful thing to witness, and something I will never forget.

Nearly 42 hours we had with our Andelyn, and it was time to say goodbye. She was changing before our eyes and we couldn't bear to witness it any longer. My nurse promised she would care for her and sit with her and tell her how much she was loved. The mother instinct in me wanted to jump out of the bed and run after her. My baby ripped away from me. My baby, no longer a part of me. My baby, not coming home with us. This was so surreal. I asked Eric how we were ever going to get through this. In all honesty, I now know we never will. We will carry this pain for the rest of our lives. It will never go away, but I hope for a day when we will learn to walk beside it.

Perhaps one of the most excruciating things to add on top of being wheeled out of the hospital with empty arms, is that your body doesn't know that your baby died. Against my will, I experienced everything a normal mom does postpartum. Recovering from a brutal surgery, because there's no time to be gentle in an emergent c-section. Health issues developing and just piling on. The emotional pain of milk coming in meant for your baby that isn't there to feed, on top of the physical pain of engorgement and trying to stop production. You'd think loss moms could somehow be spared all postpartum pain to somehow ease the pain of losing their baby. The pain that will live with them forever. The pain. Unspeakable pain that lives with me every second of every day. The emptiness I feel in my body that grew and housed my daughter for 9 months. Now I'm left with just an incision lined deflated belly, where she moved, stretched, flipped, and kicked all day long and had nothing to show on the outside. No baby to look at or hold. All I can do is hold onto the memories and the moments of her inside of me. The only life she lived was with me. Her heart is only beating with mine. I read about something called fetal-maternal microchimerism. Besides providing nutrients to the baby, the placenta actually allows cells to pass between the mother and her baby. In a scientific study, pathologists found cells with Y chromosomes in autopsies that were done on 26 women who died after pregnancy. Why is this interesting? Cells with Y chromosomes are male cells and should not exist in a female body. Each of the 26 women had

been carrying sons. The pathologists found these baby boy cells in every organ that they tested. The cells had developed into functioning tissue in each of the organs. Fetal cells in the brain developed into brain tissue. Fetal cells in the kidneys became kidney tissue, and fetal cells in the heart became heart tissue. The cells of these baby boys were, scientifically, a part of their mothers' beating hearts.

When I say I will always carry Andi in my heart, I quite literally am. With every beat of my utterly broken heart, she is there. With every single breath of air into my lungs, she is there. I would have given my life in an instant to save her. I will question it all until my very last breath, but I wholeheartedly want to believe that my angel saved my life. Placental abruptions are extremely rare. Severe abruptions, like mine, can be fatal to both the baby and the mother. The name Andelyn means "beautiful" and "pillar of strength". The strength and selflessness of my breathtakingly beautiful baby girl will never be forgotten. Andelyn chose herself because she knew her big brothers and her daddy needed me more.

We are forever changed, forever broken, but forever searching. A bigger meaning, some bigger purpose, some light from underneath the darkness. There has to be something beautiful to come out of this unimaginable loss. There has to be an answer, on our journey After Andelyn.

Andelyn,

I promise to always tell your story.

I promise to never stop saying your name.

I promise to always keep you alive in our family.

I promise to never stop searching for answers.

I promise to do good in your honor and make you proud to be my daughter.

I promise to keep fighting for changes in perinatal care and testing.

I promise to advocate for all pregnancies to be treated the same.

I promise to help others who will walk this path of pain and loss.

I promise to look for you in all of earth's beauty.

I promise to love you with my whole heart and carry you always.

This is my promise to you, until I can hold you in my arms again. 🕊️

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Shalyte's Story:

After spending two weeks bedridden in a hospital, I lost my son Tavyn to placental abruption at 30 weeks leading to a stillbirth delivery. Crushed going home to an empty nursery I was left with no answers. The following years were met with turmoil and grief, but I couldn't accept the fact there was nothing I could do. Volunteering with my local TEARS foundation led to research which led to the finding of PUSH, Healthy Birthday and other nonprofits fighting to make a change. Upon seeing this the hole in my heart was filled with inspiration to help. I see SHINE as just the first step of a miracle that is to come!

Theresa's Story:

I write here to ask for your help to end the crisis of stillborn babies in this country and especially in the state of Alabama. I experienced a 40-week stillborn daughter in 1989. In 2021 my daughter delivered her 40-week-old daughter stillborn! The pain is unbearable and the tragedy unimaginable in this day and age. The US must do more to help women with healthy deliveries and curb infant mortality. Simple tests can avoid these tragedies, and these tests should be part of basic prenatal care. Please help us to make Alabama a leader in decreasing Stillborn deaths. Our babies need you.

Eric and Kaitlin's Story:

Our daughter, Ella, was stillborn at 31 weeks' gestation on August 8th, 2021. During our pregnancy, stillbirth was never mentioned; we were not educated in ways to protect our child. Had we received education on the potential risks, and measures to be taken to prevent stillbirth, maybe she would be with us today. We do not want another family to have their lives shattered by losing a child.

Deanna's Story:

My grandson was stillborn @ 35 weeks in Nov 2021. If proper action had been taken, he would be here today. At 53, this is the worst thing I have ever experienced & seeing my daughter go through it is gut wrenching. In the last 15 months I have come to know and see the effects stillbirth has on families. I believe it is the loneliest loss one can experience. Also, these young parents are rarely financially able to afford a funeral, medical costs & loss of work. Please open yourself to learning more and helping US families.

Ashley's Story:

Here is the story of our baby, Elias.

My doctor told me that we were having a perfect pregnancy. Two days later, my baby died.

I was 26 weeks pregnant when I realized I hadn't felt my baby moving. I brushed it off telling myself that I just wasn't paying enough attention. As the day went on, I was getting more and more anxious. I felt deep down something was terribly wrong, but I kept finding ways to convince myself it was okay. I mean my doctor hadn't told me to do kick counts yet, so I'm probably overreacting, right?

I knew my baby's routine. I should have known better. I even did the juice test and no kicks, but I kept convincing myself I wasn't paying attention or that I felt flutters. I went to bed and even went to work the next day. I didn't realize that I could call my doctor after hours (it was NYD 2020), so I waited until they opened to call them. I heard the nurse's tone, and I knew it wasn't good.

She sent us to the ER where we heard the worst news of our lives "I'm sorry. The baby has died." I labored, I delivered my baby, I bled, my milk came in. I went through it all without bringing my baby home. I got a few short hours with him to carry with me the rest of my life.

To this day, I wonder why my doctor didn't mention anything about stillbirth risks or signs. We ignorantly believed nothing could go wrong after our 20 week scan. On top of being completely blindsided, it was going to cost around \$4,000 to get an autopsy (on top of our \$5,000 hospital bill for delivery), which was not feasible for us. We may never know the cause of our baby's death or how to prevent it from happening again because of this.

Allison's Story:

Deacon was born 8/8/21 37 weeks stillborn due to COVID. Willa was born 8/2/22 due to cystic hygroma. Both of my babies were IVF babies.... Yeah, ridiculous amount of money to try and conceive just to have them die. And then I didn't have a ridiculous amount of money to birth them, and also grief on top of that. Both of my pregnancies could have been prevented. Covid did not have to exist, but it's hard not to feel like our government let us down and caused a lot of people to die. The cystic hygroma could've been prevented, but IVF cost so much money and then to test each egg also cost an extremely high price to pick out your "normal eggs." The people that are not able to conceive naturally go through so much trauma with having to give shots every day to take medicine every day to try and feel normal every day, but also trying to find the blessings in the IVF process. And then, after all of that trauma, all of that work, all of that money, your babies are gone and you're stuck with grief. Could you imagine caring for your baby and then leaving that hospital empty-handed. You don't get to carry your baby out all you get to carry is a cup of water that the hospital gave you to take home all of your bags and you're wheeled out in a wheelchair to go home to a room full of your baby's items to only still be so empty. I put myself in your shoes. Our babies are gone and a lot of it could have been prevented with better health care and better knowledge. Not every pregnancy is the same and healthcare treats it as every pregnancy is the same. Women know their bodies, they know when something is not right and when you go to labor and delivery to tell them that you were having contractions and have been for weeks on end just to be sent home as if you the patient don't know what you're talking about. And then you feel that guilt and that shame that you don't need to go back up there because they will just say the same thing, that nothing is wrong, you're not dilated and your contractions aren't close enough then to wake up still in contractions and to not hear your baby's heartbeat. Put yourself in our shoes. It's not the nurses in the doctors in you that have to suffer. It's the mamas who lost their baby that have to suffer with things that could have been prevented if healthcare would just listen to what we have to say and treat it as though every pregnancy is not the same, everybody is not the same, every baby is not the same.

The only thing that I find comforting is knowing my babies never had to suffer. They never had to go through the crappiness that this world has to offer. That they have only known love, and that was for me while they were in my womb, until they opened their eyes to the face of Jesus, Jesus is love, and I'm grateful that that's all my babies have ever known. Could you imagine not having one of your children? Well, we are living in it. Stillbirth is preventable with better healthcare.

Emily's Story:

Maverick, he is my 6th baby... Maverick was born sleeping on May 7th of 2022 and he was 38 weeks and 6 days along. I had a healthy pregnancy. I knew I was in labor, I wanted to sleep but I should have listened to my body. My placenta detached itself from my uterus, I bled out and so did he. When I got to the hospital, they found a faint heartbeat (68 bpm) low but there. In fact it was the last thing I heard as they put me under for an emergency c section.

I woke up to them... handing me my baby and hearing the words "I'm so sorry for your loss" and me not fully comprehending what I was just told. I looked at my husband and realized by the look on his face that we lost our sweet sweet baby boy. Along with it, I too, almost died. I had a 2,000cc clot behind my placenta and had to have a blood transfusion because I lost over 50% of my blood volume.

It didn't hurt. I thought my contractions were just getting stronger. I blame myself, every single day, and though that's a normal thought I still battle with the guilt. I love my little Mav and I always will.

Heather's Story:

I always wanted to be a mom at a very young age, pushing around my babies' dolls in the stroller wherever I went. In 2015 I was pregnant with my first child and when I found out I was having a little girl, I was over the moon filled with joy. I chose the name Layla Elizabeth. She was born at 29 weeks due to fetal hydrops, fluid in her heart and lungs and stomach. I always had pre-eclampsia and was in the ICU for 24 hours because the doctors said I was mirroring her with fluid in my lungs. I went through so much but I would do it all over again in a heartbeat to have her here. Every day I want to honor her and her short but very precious life and be her voice.

I want to help prevent stillborn, all babies' lives matter!!

Doug's Story:

I am a father who lost his son (Cameron) at birth on 10/19/2000. It was a devastating day for my wife and I. It is devastating for all parents who have a stillbirth, SIDS or other infant loss. I have facilitated peer-to-peer grief support groups for parents and other individuals who have lost a child through still-birth, SIDS, miscarriage and other infant loss reasons for over ten years, and I believe this is a subject area where additional government funding, resources and research would be a great benefit to the public. Unfortunately, this is a topical area that no one wants to talk about. However, still-birth still negatively impacts a large number of people in the U.S. each year. The proposed legislation, albeit small in nature, could potentially reduce significantly the number of still-birth deaths in the U.S. each year. Also, it will greatly increase the awareness of still-birth and other infant loss deaths in the U.S. I highly recommend all members of Congress support this important legislation. Thank you!

Kate's Story:

I became pregnant with my first daughter when I was only 22. From the beginning, my providers regarded my care as a "textbook pregnancy." I was young and healthy - what could possibly go wrong? Visit after visiting our baby continued to grow. She passed every test with flying colors. We hosted the gender reveal, then the baby shower. We prepared her nursery with excitement, buying all the things a little girl could possibly need and more. I spent my days dreaming about what she would look like and who she would grow up to be. Already, Aurora was so very loved.

At 36 weeks I developed polyhydramnios. My providers brushed it off, saying it was no big deal. They failed to inform me that this condition was, in fact, a risk factor for stillbirth. They continued to monitor me weekly after that point, and things seemed to improve. The last thing I was told was that we would discuss induction if I had not given birth by 40 weeks.

Flash forward to 40 weeks, our due date, October 6th 2020. I called the hospital after noticing a decrease in Aurora's movement. They told me to come in but assured me everything would be fine, saying "these scares happen all the time." Oh how I wish that had been true. I do not remember hearing the words "there is no heartbeat," only seeing the sadness in my doctor's eyes, Aurora's lifeless body on the ultrasound screen and a sickening feeling that something had gone terribly wrong. I remember screaming, punching, and the look in my doctor's eyes shifting from sadness to fear. Around 7pm that evening, our lives were changed irreversibly when we were told our perfectly healthy daughter was gone.

When a child dies with no warning, you first ask yourself why. Why me? Why us? Why her? The second question you ask yourself is how. Nobody on our medical team could answer these questions. Not the delivering doctor, not the nurses, not the midwife who had seen us all 40 weeks. Not even the pathologist who performed a partial autopsy on Aurora's tiny body could bring us any closer to having answers. We were told "sometimes these things just happen,"

as if those pathetic words meant to placate us would bring us any solace. Well, that answer wasn't good enough for me.

This is why I SHINE. For Aurora, Autumn, and every other baby born still. Because they should be here -- laughing, playing, growing. And with improved research and data collection, with more media attention, and more eyes turned to the public health crisis that is stillbirth, perhaps they could have been.

Emily's Story:

In December 2021, 38 weeks into a very routine, normal, healthy pregnancy, I didn't feel our baby move one morning. I went into L&D triage to discover my son, Nathan, no longer had a heartbeat. Since having a stillbirth, I have learned how common it is. I hope to, in some small way, make whatever difference I can so that no one else has to endure the heartbreak I have.

Camila's Story:

I became a surrogate to give a couple the wonderful gift of a child and because I wasn't properly educated on fetal movement by my provider, because my concerns were dismissed, and the proper monitoring wasn't performed I had a stillbirth the day of my scheduled c section at 39 weeks. I learned that it could have been prevented and I am now a stillbirth advocate.

Valeria's Story:

I have decided to share my story in hopes that you know that Wyatt was very much part of our family, and that his short life here impacted us greatly. Social media for once has helped me get through this extremely difficult, painful, and sad time. Unfortunately, I'm not the only one that knows this pain and we have found a group of loss parents. None of us want to be part of this group, but we are glad we have the support. I went into my 39 week appointment on Wednesday the 18th of May, everything was normal, we even set up an induction date for the following Tuesday. Went about my day, went to work, came home and had a normal evening. The next day I woke up perfectly fine with a lot of energy and excitement that I knew Wyatt was coming soon. Around 12 on Thursday I noticed I hadn't felt Wyatt move all morning. I told Eric (my husband), he got concerned and suggested I go in. His concern got me worried, so I went in. They couldn't find his heartbeat, so they sent me straight to the hospital.

After what seemed forever for them trying to find the heartbeat, they called for an ultrasound. The ultrasound tech, nurse, and my doctor were all very quiet while looking at the screen and I knew something was up. After the tech left, with tears in his eyes my Dr told me that there wasn't a heartbeat anymore. That my perfectly healthy baby had died. I was induced at 4pm that evening and was in labor for 12 hours, delivering him at 4am on May 20th. We met him, held him, loved him, and said goodbye to him.

My grief is very heavy and very much present. I am alive and going right now because of Lilly and Noah (our other kids) and Eric, my family and my friends. I have never felt so loved and so supported and so hopeless and sad all at the same time. But this is my youngest, this my third child, and my second son, and his name is Wyatt Matthew Woodruff, and for as long as live I will carry and share his memory. And I will raise and share awareness of stillbirth in hopes of helping other families.



Jennifer's Story:

I support SHINE because we deserve to know more and understand more when it comes to stillbirth which is a

debilitating grief no human should ever have to endure. If we had more answers, better testing etc. perhaps we'd be a western country with fewer stillbirths.

Our story - We learned in March 2010 we were expecting again after an early miscarriage in 2009. In this 2nd pregnancy, I craved citrus fruits and juice, cereal and couldn't stand one of my favorite staples, coffee. This baby always moved a ton especially to music and daddy's voice. This was a beautiful and uneventful pregnancy that went to 41 weeks gestation with our son; James Edward Kaiton. After a non-stress test on Wed. Dec. 1st, James was doing well and the doc recommended we induce in 2 days. We convinced the doc that we wanted him to come naturally so he agreed to wait to induce me til Monday. I went into a slow labor the next day and labored at home until my water broke on Sat. Dec. 4th. In the hospital they told me unexpectedly James had no heartbeat and they prepared me to birth him naturally by giving me an epidural and Pitocin. My body didn't open enough, so they scheduled me for a C-section the next morning. On Dec. 5th 2010, James Edward Kaiton was stillborn weighing 8.2lbs, 21 inches long. He looked like me and had his daddy's tall body. We were absolutely devastated and got very few answers as to what happened and why he died. The pathology report showed an infection in the placenta and cord, and his autopsy didn't show anything of concern. We were left with despair, uncertainty, confusion, anger, disbelief, deep sadness/grief, that changed our lives FOREVER. Why was there an infection? Why weren't there any signs or further testing? Why does this happen? What could we have done to save our son? These are all the questions and thoughts we've had to endure over the past 12 years. I pray legislation around stillbirth is taken seriously and that we begin to collect data around incidents of stillbirth like ours. Thanks for reading if you made it this far.
Love, The Kaiton Family

P.S. After we lost James, I experienced two 2nd trimester losses back to back. It took a doc thinking outside the box who did further testing to find out I had a blood clotting issue when I get pregnant. Why didn't my docs do further testing to find this out before I had to endure 2 more losses? I feel like the testing the board of obstetrics recommends is too limited for what we need these days. No family should have to face this much pain and loss in order to get answers. Why can't we just do right by families to begin with?

Amber's Story:

I was assigned a female midwife at Coeur OBGYN when I called to set up an initial appointment and establish prenatal care. Everything was normal and non-eventful until I started having contractions at 33 weeks. I called the office's after-hours services. I was supposed to get a call back from the doctor on call but after 2 hours of not hearing back we just decided to go to Labor and Delivery at Kootenai Health just in case. They confirmed that I was having contractions and gave me a shot of Terbutaline to stop those contractions. After this, I went in for my scheduled visit with my midwife and their office claimed to have no idea that I had been treated for early onset contractions at labor and delivery. I addressed that I never received a call back from their on-call doctor and was told that the doctor must have been too busy to call me back. At 37 weeks, 11/17/23, I had my growth ultrasound. We were told by our ultrasound tech that Gabe was measuring in the 96th percentile and that I had a lot of fluid. The tech stated how much fluid I had about 5-6 times and said that these issues would be addressed by my doctor. We went in for our meeting with our doc and were advised that due to Gabe's size, a scheduled c-section was the safest option. I was not surprised and scheduled a c-section for December 1st - exactly 39 weeks. What my doctor failed to mention in this appointment was that I was diagnosed with Polyhydramnios due to my fluid levels being so high. I did not learn this until I requested my medical records a few weeks after Gabe's death. For reference, polyhydramnios can lead to stillbirths.

At 38 weeks I had my last appointment before my scheduled c-section, 11/23/22. I had noticed the day prior that my sons' movements had slowed and planned to bring it to my doctors attention the next day. My son loved to sleep during the day and move all night, so his patterns were difficult to recognize. How I kept track is that he would usually be very active as I woke up during the night which became less apparent. When I arrived, my blood pressure was taken, and I was at 150/94. Research shows that a blood pressure over 140/90 is due to hypertension. For reference,

hypertension can cause stillbirth. I also brought up my son's decrease in movement to which my doctor said "his heartbeat sounds strong but if you're worried about it over the weekend you can go into Labor and Delivery to be checked out". My fault was that I believed my doctor. In my opinion, now that I have experienced this, any mention of slowed movement should result in a non-stress test but instead I was sent home. Once we received my medical records, we saw that my doctor did not notate a decrease in fetal movement, but instead notated positive fetal movement, but instead notated positive fetal movement which is false - I have the texts to prove it. Also, in my opinion, the excess fluid along with a high blood pressure should have raised enough flags to conduct further testing. I also learned after receiving my medical records that I had protein in my urine. All of my symptoms combined should have at least alerted me to preeclampsia, but again, I was sent home.

Since my doctor determined my son was fine due to his heartbeat, my husband and I kept track of Gabe's heartbeat with us at home doppler. Unfortunately, we woke up on Saturday the 26th and couldn't find his heartbeat. Our son's death was confirmed via ultrasound at Newport hospital, and we chose to be transferred to Kootenai for a c-section. Once I arrived at Kootenai, I realized that the on-call doctor was my midwife and her overseeing MD. I waited in my room for almost 2 hours, without monitors, before my midwife came in to confirm via ultrasound that my son had passed.

I gave birth to my son on 11/26/22 at 9:04 pm with my husband by my side. Our boy is perfect. He is beautiful. I am so proud to be his mom, and I know my husband is so proud to be his dad. Gabriel was 8 lb. 4 oz. He has his dad's giant hands and his mom's giant feet. He is the best combination of both his mom and dad and is cuter than I could ever imagine... he was just born sleeping.

Once my son was born, I was only visited once by my midwife and once by her overseeing doctor right before we said goodbye to our son so he could be taken to the funeral home. I was called by their office to set up an after-delivery appointment, when I called back, I had not even been discharged from the hospital and was asked if I was a new patient and was put on hold - I decided to hang up that phone call. We had Gabe's memorial that Friday. My midwife came and let my parents know that the reason Gabriel passed was because of blood clots in the placenta and cord. I showed up for my after-birth appointment on time, my midwife showed up 30 minutes late and greeted us by saying "I know you have a lot of questions, but I have no answers haha". We of course asked a lot of questions, and she decided to test me for an array of different blood clotting disorders which all came back negative. She ended the appointment by asking me what birth control I would like to start, when I declined birth control she laughed and said "so we're going to rely on the pull and pray method? Hahaha". Me, Josh, and my parents sat there in shock with tears in our eyes. She then discussed my medication. I am on Lexapro for anxiety. She decided to just have me start taking double what I'm used to and once I met with a psychiatrist, she told me that this was an inappropriate way to manage my medication.

I was supposed to receive the results of my blood tests the following week. After not hearing from them I decided to give the office a call. They told me the results were in and I should be hearing from my doctor soon. The next day, I still had not heard so I gave the office another call at the end of the day. I had a nurse call and told me that I would hear from my doctor eventually. I ended up getting a call that night around 6:30 and was told that I tested negative for any blood clotting disorders.

Beyond this, I had not heard from my doctor at all so I decided to transfer my records to a different OB office. When I called to get my records transferred, I was asked if my baby had been delivered since I was an OB patient who was switching care. I had to respond and tell the front desk that my son was stillborn and their response was "oh yes I see that now" - this happened on multiple occasions after giving the front desk my name and birthdate.

I have started seeing a new doctor and will also be seeing the high risk pregnancy center out of Sacred Heart. After speaking with this new doctor, I was told that further testing should have been done based on my blood pressure alone, not to mention my complaint of decreased movement. She also mentioned that after her review of my medical records, there was no way to actually tell if the blood clot was the reason for my son's death or if the blood

clot was a result of my son's death. At the end of the day, until I get more specialists involved, we have no reasoning behind Gabe's death. We may never know why although I believe the warning signs were all there.

SHINE is important because we need answers. We need to be using the technology we have available and treat all pregnancies as high risk. I did not find out that there was technology available to monitor the placenta for blood clots until it was too late. The standard of care needs to be updated. These babies' stories need to be shared to a board or experts once a stillbirth occurs. We cannot as a society be ok with our stillbirth statistics.

Mayra's Story:

My entire pregnancy I had no problem, "textbook perfect ". Baby was thriving and growing every week and everything looked perfect.

Until all of a sudden at 35 I had one painless bright red bleeding and went to the hospital. They couldn't figure out why I bleed but I stopped but they suspected it could be a placenta abruption. Baby was still doing great and in the event i bled again they gave me two steroids to help develop the baby's lungs since I was 35 weeks. I asked if we can take the baby out through a c section and they advise me to continue with my pregnancy since the baby was doing well during the 48 hours of monitoring. So they put me in bed rest and send me home. I had a follow up appointment at 36 weeks at my doctors office and baby looked well and nothing seem like there was wrong and they gave me the impression everything was going to be good. They also told me I was going to be induced by 37 weeks and that anything passed that would increase a risk of complications. Mind you no one not even the hospital doctors and my doctor from my group follow up with me and no education was given to me about how to monitor fetal movement and counting the kicks.

So trusting the doctors I had no concern that something could go wrong. On top of that they also were going back and forth with the induction date until Sunday arrived and I started to feel contractions. I was already 37.1 and I thought I was just going into labor naturally before my induction date March 27th but I was wrong it was too late. My daughter had no heartbeat.

Lindsey's Story:

My first baby died. Yes, she died, after a perfect 40-week, full-term pregnancy. She died from an infection. Nothing could be done to save her. In one breath she was here, we were planning on delivering her and in the next, as the doppler on my bulging belly remained silent and the ultrasound still, she was gone.

"I'm sorry..." The doctor shook his head, "no heartbeat." Baby feet - my first baby died. Here's what I need you to know...With those words the room spun me forever into the land of upside down that I've been walking in since. Right and wrong no longer made sense as a sentence because she was SO right, just a moment before and in a split second everything went So wrong. But there was nothing wrong with her. She was perfect. No health conditions. No reason for why she died. She died because, well, life isn't fair that way. Babies die. Mine did.

This did not make me love her less. When they put her cold decaying body into my arms I cried. Not because she was gone, but because she was here. Because her weight against my breast was the most love I have ever felt in my life. More than a first kiss or falling in love with your soulmate. Holding her, I was not repulsed as I feared I would be to hold a dead baby, but I was filled with love akin to knowing the secret of the Universe and it was placed in my arms. I was proud that she was mine. I was proud that she chose me. I was proud that I had given birth, even if only to the body of a soul. I was proud that everything in my life had led me to that moment.

I was broken, because everything before that moment did not make sense and everything that was to come I was terrified of. When she died it's as if I died with her. Who I used to be was gone and the place where my soul used to be was replaced by a stranger I had just met – grief. Leaving the hospital without a baby is one of the biggest betrayals the Universe can bestow on a parent. I was promised a child to take home only to be given empty arms. The lightness of the unfilled car seat was a direct assault against the weight of her in my arms from the day before. Only adding insult to injury was the barren wobbly womb where she lived and died that was deflated and also longing to feel full once more. Like it had been, blooming with life, only 24 hours before. The juxtaposition of death happening in the space life was supposed to be born was and still is impossible for me to truly comprehend.

The empty nursery I passed after coming home from the hospital was like a punch in the gut. The diapers on the changing table, the onesies in the dresser, washed and ready to use would all collect dust as days turned into weeks they went untouched because there was no baby to wear them.

Gena's Story:

My name is Gena. My son's name was Jackson Eugene Dale. He was born 27 weeks into my pregnancy. I had a c-section to remove his poor body from mine. He had been dead about a day at that point, I later learned.

I went into my doctor's office that morning to check on my rising blood pressure and the fact that I hadn't felt him moving. They were unable to find a heartbeat, after several techs checked and my doctor did too. We moved into the ultrasound room and my doctor confirmed that my son was dead. That moment, looking into the eyes of my doctor and ultrasound tech, seeing the sadness on their faces, feeling their hands on my body trying to offer comfort, was one of the worst moments of my life. It was surreal and horrible.

I'm an older mother and had many risk factors at play that I tried desperately to overcome. My blood pressure and blood sugars were perfect. I was calm and careful. I followed all the rules to the letter. But he had a chromosomal abnormality (Trisomy 18) that was undetected during my pregnancy, and he wasn't able to make it.

Last September, we had a foster daughter removed from our home. We had our sweet baby girl until she was 18 months old, when they took her away to give her to some family members of her biological fathers. It felt like she was dead, as we lost her fully and completely, with no contact at all. Our hearts were so deeply embedded in our grief that I ignored the symptoms of my pregnancy. I thought I was just depressed. Maybe even old enough to be starting early menopause. But when they confirmed my miracle baby, despite the many medical reasons why pregnancy was all but impossible for me, we felt that we were given another chance. We conceived right around the time that we lost our foster daughter. There was never a more wanted baby than my Jack. I cannot fathom a mother who was happier than I was. It doesn't seem possible to me. My love for this child was tremendous, overwhelming, magnificent. I managed to have one child when I was young, who was at the time 16 years old. He, too, was so excited. Our other foster daughter, who we have since adopted, was too. We all felt this baby was our rainbow.

But, he did not make it. Despite our love and all my hard work to give him a safe, loving body to develop in, we could not overcome his genetic problems. My husband and I had 2 hours to hold and love our son, before giving his poor little body to the funeral home. Two lost babies in 6 months was nearly more than I can bear.

I have two wonderful children at home still, and my husband is phenomenally supportive. I know how lucky I am to have these things. But I am still hurting so bad. I'm so angry. So sad and so, so angry. My beautiful, important, tiny, broken little son will never know how loved he is. He will never be able to see how amazing his Daddy is or how much his siblings longed to play with him. My son's name was Jack, and I love him more than words could ever say. Thank you for allowing me to tell my story.

Lanette's Story:

My name is Lanette Johnson and I am the mother of an angel, Lyanna Alina Gomez. She was born sleeping on July 9, 2019 due to cord entanglement. I went into the hospital for lack of fetal movement and it was then that I heard the gut wrenching words, "I'm sorry, there is no heartbeat." I was 38 weeks pregnant, 10 days away from her due date. I carried her for 9 months and she was gone, just like that. Gone without warning and I was devastated. Everything from that point on is a blur because I went into complete shock. To make matters worse I had to go through the process of being induced and delivering my lifeless baby. I had a baby and I have no memory of it because once again my body shut down and I went into complete shock, I was gone...emotionally and mentally checked out. If it weren't for the pictures my family, the wonderful staff at Beth Israel, and the photographer from Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep took I wouldn't even know what my daughter looked like.

After losing Lyanna I felt lost and alone. The first few months were a living nightmare because everyday I would wake up and hope it was a bad dream but it was not. I had this soul piercing pain and my heart was broken. I honestly didn't know how I was going to get through this. I had so many questions and the biggest one was why, why did this happen to me? This is a baby I prayed for, a baby I had to undergo IVF treatments just to conceive, a baby I was so lucky to be blessed with after suffering an ectopic pregnancy just 1 year prior, which resulted in the loss of one of my tubes. My faith was tested and I was angry, angry at God because I didn't understand why he would allow me to go through something so terrible.

Losing a baby to stillbirth changes you forever and you will never be the same. I now look at life with a new pair of eyes and a different perspective. Lyanna may have been STILLBORN but she was STILL BORN and because of that I will always have an angel by my side.

Maria's Story:

My name is Maria Walsh and I live in Kansas City, MO, with my husband Matt and our three children: Oliver who lives in Heaven and Elsie and Miles who we are blessed to have on Earth. Oliver Thomas Walsh was born sleeping on Sept. 25, 2014. He was a beautiful 5 pound baby boy.

As an elementary education teacher who spends my days helping kids develop their social, emotional, and academic skills I could not wait to have my own children. I had dreamt about this day since I was a child. My pregnancy was a dream pregnancy. We found out I was pregnant on my birthday and had no complications my entire pregnancy. Our 20 week anatomy scan was perfect and we prepared for our dreams to come true soon! A sweet baby boy was going to be loved so incredibly much by so many. Three weeks before we delivered Oliver, I had noticed that my baby's movement had changed. I had told my obstetrician every week for three weeks leading up to his death. All she said to me was that movement does change towards the end, and that was it. No further questions were asked or monitoring was offered. As a first-time mother you do not know any better and you trust the professionals. We believe that we lost Oliver due to growth restriction towards the end of my pregnancy. Oliver was telling me he was struggling ... and I am still so incredibly sad that I was not better educated on fetal movement in the third trimester to be able to save his precious life.

Losing a child is unlike any other loss. Not only for the mother and father, but for their entire family and friends. The pain never ends; it is an everyday battle, and the grief never goes away. We must do better in this country to bring more awareness, education, and preventative measures to end this silent epidemic.

Caitlin's Story:

Carson was my second child and second pregnancy. I was diagnosed with gestational diabetes but still considered low risk and diet controlled until week 33. It was not a factor in his death. At my regularly scheduled 34-week appointment on Friday morning I met with my doctor. I had woken up with a feeling of doom that I just couldn't shake. I asked for an ultrasound and was told I had to wait two more weeks since I had had one at 32 weeks. We listened to his heartbeat and then I was sent home. This was May 2020 peak Covid. My 4-year-old was home, and I was working full time from home. It was incredibly stressful and that day I had a meeting with my work team about taking Covid leave because I was stressed and worried about my baby. That night I noticed he wasn't moving at his normal active time, but I had not been educated on fetal movement. I didn't want to be "that crazy mom" and call my doctor, and thought I shouldn't endanger my baby by going to the hospital. I told myself surely, he would move overnight. I felt panic. I didn't know then what I know now. Saturday morning, I woke up early and realized he hadn't moved all night. I couldn't go back to sleep. I ate breakfast, drank juice, did jumping jacks, pushed on him, trying to get him to move. I could feel his body when I pushed against my stomach, but he was not moving. I called the doctor and the on-call doctor said to come straight to the hospital. My husband and I left without saying goodbye to our oldest son or my mom who had come up to stay the weekend with us.

We thought we would be back. I knew something was wrong, but it didn't cross my mind that this baby could be dead. We got to the hospital, and they came down with a wheelchair to take us up to L and D. There was some conversation on the way up, but I was crying and it's not worth retelling. They separated us and didn't let my husband come back with me at first. They put the fetal monitor on my stomach and weren't finding anything. I started to panic. I heard a heartbeat and said, "is that him?!". The nurse said, "no that's you, I need you to calm down so I can find baby's". A few more minutes of that and they gave up and said the doctor would be in shortly. I still didn't think he could be dead. They finally let my husband come back and then the doctor came in. He turned in the ultrasound and turned it towards us. "This is your baby's heart and there's no movement" "how could that happen?!! Are you sure?!!" "Do you want me to check again?!" "yes!!" "I'm sorry, there's no movement ". Then they left us alone for a few minutes before moving us to a delivery room. It wasn't until Monday night that Carson Jack was born. At 4 lbs 12 oz he was perfect and beautiful and looks so much like his big brother Hudson. We miss him every day and there is nothing that lessens the pain we feel daily. We have learned how to carry it but it remains heavy.

Laken's Story:

On April 26th, 2022 at 7:37pm I gave birth to our first and only son Grayson Stone. He was born still at 27 weeks and 3 days weighing 1 pound and 5 ounces. I believed all of the myths and was also told that around that week of gestation the baby is dropping lower so I thought it may just be harder to feel his movements. I was having trouble feeling his movements and for peace of mind, I used an at home doppler. (A big mistake) It was hard to find something at first, but after drinking some juice I thought I heard the heartbeat racing. Since I had that reassurance, I thought he was okay.

I was a first time mom so I didn't know any better. My whole pregnancy my doctors or other people would make me feel crazy. I often felt all of my questions were dismissed by everyone because I was a worried first time mom. I trusted my gut too late. We went to the emergency room and were told "the reason we can't find your baby's heartbeat is because there isn't one. I'm sorry." Grayson was born 2 days later perfect inside and out and the doctors could not figure out what happened.

Finally, we received his autopsy results. Intrauterine Growth Restriction. Grayson's placenta was small and was not giving him the proper nutrients that he needed to survive. At birth it was discovered that Grayson was less than 1 percentile. Because I was not considered high risk and he was measuring fine at past appointments, I was not closely monitored. His placenta was never measured so we never knew it was small. It should have been measured. We

discovered from Dr. Harvey Kliman that his placenta had trophoblast inclusions causing it to not grow.

After almost a whole year of seeing multiple doctors and searching for answers of why my son died we figured out that I have an autoimmune disorder called Sjogren's disease which is why they believe that he had trophoblast inclusions in his placenta that caused it to never form properly. Sjogren's disease can actually be triggered by pregnancy. My doctor explained to me that it was the "perfect storm" and sometimes with autoimmune diseases, our body cannot take care of both ourselves and our baby, so our body will always choose us. Women with autoimmune diseases are at risk for their babies having congenital heart block (where their baby's heart stops beating) and there is no reason and it cannot be shown on an autopsy. I wish I would've known then what I know now. I founded Grayson's Footprints Foundation in his memory to help other mamas that have experienced baby loss.

Avery's Story:

On January 20, 2023, our daughter, Kira Morgan Elkins, was stillborn at 33 weeks. We spent the last several months getting to know her fun personality, and though no amount of time with her would have ever been enough, 8 months was certainly too short. She loved music (60s and Harry Styles the most), apples, the mindfulness portion of barre classes, Will's laugh, and Halloween candy. One of the most fun things she would do was move constantly...until Will tried to feel her! Our dogs were her biggest protectors, but especially Samson. He would spend each evening lying on my belly and wouldn't let anyone close to me on our walks.

While there are infinite things I wish we could have done together, I am so grateful for all the things we did do. We traveled to a few places! We went to Alabama to meet her cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. She would show off anytime they wanted to see her move! We visited friends around the country and even saw her favorite, Harry Styles, in concert. The three of us traveled to the Dominican Republic where we snorkeled and danced and ran in the rain. We went spelunking and held iguanas and monkeys. Here at home, we went to museums and concerts and shows of all kinds. We graced the floor of Congress. We ate more brunch than should be humanly possible and we went to as many barre classes as we could fit in. We even went to a candle making class. We'd imagine everything we did as a future version with her earthside, everything from making breakfast to going to the orchard and lights festival. Every single part of this last year was better because Kira was part of it.

There is no love like the love you have for your baby... conversely, there is no loss like their loss. We are learning how to move forward with the depth and breadth of our joy and despair coexisting. We are so incredibly proud to be Kira's parents, and we never envisioned having to exist without her. We never pictured leaving the hospital without her. We never gave thought to which funeral homes were the best. We never considered which urn we would want to hold our perfect little girl, the girl we were meant to still be holding in our arms. As each day passes, our grief does not dissipate, but we learn to carry its weight.

Elisa's Story:

On May 15th 2021 my daughter Ava Mae Sharman was born still, but she was STILL BORN. It was the spring of 2021 and we were expecting a healthy baby girl. I had a typical healthy pregnancy. I ate the right things, didn't eat the wrong things, I exercised, I don't smoke, and I didn't drink. I had no risk factors. I went to all my prenatal appointments, and did all the required testing. I was on my way to motherhood. At 39 weeks, a pregnancy is considered full term and we were getting close. Our Ava was alive and well until 38 weeks, 5 days. She was 5 pounds 9 oz. She was a person, not a mass of cells, or a blob of goo. She should have been born alive.

My husband Ben and I were told that Ava had died on Friday, May 14th. We were told I had to deliver her vaginally as it had the lowest risk of complications. After laboring for hours, on the morning of Saturday the 15th, I delivered her. Following her delivery, I experienced complications. I hemorrhaged due to a retained placenta. I experienced severe high blood pressure that lasted weeks following Ava's birth. I was then diagnosed with PTSD following our loss. This diagnosis continues to impact both my physical and mental wellbeing to this day. A week after Ava's death, while

planning for her funeral arrangements and cremation, I was denied my allocated Paid Family Leave that I had planned to use. I relied on that leave in order to pay bills and contribute to my household but it was revoked. Not only did I need to cover the cost of living but also had medical bills to pay and now funeral costs. I should have had a baby to take care of.

Having a stillbirth affected the health of my second pregnancy, increasing my risk for complications and preterm birth. My son Miles (7 months) was born a month early and spent 5 days in the NICU. I had a spontaneous premature rupture of membranes. I had another retained placenta which needed to be removed surgically in the OR after his birth. I now live with pelvic misalignment, varicose veins, and chronic sciatica that requires frequent physical therapy and chiropractic care. This is the impact that stillbirth had on my maternal health: physical, mental, and financial.

Sara's Story:

Our baby girl, Penelope Ann Ralston, was born sleeping November 22, 2022. After a relatively easy and uncomplicated pregnancy, I was scheduled to be induced at 40+2 due to my age. Penelope decided she wanted to get the show started the night before my scheduled induction and I started having contractions. We were admitted to the hospital and I slowly progressed throughout the next day. The midwife checked me around 4 pm and I was still only at a 6. Around 5 pm my husband, sister, and father decided to go find something to eat and walked across the street to a fast food spot. Shortly after that I noticed I was feeling quite a bit of pressure. The midwife checked me and I was at a 10! The nurse told me to call my family and tell them to return quickly. I called my husband to let him know Penelope had changed her mind and was ready to make her entrance into the world! Once everyone was back, I started pushing. During my second contraction, suddenly they couldn't find Penelope's heartbeat. They turned me over, turned me to my side, got out the doppler, and still couldn't find her heartbeat. They rushed me to the OR for an emergency c-section. When I woke up and asked for my baby, they told me they performed CPR but they weren't able to get her back, and my baby had died.

We were able to connect with the Iowa Donor Network and got to spend about 6 hours with her before they took her away. Penelope was perfect in every way- 6 lbs 15 oz, strawberry blonde hair, the cutest little ears and tiny little nose. She was our first and only child and my husband and I miss her so much. The doctors have not been able to determine why our daughter died. It's hard enough losing your child, but to not know what caused it and if it could have been prevented is excruciating. No parent should ever have to hear "sometimes these things just happen". Mommy and daddy miss you and love you forever, Penelope ♡

Vivian's Story:

The short story is I lost my 3rd baby, my only son, in April 2020. I knew not to eat cantaloupe or cold cuts or sushi. I did not know the risk of stillbirth. It was my third baby, and I had no, no education, no screenings... he died of a "freak accident", a cord accident... a few months after he died I listened to a podcast and couldn't stop crying. The symptoms they talked about, I had. There were tools implemented overseas where they saw a reduction of stillbirth rates. I advocated with my OB office to use them. I advocated for support for bereaved parents in the hospital I delivered at for almost 2 years... nothing. I support SHINE for Autumn because it isn't acceptable anymore not to have the proper research and funding to ensure better outcomes... We know there are things we can do to prevent stillbirth and don't. I support Shine for Autumn because I got tired of trying to advocate. I gave up. It was too much... I support SHINE because our babies deserve to live. I support SHINE in honor of my sweet baby boy, in memory of all the babies we have lost, and in honor of all the parents and families who know this pain, and in the hopes that no one ever has to hear the dreaded words "there's no heartbeat".

Dodie's Story:

Growing up in a large family, I wanted nothing more than to be a mother. Sure, I was interested in all kinds of other stuff, but I just KNEW being a mom to many children was in my future. I had 6 kids' names picked out!

Thanks to many medical issues that were out of my control, I was told young that children were highly unlikely, though there was that one in a million chance that I could bring a viable baby to term. Maybe. But don't get your hopes up.

After years of trying, I pulled it off. I made a perfect boy child, sixteen years ago. And despite how we both nearly died during the pregnancy and delivery, we made it here and I counted my blessings. I spent the next sixteen years loving him and being an aunt and godmother to other kids, eventually becoming a foster mom and having even more babies, toddlers, kids, little ones - even more teenagers to love.

But deep inside, I always felt that pang for a pregnancy and baby of my body again. It never went away. I wanted to feel what happy-pregnant felt like, not scared-pregnant. I wanted to nurse. I wanted to take silly pictures of my tummy. I wanted the full experience I was denied with my teenager's pregnancy. But, I went on and just accepted that I would never be a woman who did pregnancy easily. Or I tried to go on. But the desire remained, silent and buried. Then, last September, a miracle happened. Despite being on active strong birth control for all those years, despite the same medical issues I always had, despite it all - I became pregnant. I honestly thought maybe it was early menopause, at first. I couldn't really be pregnant. I mean, I'm 41. I am too old now! I have *issues*, after all! But, I was wrong and I was really, truly, honest to god pregnant.

My husband, who was not the father of my teenage son, was over the moon at being able to bring a child into this world with me that carried both of our bloodlines. I could not believe my luck. My baby, who was a boy and we named Jackson, was undoubtedly the most loved baby in the history of little unborn people. Nobody could ever have wanted a child as bad as we wanted him!!! My teenager was thrilled, our foster kids (one of whom will be adopted next month) were all thrilled. The whole house was so incredibly happy. We were all in full on baby mania!

But my son died. Despite my careful attention to my health conditions and watching my blood pressure, heart rate, blood sugar, weight loss/gain, staying calm, staying on minimal activity, taking all the right vitamins and my daily, fervent, desperate prayers that I could bring my darling to birth, he died.

He had Trisomy 18. He lived to 27 weeks of gestation and died inside of my stupid, old, horrible, traitorous body. He was beautiful and perfect and so fucking wanted. He weighed 1 pound, 6 ounces and he was 11 inches long. He had blonde eyebrows and big feet. He was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. I love my son so much. I delivered him two months ago today, with his closed eyes and broken skin and no heartbeat and no life. The warmth that my body provided him left him so quickly, as I held him in my arms and felt him grow cold and I screamed in agony and rage.

If I were younger, maybe my eggs wouldn't be so bad. If I were healthier. If I were some other mom. Another womb might have kept him alive. Another body might have been stronger. Another mom might have done it better.

I am supposed to go back to work today. My job has been so supportive. My other children. My husband. My family. My friends. I know I am blessed. I know I should get over it and heal and stop wanting to die to be with him. I KNOW THESE THINGS. But my heart is so broken. So, so broken. I miss my son.

Jack, I am so sorry I couldn't be a better mom for you. I love you so much, my baby. I hope there is no pain where you are. I hope you are whole and transformed and the perfect darling boy I know you should have been. God, I love you so much, baby. I'm sorry.

I can't tell anyone how bad I am doing. I have to smile and pretend and watch the world move forward. I have responsibilities, they say. I have other kids, so I should be grateful, they say. It's God's will, they say. Some women have nothing, they say. Stand up and wipe your tears and move forward, they say. He's not in pain, they say.

I am trying, but it's so hard. Thank you for listening to me, random strangers. I love you all too.

Shawna's Story:

We find ourselves a part of the most unwanted club there is, the reality of which is impossible to escape and exhausting to live with. One we never wanted to join and wish we could course-correct. We are the 1 out of 160 whose child was lost to stillbirth. Our beautiful Emerson Elizabeth Mae was born on March 19, 2021, one day before her official due date, and she will never receive a birth certificate.

To say we are heartbroken is an understatement. Our sweet girl will never get to grow up and live all the hopes and dreams we had for her. Every day there is something that makes me cry, something that should have been our 'first' with Emerson. First family dinner, first hike, first everything. We miss her all the time. We got to spend 40 hours with her at the hospital. Time to hold her cold, purple body and try to say goodbye to her and all the dreams we'd had for her. 40 hours was a blessing that not all families get, but I still ache for more time and wish I'd cuddled her more. 40 hours is not enough when you have a lifetime planned.

We may seem fine but know that we will never be 'fine.' This sadness will always be there. It is not something that you just 'get over.' We will always remember her, love her, miss her. Let us know that you will miss Emerson too and that she will not be forgotten.

Sara's Story:

We had grown accustomed to our unborn daughter waking Sara up with kicks and punches every morning at about 4am. On Thursday, there were no kicks. We went to the hospital immediately. The nurses checked with a doppler but couldn't find a heartbeat. Doctors came in with an ultrasound and confirmed our worst fears. Our daughter had passed away. What came next was an incredible outpouring of love and support from our family and friends, amazing compassion and care from our nurses and doctor, and a superhuman display of resilience from Sara as she went through labor and delivery. She was born on August 20th at 11:04am. She was 4lbs, 11oz, and 20 inches long. We decided to name her Dawn. We thought it was perfect for her because we could see glimpses of her light, through her loving kicks, and scattered among all of the joy and excitement our family and friends expressed at the chance of having a new baby girl in their life. If only she was able to pass the horizon and let her light shine. Tragically, she never got that chance. We know she would have been an amazing big sister, cousin, and grandchild. And she will live on forever in our hearts.

Rahul's Story:

We were expecting our Baby J to be born on December 16, 2022. On September 15th my wife stopped feeling him and we went to the emergency hoping it was just normal. But soon we learned that the baby had no heartbeat. We were admitted immediately, and my wife went through the labor process giving "birth" to the baby. We held him through the day and gave him up in the evening.

We went through many tests, consulted with fertility specialists at Stanford but they were unable to determine a cause. Nothing showed abnormal, we even had an anatomy scan just 2 days prior to him not having a heartbeat and everything came back normal, he was measuring as expected. All we have right now is we don't know what happened and we don't know if it will happen again.

Emily's Story:

We were so excited that our second son Daniel would be just 2 years younger than his brother. We had everything prepared for him and everything was going smoothly with a textbook, healthy pregnancy. At 34 weeks, I went to a regular doctor's appointment where I received the worst news of my life. There was no heartbeat and no fluid. After making the most horrible phone calls to my husband,

Mom and dad, we immediately rushed to the hospital. Our baby Daniel was delivered stillborn the following morning on August 20th, the day that was supposed to be our baby shower. Not a day goes by that we don't wish for our son, and brother was here with us.

Natalie's Story:

When I moved to Ohio in 2013, I fell in love with the state. I worked at a local television station which embedded me into the community and introduced me to so many wonderful people. I met my husband here and started to lay down roots in Dayton where both our jobs were located. In 2019, two years after our daughter was born, we got pregnant again, which we thought was perfectly spaced out. We did the genetic testing offered and I continued to have frequent ultrasounds and appointments. Everything was progressing beautifully.

33 weeks into the pregnancy I woke up and noticed our baby wasn't moving. I knew it was serious after getting off the phone with my OB and they said to go right to labor and delivery. I raced to the hospital, waddled through the doors and was anxiously ushered back to the triage area. There, a doctor gave me the words no expecting mother and father should ever have to hear, "There is no heartbeat. I'm sorry." At this point we still didn't know the gender of our baby as we wanted to be surprised. But as I sat there waiting to find out when we could do our repeat cesarean section on the worst day of my life, I needed to know who this little one was. The little one who kicked me daily and had a big sister so eager to meet them. The little one we had been planning for and anxiously awaiting for. The little one who knew the sound of my voice and was so very much loved already.

My doctor poured through our chart and told us it was a boy. Samuel was born via c-section three hours later. No cry, no movement. He looked like he was just sleeping. I had no idea that morning that something so utterly heartbreaking could happen. It has completely changed my life. I held my son for hours and finally said our final goodbye the next day. I was kept in the labor and delivery side of the hospital so I wouldn't hear or run into mothers and babies in the hallways or hear the heart aching sound of a baby crying. I left the hospital empty handed and broken hearted. I also left with an unquenchable desire to find out WHY this had happened. "We may never know" is what I was told over and over by doctors. They submitted the placenta and the cord for analysis. Best guess was a cord compression...and that was a guess. In the days immediately following, I poured into research and tried to find anything I could relating to statistics on stillbirth. The best information out there was from Australia. Australia! The statistics found in the US, let alone in Ohio, were pathetic.

How can the state and country that I grew up in...the best in the world, not have this information and not have better resources available for mothers going through this? One support number I was given wasn't working, the other was too far away. I was left with no information and little support. My biggest saving grace was my support system and meeting other moms who had gone through this. The guilt, the grief and the love are my motivators to share his story and help any other loss parent I can. We have to research and find out more about potential causes. We have to do better for the m

Kauri's Story:

When we began planning our family, we were not prepared to be disappointed with negative pregnancy results, but we continued trying, determined to grow our family. After eighteen long months, Kauri was pregnant with our son, Lincoln.

Lincoln's due date was August 30, 2021, and time seemed to creep by almost as slowly as it had to get pregnant. Lincoln continued to grow stronger and so did our love for him. All his ultrasounds passed with flying colors. His due date came and went, and we were assured that everything was fine but advised to not go past 42 weeks, so we scheduled an induction on September 9th, 2021.

We headed to the hospital a few days prior to the induction date for a routine non stress test. Covid protocols were still in effect, so Nathan waited in the car expecting Kauri to shortly come back with good news as she did before with every other appointment. In the appointment Kauri's nurse placed the straps over her abdomen and fiddled with the machine. She hesitated and said it did not seem to be working properly and left to get the doctor. When the doctor returned, he told Kauri, "There's no heartbeat." Kauri texted Nathan that she needed him, and he knew something wasn't right, he came in as quickly as possible. We couldn't believe what we were hearing, we didn't understand how this could have happened and what could have been done to prevent it. So many emotions ran through us both, denial, anger, even hope that a miracle could happen and Lincoln could be with us safely.

In a haze of confusion, anguish and pain, trying to comprehend the situation we found ourselves in, Kauri had to be induced to deliver a stillborn Lincoln. Labor crept by slower than the eighteen months trying to conceive, and longer than the pregnancy. We wanted to disappear, to wake up from this bad dream, to hold our baby and see him looking at us. After twelve hours of labor, a stillborn Lincoln was untangled by the cord and laid on Kauri's chest skin-to-skin as any other baby would have been. He was beautiful, he looked perfect, he just was no longer with us. We held our boy, we cherished him, even though we would not get to take him home in the way that we thought. Even though he wasn't with us, we didn't want those moments to end, but we had to leave him there. We said our goodbyes to Lincoln's still body. He looked so peaceful, and we knew God was with us. We left the hospital without a birth certificate, without a death certificate, and without our beloved baby boy. It was as if his only existence was in our hearts, and now a memory. Through our faith we found peace, even if we couldn't see it we knew that God had a plan for us and our family, and had put the right people in our path to give just the amount of strength we needed to carry on.

Our story could have been prevented. Through education and research, we hope to reduce the number of stillbirths and support organizations such as SHINE for Autumn Act that share this common goal.

Annie's Story:

Avery Parker was our second child, a little brother who was set to be born just 22 months after his older brother. He was so deeply wanted and was due June 2020. I had a completely healthy pregnancy but when I felt less movement at 36 weeks pregnant, I went into our OB triage. My husband took our older son to a local park as we expected this would be a quick check up for reassurance. It was May 2020, and at this point during Covid our older kid was not allowed to come into the hospital. So, I went to triage alone and quickly my whole life fell apart. There was no heartbeat, and I went on to deliver Avery later that same day after a short induction of labor. We said goodbye to him the next morning and I often reflect on how impossible that moment was. The moment of watching our nurse walk away with Avery and never seeing him again.

We miss him so much everyday. With each passing year we picture what he would be doing had we been able to have him with us. Despite an autopsy they never determined a clear reason for his death. He did have a slightly small placenta and a velamentous cord - which were never noted on previous ultrasounds.

Meg Solera	My daughter lost her first child at 37 weeks, born still. There was no reason, no illness, nothing doctors could find as to why all was well on Friday, and Wren was gone on Sunday. We have one of the highest stillborn rates of any industrial country and this must stop. This is a public health crisis.
Acosta	My daughter Lucia Restrepo was stillborn on January 25th, 2022 at Emory Hospital. I had a perfect pregnancy, and my baby was perfect all the way to the end. No genetic disorders or diseases, neither did I have any conditions. To this day I still don't know why my baby died. Please sign the act to help do more research and help prevent more babies from dying.
Haylie Jenkins	My daughter Magnolia Elaine was stillborn at 33wks March 20,2022 and I have multiple friends that lost their baby to Stillbirth. I am a birth doula, and I advocate for better research on placentas during pregnancy. My daughter's placenta was 8.9X bigger than her and only in the 0.021%, small placentas are the #1 cause of Stillbirth and is completely preventable. We should be measuring the things that support the baby during pregnancy!
Cristina Neville Rombough	My daughter Marley Caroline Neville was stillborn on December 14, 2007. Since the death of my daughter at 39+ weeks, I have met many other women and families that have also had a loss through stillbirth. Since her death, my life has been forever changed, including, divorce, mental health struggles, depression, PTSD, and what I like to refer to as the post Marley's death, Cristina. For anyone experiencing this kind of loss, they would understand. There was a Cristina that was pre-Marley's death, and there is the Cristina that is post Marley's death. They are just very different people.
Anna Dundek Bell	My daughter Violet was stillborn at 40 weeks and 1 day on September 18, 2020. We had an ultrasound the day before and everything appeared healthy and normal. 24 hours later we went to the hospital for a scheduled cesarean and there was no heartbeat. I had felt her move just hours before. Please continue to support research on stillbirth to help save babies like my Violet.
Julie Sydenstricker	My daughter was 38 weeks pregnant with a healthy baby girl, Aurora. Aurora had hiccups and finally settled down the night before tragedy struck. The following morning my daughter noticed a lack of movement and started to get concerned. After dropping her son off at school, she headed to Dr for a checkup. No heartbeat was found. Aurora was dead. She then had to wait 9 hours for the doctor to arrive at the hospital to deliver her and it was discovered during the c-section that she had a concealed placental abruption. It had cut off oxygen to baby Aurora and she died in the womb. Condition was not detected by 3d ultrasound the previous week nor at weekly checkups. There was no fall, strain or trauma that caused this.
Amanda Pullmain	My daughter, Annalise Rose Pullmain was stillborn in August 2022. My husband and I are considered "lucky" because we have our answer to the question every parent in our situation, "why?" I am advocating for this bill to be funded for the millions of parents across the country who will never have this closure and are left with unknown causes or causes that could have been preventable with more funding towards research. This is a critical public health issue and women's issue, especially for women of color who are statistically more likely to suffer from maternity health complications such as stillbirth.

Erika Nolting Young	My first daughter, Sommer, passed away just after birth this past August. Doctors still don't know what happened. They thought I had a perfectly normal pregnancy, and labor looked normal until something catastrophic happened in the final moments of labor, and whatever it was, Sommer was unrecoverable after 2 hours of emergency care to try to save her life. In the aftermath of this tragedy, my husband and I have spent countless hours trying to understand what could have gone wrong. It is clear that doctors are flying blind in pregnancy and delivery because they have very little data about an individual's health or the overall day-to-day health of their pregnancy. Better monitoring and imaging solutions are desperately needed, and women need to be tracked more closely during their entire pregnancy. Comparing one person's pregnancy and labor to that of the general population isn't sufficient. Doctors need to compare any moment in a woman's pregnancy to the rest of her pregnancy. To do that adequately, more data is needed. And, overall, more research is needed in the field of maternal and fetal medicine.
Alishia	My firstborn son DJ was born stillborn at 28-weeks January 18, 2016. It was a devastating blow to my husband and I because we didn't have a clue that anything was wrong. Every time we went to our appointments, they said DJ had a strong heartbeat...until he didn't. Although we had an autopsy completed on him, we were NEVER given official word as to what happened. They told us that DJ and I looked fine. But babies that look fine, don't just die. That is why I am supporting SHINE. I want DJ's life and all babies who have died way too soon to be remembered. I also want families who are expecting to be able to have the best care and preventable measures put in place, so that they don't know the devastation of loss (the tears, the grief, the anger, the sadness, the isolation, the mental challenges etc.), that I and countless families have experienced.

Katrina McSherry	My son, Callum, was a full term stillborn on July 15, 2023. My pregnancy was completely healthy with no issues until I went into labor and found out my baby had passed away when we got to the hospital. I had been to the doctor 2 days prior, and the doctors did not notice anything to worry about. Had there been more education or monitoring, my baby might still be alive. My husband and I are devastated, and our lives are forever impacted. We are both responsible, hardworking, and compassionate Americans that have been impacted by the lack of funds that have gone to the prevention of stillbirth in America.
Carolyn Winn	My son, Niko, was stillborn in 2022 for unknown reasons. My pregnancy was very healthy, and I did everything to keep my baby safe. Yet, I woke up in the morning to no kicks or movement and was told that his heart was not beating... the worst words a mother can hear. Niko was my first and only child and my world is upside down. More research is needed to prevent this terrible outcome and to give families understanding and closure. I would give anything to be with Niko again.

Melissa Rowell	My son, Sequoyah Emrys Rowell, was stillborn on 9/20/21. He died due to an insufficient placenta that could have been detected if monitoring the size and function of a placenta was standard in prenatal/ultrasound care. We had an ultrasound a day a half before he died, and it would have been noticeable then. If they had looked at his placenta, we would have been made aware of the danger and had him delivered immediately. He was full term and perfectly healthy and should be 18 months old now.
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Jamie Lindelof	My daughter (our first child), Harper, was stillborn in 2018 and every day I see her missing in our home, in our lives.
Elizabeth O'Donnell	My daughter Aaliyah Denise Briscoe was born still on 12/1/20 at GW Hospital. I've started a nonprofit in her memory as a way for her to still have a legacy in this world. I don't want any other parent to experience what mine has.

Kristin Naylor	My daughter Abby died of what I believe is a preventable stillbirth in 2018. Our culture does not understand the tragedy of stillbirth. If they did, surely things would be different. Please use your legacy to help prevent this from happening to other families.
Alison Sawyer	My daughter Adair was stillborn in 2019 and I am hopeful we can find a path to prevent the loss of additional babies in the future.
Melissa Espiritu	My daughter Alexandria, was stillborn in 2019.
Erin Wallace Morrison	My daughter Alice was stillborn in 2012, and I have the privilege of hearing stories of children stillborn in my support group, DC PLIDS.
Mackenzie Warren	My daughter Amanda was stillborn in 2018 and 21,000 babies are stillborn in the US every year.
Marisela Garcia	My daughter Amarie Isabella was stillborn in 2022. It's imperative we find a solution for why stillbirths occur.
Indy martin	My daughter Amelia Michelle was stillborn in 2020
Meaghan McCarthy	My daughter Amelia was stillborn in 2021 and my son Teddy was stillborn in 2022. We don't have answers as to why.
Amy Genao	My daughter Amilia was stillborn July 5 2022. She is survived by her twin brother Micah.
Patricia Irwin	My daughter and many friends have lost babies that were Stillborn
Lisa Soignier	My daughter and Son-in-law experienced the stillbirth of their first son. I am a concerned grandmother.
Joanna Feehan	My daughter Andelyn was stillborn this last December.
Shivani Sharma	My daughter Anika was still born in 2022 at nine months gestation
Jason Satek	My daughter Anja was a full term stillborn in 2013, and there is no greater grief between an expectant parent and a grieving one. Stillbirth is far too common in America, and we should do what we can to minimize it.
Maureen Gaffney	My daughter Ann was stillborn at 27 weeks on February 14, 2020 her sister Sofija died the following year on April 21st at 34 weeks.
Whitney Treseder	My daughter Anna was stillborn in 2011 and we never figured out what happened.
Julie Jaffray	My daughter Annabelle was stillborn in 2023, and it was preventable
Mcdaniel	My daughter annie, was born still in 2021
Courtney Bokeno	My daughter Anniston was stillborn on 11/07/2021 when I was 33 weeks pregnant with her.
Erin Maroon	My daughter Ashlie was stillborn at full term in 2015, just hours after my doctor told me she was fine. My daughter is not just a number...she was here and she mattered. This crisis MUST start getting some attention.
Robbie Dozier	My daughter Aurora Forrest-Dozier was stillborn in October 2020.
Jessica Coronato	My daughter Avery Victoria was stillborn in July 2022, and I am an advocate for women's health, mental health and the powerful impacts they have.
Christopher Coronato	My daughter Avery was born still birth in 2022
Joseph Bustamante	My daughter Avery, was stillborn in 2023
Rachel Meade	My daughter Azalea was stillborn in 2022. Everything possible needs to be done to protect other mothers from losing their children.
Maria Haney	My daughter barely survived

Selena	My daughter Blakely Layne, 30.5 wks gestation stillbirth
Selena Chacon	my daughter Blakely was stillborn at 31 weeks gestation, low risk pregnancy ,could've been prevented but now I visit my baby in a cemetery
Janelle Blouin	My daughter Brielle Vanessa Johnson was stillborn February 5th, 2021. We need more help, more resources and better care.
Caitlyn	My daughter Catherine was stillborn in March 2023.
Carol McMurrich	My daughter Charlotte was stillborn in 2003, and I work with all the folks in Western MA who experience this type of loss. It's appalling that there is little to no research that goes into stillbirth, and this needs to change. It is devastating for families and has a huge price tag for the health care and mental health care systems.
Anna Feldberg	My daughter Charlotte was suddenly and inexplicably stillborn at 35 weeks in 2019.
Eric Eichman	My daughter Chloe was stillborn in 2022
Jillian Starbuck	My daughter Clara was stillborn October 2021 and we almost lost my son Tate this past October. Stillbirth needs to be addressed!!!!
Calvin Tribby	My daughter Daphne was stillborn in 2020.
Sara Bancroft	My daughter Dawn was stillborn in August 2022, and it's very important to me that we can do everything possible to prevent this from happening again to me or anyone else.
Krista Widdison	My daughter died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome after 8 weeks of living healthily, following an early-term miscarriage the previous year. I have several friends whose babies have died during pregnancy for unknown reasons.
Michelle Ramirez	My daughter Elena was stillborn on 8/3/22 and 4 days later I had to "celebrate" my 28th birthday not knowing why my daughter didn't make it. I was low risk the entire pregnancy.
James Bush	My daughter Elise was born still in August of 2022 and she still matters
Anais Rodriguez	My daughter Elise was stillborn in 2022 and I miss her every single day.
Lauren Colman	my daughter Ella was stillborn one week before my due date in 2010
Lauren H	My daughter Ember was born still in 2021.
Kaley Foster	My daughter Emilie was stillborn in July 2023 at 40 weeks and 3 days.
Caroline Maclaga	My daughter Emma Lynne was stillborn in 2015 in Greensboro. We didn't know at the time how vital autopsy is in understanding what happened and collecting data for research to increase prevention. This is a public health crisis that no one wants to talk about.
Jason McCracken	My daughter Emma was stillborn at 39 weeks and one day and I would like as much research done to help any babies possibly survive where they may not have in the past.
Erin Gustaf	My daughter Emry, was stillborn 9/22/22 a month from her due date.
Elizabeth Bradshaw	My daughter Estelle was stillborn in January of 2018.
Shelby Floria	My daughter Evelyn was lost to preterm labor at 20 weeks, officially classified as a stillbirth, in January 2022. We underwent IVF out of pocket to conceive Evelyn-she was a deeply wanted child who is still loved and remembered daily.
John Floria	My daughter Evelyn was stillborn in 2022 and I am an advocate for women's health.
Andrew Sowards	My Daughter Everly Sowards was stillborn on July 26th 2022.
Julian Dench	My daughter experienced a still birth in June 2023.
Gregg Ruppel	My daughter experienced a stillbirth at 38 weeks and it has caused serious psychological problems for more than a year.

Katlyn Haack	My daughter Faye was stillborn at 36 weeks in 2019
Kjirsten hurlburt	My daughter Francesca was stillborn in 2014, 2 days prior to her due date. Our family misses her every day. We would love to do anything possible to spare other families the despair that we experienced and the sadness we still feel without her living presence. Thank you!
Brittany Sylvester Gaspard	My daughter Freya Emerson was stillborn August 19, 2021
Christina Potts	My Daughter gave birth to my still born granddaughter
Michelle Peters	My daughter Genesis was stillborn in 2020.
Alyssa Levy	My daughter Georgina born March 15,2023
Cheryl Brandt	My daughter had a stillbirth in Aug. 2022. I'm an advocate for women's health.
Rusty Sylvester	My daughter had a stillborn
Rachel Borsellino Franken	My Daughter Hadleigh was still born April 2023 at 37 weeks due to a cord accident that could've been prevented if there were further checks when a baby is breech. The answer I got was it was possible to have seen the cord wrapped around but not protocol to check after a 20 week scan!! Change needs to happen to our system. It is broken!!!
Gladys Nissen	My daughter Hadley was stillborn in 2018 at 38 weeks
Erin Truxillo	My daughter Hailey was stillborn in 2008. I currently run a non profit dedicated to supporting grieving parents.
Gina Healy	My daughter Hannah was stillborn in 2019, I unfortunately have many friends who have experienced stillbirth, I am an advocate for women's health, I am Healthcare worker that specializes in mental health, I also run support groups for families who have lost their baby to stillbirth
Hailey Brissette-Mathias	My daughter Hayden was stillborn in 2021. I am an advocate for parents who have endured Pregnancy Loss.
Brittney Crystal	My daughter Iris, stillborn 2017
Karen Christiansen	My daughter is a stillbirth researcher and she knows we can save babies lives with information gained through funding research.
Adriana Tovar	My daughter Isabel was a still birth in 2019 and I am also a nurse and see how little we pay attention to this issue and the questions parents have after a loss like this.
María Gallardo	My daughter Isabella Marie was stillborn in 2022
Silva Barrasso	My daughter Isabella was stillborn in 2021 and since then, unfortunately, I've found out that most women in my life have also experienced stillbirth but have been quiet about it! We need more advocacy, funding, and education, as well as empowerment for women and families.
Alex Hart D'Hondt	My daughter Isabelle was born still on New Years Eve, 2023. My pregnancy was completely normal and progressing healthily - even up to an ultrasound 2 days before she passed - until it wasn't. Izzy is a big, bold, beautiful soul and we live our lives now hoping to prevent any family from experiencing the excruciating pain of losing a child.
Ashley Graham	My daughter Ivy was stillborn at 34 weeks in 2016, and in 2018 my daughter Sophie was stillborn at 22 weeks
Dalia Wilson	My daughter Julia was still born 2021

Taylor Anderson	My daughter Julia was stillborn on March 13, 2022 and her death absolutely could have been prevented. My life has completely changed and I'll miss my daughter every single day of my life because of the disregard of healthcare professionals.
Jennette Hansen	My daughter Juliette was stillborn in of August 2021
Katie Jones	My daughter Junes was stillborn August 2018
Michael Chapman	My daughter Juniper and son Samson were stillborn 2 years apart
Jonathan Paul	My daughter Juniper was stillborn this past October. I believe that is women's healthcare and family healthcare. Protect the next generation of Americans like my daughter.
Cineya Gayle	My daughter Kalilah Was stillborn in 2017
Cheyenne Bailey	My daughter Kaokee was stillborn in 2020 and my second daughter was stillborn in 2022. I'm an advocate for stillbirth awareness.
Steven Forrest	my daughter Katherine delivered a still born child, Aurora in 2020
Jazmin Alba	My daughter Kehlani was born sleeping July 1, 2023.
Juliana Ruano	My daughter Laela, was stillborn in 2020 I would never want this to happen to nobody
Heather Blevins	My Daughter Layla was born in 2015. I am an advocate for women's health and health care workers.
Angelica Andrade	My daughter Leilani Rose was stillborn on 7/16/2021 and this matter is very important to my family and I. We will continue advocating for Stillbirth and Women's health
Karen Glazer Perolman	My daughter Leo Pearl, still born on November 10, 2021. I miss her every day.
Catherine Abrams	My daughter Lexi, born still on July 11, 2022
Tosha Ulicni	My daughter Lilianna was born stillbirth and now I am nurse working with pregnant persons and see far too many stillbirths
Jim Birchall	My daughter lost a child to stillbirth.
Dan Gahler	My daughter lost a daughter (my grandchild) to stillbirth in 2018. I saw how much it affected our entire family, and it would be great to help learn and educate on its causes. Thank you, Dan
Marcia Hewett	My daughter lost her daughter, my granddaughter to stillbirth in 2019
Anne Elam	My daughter lost her daughter, my granddaughter, to stillbirth
Karen Whitmore	My Daughter lost her second Son to stillbirth. I am an advocate for better women's health.
Arthur Kinsella	My Daughter Lost Her Son (My Grandson)in 2022. I am a Retired NYC Transit Bus Operator.
Cindy Adrian	My daughter lost her son Adrian to stillbirth
Doris Solt	My daughter lost her son at 7 months Pregnant and nearly lost her second child for the same reason.
Acosta	My daughter Lucia Restrepo, was stillborn in January 25th, 2022 at Emory Hospital. I had a perfect pregnancy, and my baby was perfect all the way to the end. No genetic disorders or diseases, neither did I have any conditions. To this day I still don't know why my baby died. Please sign the act to help do more research and help prevent more babies from dying.
Jennifer Loga	My daughter Lucy died in 2020. She was stillborn at 30 weeks and this was preventable.

Morgan Dresser	My daughter Mackenzie Mae was stillborn on July 16, 2022. Stillbirth is so often swept under the rug and more needs to be done to help decrease the rates that innocent children are dying in our country.
Todd Dresser	My daughter Mackenzie was stillborn in July of 2022.
Caitlin Stills	My daughter Madeline was stillborn in 2019 and that support and understanding is important when you are in a sea of darkness and grief.
Janet Schott	My daughter Madelyn Grace was stillborn in 1998
Stacy Abrams	My daughter Madison was stillborn in 2012
Breanna Hanson	My daughter Magnolia Kay was stillborn July 2023. I think extra knowledge and research on this topic is important, as nobody should have to endure the pain of living without their baby.
Neesha Vadera	My daughter Mara was born premature due to cervical insufficiency and died shortly after birth. Women's health affects so many lives.
Jennifer Johnston	My daughter Maria was stillborn December 3, 1999. Four years later we almost lost her baby brother and myself as well.
Cristina	My daughter Marley was born still in 2007. I care deeply about the cause and would like there to be more knowledge about it in the healthcare field
James Beaumier	My daughter Mia Rose was stillborn on 11/08/19
Scott Schmidt	My daughter Mila Grace was stillborn on her due date on August 7, 2013.
Holly Perry	My daughter Millie was stillborn in 2020. I was never educated on the high risk of stillbirth in this country and how to advocate for my baby. Too many of us are losing children who are able to be saved with a little help!
Sarah Thelen	My daughter Murphy was stillborn in 2021
Sarah Brown	My daughter Myla was stillborn in May 2022. We were only weeks away from welcoming our first born. I am an advocate for women's health. Please work on passing legislation to reduce and end stillbirths.
Laura Forer	My daughter Naomi was stillborn in 2018 after a perfectly healthy pregnancy
Kara Finley	My daughter Nora was stillborn 3/14/21
Tori Young	My daughter Nova was stillborn in July of 2021.
Audrey McKenney	My daughter Olivia was stillborn 2022. It is heartbreaking and if we can help prevent this for future moms that would be incredible. There are no words to express the pain. Please support funding for research and testing to help prevent stillbirth. Thank you.
Cassidy Perrone	My daughter Olivia was stillborn on 3/17/22 at 36 weeks. I am a lawyer and advocate for women's health.
Sarah Dalton	My daughter Paige was stillborn in 2021. Stillbirth is a major problem in our country and not given enough attention and research .
José M	My daughter passed away
Sara Yenzer	My daughter Penelope was born sleeping in 2022 and I believe it was preventable if providers had more knowledge...
Ryan Jay Santiago	My daughter Rayne was stillborn on January 29, 2022 at 40 weeks 5 days gestation. Because of some bogus policy about induction we had to wait until 41 weeks. I am in healthcare, and this is unacceptable. The UK has gone through great lengths in terms of prenatal care and the United States needs to follow suit.

Amanda Duffy	My daughter Reese who was stillborn 16 hours before her scheduled delivery.
Stacey Dinburg	My daughter Rhyan Ava was stillborn in 2014 at 37 weeks gestation. This traumatic event has affected many aspects of our lives including dealing with major mental health challenges. More needs to be done to end preventable stillbirth and support families like mine.
Katie Rohrhoff	My daughter Riley was stillborn in 2009. She is still thought of and missed dearly every day. I know how to help others in her memory through the non-profit organization we started in her name.
Joslyn DeBoode	My daughter Riley was stillborn in 2011
Lauren Fuller	my daughter Riley was stillborn in 2016
Marti Perhach	<p>My daughter Rose was stillborn due to group B strep (GBS) in 1998 and since then I co-founded Group B Strep International (GBSI).</p> <p>According to the global estimate in the Group B streptococcus vaccine: full value of vaccine assessment. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO: "Stillbirths represent a major mortality burden with 46,000 (UR: 20,000 – 111,000) GBS-attributable stillbirths occurring each year." Prior to a maternal vaccine for GBS (and even after depending upon the effectiveness of the vaccine), there are several knowledge-based prevention strategies that GBSI has identified at https://www.groupbstrepinternational.org/-what-is-group-b-strepprenatal-onset-3.html that may help prevent or enable better outcomes due to GBS (and other causes of harm to unborn babies). Counting on your support of the stillbirth legislation to further research and implement policies for strategies to help prevent the devastation stillbirth causes to families!</p>
Felicia Hernandez	My daughter Rowan Mae was stillborn and it was preventable, however the information I needed was not part of the standard of care.
Laura Drake	My daughter Rowan was stillborn in 2021. Stillbirth impacts every aspect of our lives and has a major impact on the lives of our loved ones. A large percentage of stillbirth could be prevented with better research, care and education. Any child saved is so important.
Lindsay Rager	My daughter Sadie was stillborn due to a cord accident in 2014, and she could have lived if my prenatal care had been more research based.
Latonya Williams West	My daughter Sara West was Stillborn in 2008. I am a state Certified Doula for the Commonwealth of VA and advocate for women's health. It's so important for this funding to continue for the betterment of woman Maternal health.
Catherine Tauby	My daughter Sarah was stillborn at 35 weeks on March 24,2023.
Taylor Wade	My daughter Shiloh was stillborn in 2021
Deborah Rich	My daughter Shoshana was stillborn in 1985 and the U.S. has not significantly decreased preventable stillbirth in the last 20 years despite having the science to do so.
Melody Johnson	My daughter Solveig Sofia was born still on 2/29/12.
Shaylee Dave	My daughter Sonum Dittakavi was stillborn in September 2018. Stillbirth is a leading cause of infant loss in America, more infants die this way than do with SIDS. It deserves Congress's attention and funding!!

Julia Stetson	My Daughter Sophia was Stillborn at 41 weeks September 19,2022. Our child was completely healthy and then gone. One day before induction at 40+1 weeks. We lost our first born child and had to push out a dead baby. This level of trauma and heartbreak needs more attention and help. The number of Stillborn babies in the United States is Way too high compared to other countries. Changes need to be made
Carmella Checkoff	My daughter Sophie was stillborn in 2022.
Julia Guarino	My daughter Sora was stillborn in 2023.
Molly Simmers	My daughter Stella Lee Simmers was stillborn January 13, 2022 and we need to do everything we can to prevent this from happening to any more families.
Samantha Oliver	My daughter Stella was stillborn in May 2022.
Anita Shakaldi	My daughter stillborn April 13th 2023
Michelle Goldwin Kaufman	My daughter stopped moving in utero when I was 37 weeks pregnant. I went to L&D and got an ultrasound; there was very little movement so they rushed to an emergency c-section. She was miraculously resuscitated thanks to the hard work of the delivery NICU team, but, for whatever unknown reason she stopped moving, her brain had been deprived of too much oxygen to survive. She spent 1 week in the Nicu and then died in our arms.
Julia Tayler	My daughter Sydney was stillborn in 2001.
Jenna	My daughter Sylvia Drew stillborn November 2, 2020
Hirsha Venkataraman	My daughter Thalia was stillborn in October of 2021. I feel like her death could have been prevented with proper guidance, but we had no idea what to watch out for. We need significant research to continue so that stillbirths may be prevented. No parent should have to deal with this, and no doctor should ever allow their patients to be uninformed. With the proper research and guidance, real results can be achieved and families can be formed.
Deanna Moore	My daughter Tiana Leslie Moore was stillborn in 2022.
Jason King	My daughter tragically lost her son to stillbirth in 2018.
Cristian Ortiz	My daughter Valentina was born still, at term on 12/8/21 and her mom has made 2 unsuccessful suicide attempts due the collateral damage of her mental health from this PREVENTBLE tragedy.
Crystal Rivera-Velez	My daughter Valentina, was stillborn December 2021
Heather Rasche	My daughter was a full term stillborn , she died January 12, 2022 during labor
Alexis Santos	My daughter was a stillborn in 2021.
Myrna Reynoso	My daughter was a stillborn on August 9th 2022. My friend lost her daughter to stillbirth too. I am also a Healthcare worker.
Jody Pino	My daughter was at risk of being stillborn in 2021 and was the most traumatic experience
Allyson Senatore	My daughter was born still at 40 weeks.
Kathryn Irwin	My daughter was born still at Yale and I was given 32 mins to say goodbye, make decisions about her remains and other important legal documents. I have proposed a Bill in CT government for the last 5 years asking for uniform policies on the amount of time parents are given with their babies born sleeping.
Kay Matthews	My daughter was born still in 2013.

Aaliyah Finney	My daughter was born stillborn due to racial disparity and medical neglect. The maternal fetal specialist was more concerned about me being black than treating my weakened cervix. The doctor said that most black women my age have abortions to avoid having a baby with down syndrome mental or physical disabilities. My cervix was opened and as a result my baby was born and couldn't be saved. I went home with a weighted and heavy heart.
Heather Adams	My daughter was born stillborn on March 8th, 2024 and no one should have to experience this pain
Jessica Johnson	My daughter was recently born stillborn. There are not enough resources for grieving families.
Danelle Kosmal	My daughter was still born in 2017.
Jaclyn Paul	My daughter was still born in 2022
Lisa Vaughan	My daughter was stillborn
Nicole Myers	My daughter was stillborn 2/12/24.
Laura Annese	My daughter was stillborn and there were no support services for dealing with the trauma at that time. Women need mental and physical help to deal with this in order to recover from the pain of such a loss.
Kristen Full	My daughter was stillborn at 33½ weeks, my nephew was still born at 36 weeks and my uncle was stillborn at full term. I also have many friends that have lost a child at stillbirth.
Shanley Peterson	my daughter was stillborn at 36 weeks in 2021
Diana Goldin	my daughter was stillborn at 38 weeks in 2023
Anthony Troup	my daughter was stillborn at 38w5d. After a pathology report and an autopsy we still have no answers to what happened. My wife and I had to go through the worst possible scenario for first time parents and we still have questions, we have pain that nobody can heal, and we need whatever resources are available to find understanding, support, and healing. I am not a Republican, but this is not a partisan issue. Please.
Emily Smaczniak	My daughter was stillborn at 39.5 weeks in November 2022
Melissa Henderson	My daughter was stillborn at full term in August of 2021. My friend's son was also stillborn almost full term, in August 2022. There are no resources or support for families and no real preventative measures. I also work in healthcare.
Sarai VanderWood	My daughter was stillborn in 2013 and I have met several special people that have lost children in this same way. I am an advocate for women's health and this topic is extremely important to me.
Amber Goodrich	my daughter was stillborn in 2015, my first lost 2 children back to back to stillbirth. I am a health care worker and this needs to be a priority
Jessica McCracken	My daughter was stillborn in 2016 and resources are a valuable part of prevention and care for families experiencing such a profound loss.
Sasha Pullan	My daughter was stillborn in 2018. I am an advocate for support in infertility and pregnancy loss.
Gina Laughery	My daughter was stillborn in 2019. Stillbirth is a public health crisis that I care deeply about 21,000 babies are stillborn in the US every year the equivalent of a school bus full of children are stillborn every day in the US
Clarissa Schenck	My daughter was stillborn in 2021

Alvarez	My daughter was stillborn in 2021 and it has devastated our family. No one deserves to live with this pain.
Callaway Neumann	My daughter was stillborn in 2021. I am an advocate for myself, and for everyone else who has ever and will ever go through this. If you have any children and were able to be present at the birth I'm sure you hold those memories fondly. Now imagine those same high running emotions but instead of utter happiness it is utter devastation. There are absolutely no words to describe it, but please consider it.
Sakinah Garrett-Corcoran	my daughter was stillborn in 2022 and not only am I urging prevention because of my experience but for many mothers I serve in hospitals and birthing centers as a doula
Chelsea Van Horn	My daughter was stillborn in April of 2022 and I almost lost my life as well.
Jordan DeWolf	My daughter was stillborn in January 2022.
Kiara Chiquito	My daughter was stillborn in July 2022.
Ashton	My daughter was stillborn in Oct. 2022.
Mariah Marsh	My daughter was stillborn in October of 2022
Elizabeth Smith	My daughter was stillborn in Sept 2020 and no parent should have to go through this heartbreak.
Kayla wilson	My daughter was stillborn June 30, 2022.
Jesse Miller	My daughter was stillborn June 6 2022
Edith Hernández Barrera	My daughter was stillborn June 9,2022
Michelle Reyna-Sanchez	My daughter was stillborn on February 26, 2021.
Molly Reiniger	My daughter was stillborn six years ago and I don't want any other families to have to go through the pain that we did
Courtney haran	My daughter was stillborn this past year. We need more research. No innocent baby deserves a lack of answers for the loss of their life.
Caitlin Mogg	My daughter was stillborn.
Jenna Raab	My daughter Zara was stillborn in June of '21
Rishona French	My daughter Zoe Madelyn was stillborn in 2017.
Eric French	My daughter Zoe was stillborn
Abbie tunney	My daughter- Tatum was stillbirth in 2022 . I know several friends as well. More research needs to be done in this area.
Pam McCracken	My daughter-in-law gave birth to my granddaughter, Emma, who was stillborn in December 2016.
Brigid McCarthy	My daughter-in-law lost a child to stillborn.
Roberta Gold, (The Shane Foundation)	My daughter, (age 31) died following the stillbirth of her son. Both deaths were preventable.

Elizabeth O'Donnell	<p>My daughter, Aaliyah Denise Briscoe, was stillborn on 12/1/20. Perhaps if our country was more in tune to the stillbirth crisis and the physical and emotional toll it takes on families my former employer, DC Public Schools, wouldn't have callously taken away my paid family leave. Their lack of understanding what the "birth" of a child means made it impossible to comprehend the situation and, somehow, made it worse.</p> <p>Perhaps if our country passed these bills and was more in tune with the stillbirth crisis the above wouldn't have even happened and my daughter would be here.</p> <p>The US is currently making a choice to push stillbirth under the rug and as Aaliyah's mother I'm not standing for it. I refuse to see another family be forever broken and torn apart like mine.</p>
Emily Peregrim	my daughter, Adalynn, was stillborn 1/25/2016. No family should have to endure such a traumatic life event, which oftentimes could have been prevented. Families experiencing such a loss greatly can benefit from the Stillbirth Working Group of Council's focus on such an important topic.
Cassandra Wheeler	My daughter, Adeline, as stillborn in 2020. I have friends that have lost their daughter and son to stillbirth. I am an advocate for women's health.
Colleen Kurtz	My daughter, Ainslie, was stillborn in May 2018. I have friends and cousins who also lost their children to stillbirth. This is a huge area of concern and there is not nearly enough care for mothers, fathers, and siblings that have been impacted by such a devastating loss.
Erica Aitken	My daughter, Alexandra, was stillborn in 2019 & our family has been irrevocably changed. We miss her every single minute of every single day.
Anne Maassen	My daughter, Alice Claude, was stillborn in October 2019. Stillbirth is a devastating loss that is still poorly understood and people bereaved in this way need more support than is currently available. Thank you!
Joseph Cafiero	My daughter, Alison, suffered twin stillbirths in 2014
Jennifer Mahoney	my daughter, Aliya, was stillborn in January 2020 at 40 weeks after a very healthy, no-complication pregnancy
Brooke Jones	My daughter, Allison was stillborn in May 2022 at full term. We are so heartbroken and navigating pregnancy after loss and seeing all the ways standard care is lacking to prevent these lifelong tragedies for both parents and families. No one should have to bury their child.
Burnett	My daughter, Amelia, was stillborn September 2022. After three years of trying to conceive. I started bleeding at 12 weeks with no apparent cause. At 17 weeks my water broke and had to deliver my baby. There are still no answers as to what caused this. I am currently 16 weeks pregnant and pray I do not lose another baby. Having answers would help prevent any future losses for me and other women.
Emily Schwickerath	My daughter, Amelia, was still on at 38 weeks gestation on May 26, 2021.
Callaway Neuman	My daughter, Anastacia was stillborn July 2021, and I will always miss her.
Anna Adhikari	My daughter, Anaya, died at 38 weeks and was stillborn due to placental insufficiency. She had a small placenta which couldn't sustain her. Her death was preventable if her placenta was measured.
DeShai Reid	My daughter, Angel, was stillborn in 2020, my lovely best friend lost her baby daughter to stillbirth, I am an advocate for women's health.
Anne LaDue-Satek	My daughter, Anja, was stillborn in 2013, three days before I was to be induced

Jamie Hagenmayer	My daughter, Annabella was stillborn in 2022 after a completely normal pregnancy
Lisa Rhodes	My daughter, Annabelle Harper Lee Rhodes was stillborn in 2018. It is a horrible, awful thing to experience. We need to find ways to educate and learn more about stillbirth. It is an extremely hard thing to go through both physically and mentally. Something that no other mother or father needs to go through. Thank you in advance!
Nneka Hall	My daughter, Annaya, was stillborn in 2010 due to missed preeclampsia. My life has been forever changed. I have since met hundreds of others who have had the same outcome.
Becky Chacon	My daughter, Annie was born stillborn in 2014 and I want to make more people aware of stillbirth and prevention. I am a healthcare worker and stillbirth and pregnancy loss is a public health issue.
Kaitlyn Dooley	My daughter, Annie, was stillborn in 2020.
Heather Fisch	My daughter, Annika, was stillborn in 2017.
Kristin Langlois	My daughter, Arbor, was born stillborn in 2016 and I know numerous other families who have suffered this unimaginable loss - I am an advocate for the health of women and babies in the womb.
Claire Houston	My daughter, Arya, was stillborn in 2022. This is the hardest thing I've ever been through, and I would like to help anyone else not go through this.
Kate Forrest	My daughter, Aurora, was stillborn on October 8th 2020
Elisa Sharman	My daughter, Ava was stillborn, and hers was preventable.
Maria Kardassilaris	My daughter, Ava, was stillborn in April 2018. She would be turning 5 this year and heading to kindergarten in the fall.
Saiba Ulrich	My daughter, Avani, was stillborn in January 2023.
Chi Jenny Nguyen	My daughter, Avery Ngoc-Anh Nguyen, was stillborn at 36 weeks and 4 days on 03/25/2020, despite a healthy pregnancy. We miss her everyday!
Cheyenne Chavis	My daughter, Avery was stillborn on February 3rd, 2023.
Amanda Méndez	My daughter, Ayla Grace, was stillborn in 2019.
Amanda Mendez	My daughter, Ayla, was stillborn 1 week before my due date in July 2019.
Jayzabel Torres	My daughter, Azuli, was stillborn July of 2022. Most women I share this experience with, quickly share the same experience or a similar one. There was no reason provided for my daughter's stillbirth and it seems to happen way too often, unnecessarily. It is the leading cause of death
Justin Jenkins	My daughter, Banks, was stillborn in 2022.
Lisa Reed	My daughter, Betty Jane, was born still at 21 weeks and could have been prevented with proper cervical length checks and other diagnostics between weeks 12-20. Those diagnostics would have shown that my cervix was short and not strong enough to hold through a term pregnancy. I could have received a cervical cerclage that would have prevented our loss. Please help make this more important and support retainment of critical funding for this cause. My only hope now is to do everything I can to prevent this from happening to anyone else. Thank you so much!
Chloe Acerra	My daughter, Birdie, was stillborn in July 2022. I still have no idea what happened, after many months of tests and procedures. I would do anything to prevent this from happening to anyone.
Maria Strohmayer	My daughter, Blair Elise Strohmayer, was stillborn in 2020.
Ashlie Kennedy	My daughter, Blair Evelyn Kennedy, was stillborn on March 15, 2021.

Kaleigh Shipman	My daughter, Brenleigh, was stillborn in 2022. I don't want any other families to have to explain to their older children why their baby isn't coming home.
Bailee Akin	My daughter, Caysee, was stillborn at 36 weeks gestation after a completely healthy pregnancy
Kate Stephany	My daughter, Celeste, was stillborn in December 2022.
Kaitlyn Verhulst	My daughter, Charlie, was stillborn in May of 2021. The reason is still unknown by medical professionals. I am shocked at how little advancements have been made in healthcare in the past 50 years.
Loren Morley	My daughter, Charlotte Fae, was stillborn in 2014
Catherine Citarelli	My daughter, Charlotte was a full term stillbirth in 2018.
Lindsey Deadrick	My daughter, Charlotte was stillborn in 2021 at 40 weeks.
Sara Bankhead	My daughter, Charlotte, was stillborn in March of 2022. 7 of my closest friends had stillbirths. Most of which were very preventable. I am an advocate for women's health. No woman should have to beg for their unborn child's life to be taken seriously. No one listens until it's too late.
Mikayla Eichman	My daughter, Chloe, was stillborn in 2022.
Edmund Kelly	My daughter, Christie Marie Kelly, was stillborn at 38 weeks on November 4, 2021
Janeen Kelly	My daughter, Christie Marie Kelly, was stillborn at 38 weeks on November 4, 2021.
Cheryelle Easley	My daughter, Claire, was stillborn at 39 weeks in July of 2020. No parent should ever have to go through what we did, especially with a healthy pregnancy with no problems. There has got to be solutions to prevent this from happening.
Jacqueline Bleczinski	My daughter, Claire, was stillborn in 2020.
Katie Sindt	My daughter, Cora, was stillborn in March 2021. I know too many babies who should be in their families' arms.
Kirstin Carlson	My daughter, Cora, was stillborn November 2nd, 2020.
Jennifer Casriel	My daughter, Eden, was stillborn in 2013. Her identical twin, Zoe, is turning 10 next month.
Danielle Fenstermacher	My daughter, Edith, was stillborn on March 8, 2021. Her death was preventable, as many stillbirth deaths are.
Allison cox	My daughter, Elaina, was stillborn in 2021 just two days after a regular checkup with my OBGYN and 10 days before her due date. Birthing her lifeless 7lb, 7oz body was an experience no one should have to go through this.
Melanie Adams	My daughter, Eleanor (Ellie), was stillborn on 7/25/2014, two days after her due date.
Avery Sinclair	My daughter, Eleanor, was stillborn in October of 2022.
Emily Scott	My daughter, Eleanor, was stillborn on Mother's Day May 8th, 2022.
Kari Halvorson	My daughter, Eliza, was stillborn on February 15, 2023. I also work as a physician in primary care with an interest in women's health.
Kate Pon-Johnson	My daughter, Ella Lynne, was stillborn in 2015. My love for her will never cease because she's our family's missing piece.

Bonnie Bennion	My daughter, Ella Michael Wyrick, was born without a heartbeat in October 2021. Based on my experience with medical professionals and the hospital systems, there is much work to do to prevent stillbirth and adequately care for mothers and parents who experience stillbirth. No one discussed how to monitor my baby, no one provided information on what to anticipate once I learned my baby's heart had stopped beating, and no one provided any information on mental health resources after delivering my baby still. These are a handful of aspects that need to change in the system to increase awareness and decrease stillbirth rates in the United States, and there's more.
Regan Chase	My daughter, Eloise, was stillborn in August 2011
Nicole Haigh	My daughter, Elora, was stillborn in 2020
Kristin Akers	My daughter, Ember, was stillborn on April 2, 2022.
Jillian Silk	My daughter, Emery, was still born in February 2023
Andrea Niese	My daughter, Emery, was stillborn in October 2022 and we still never received a real answer as to why. I think about it every day and parents deserve answers.
Allison Carnucci	My daughter, Emilia, was stillborn at term in 2021 with no true "cause" of her death identified. I miss my firstborn daughter tremendously.
Charmel Clough	My daughter, Emilia, was stillborn in 2017.
Cassandra Goodenough	My daughter, Emilia, was stillborn in 2020 at 35 weeks
Angela Ewers	My daughter, Emily was stillborn in 1999. I am a pastoral counselor, and I lead a support group for women who have lost babies.
Kim Brand	My daughter, Emma, was stillborn in 2015 and I think of her every day
Julia Ullrich	My daughter, Emma, was stillborn in July of 2021 and I have many friends who have lost their babies to preventable stillbirth.
Amberly Dicey	My daughter, Emma, was stillborn September 2014. I am an advocate for bereavement services and am a volunteer NILMDTS photographer since December 2014 and am the founder and director of the Kentucky Cuddle Cot Campaign which has been involved in over 10 placements of cots to help grieving families with stillbirth and late miscarriage.
Ashley Miller	my daughter, Esther, was stillborn at full term in 2019
Ellen Borde	My daughter, Eve, was stillborn in 2012.
Mikayla Streeter	My daughter, Everest, was stillborn on 7/20/2022. Her death could have been prevented with an additional ultrasound at 30 weeks. I'm an advocate for saving the lives of babies and helping mothers learn different signs from their babies on the womb to help end preventable stillbirth.
Amber Knott	My daughter, Evie, was stillborn at full term in 2021 and I miss her every day.
Jessica Brady Reader	My daughter, Francesca, was stillborn in 2021 and I will ache for her always
Jessica Michel	My daughter, Freya Grace, was born still in 2019 because the monitoring we received for her growth restriction failed her.
Stacy Mafera	My daughter, Gabriella Grace Howe, was stillborn on her due date, June 13, 2022. The devastation of losing our
Emily Maryles	My daughter, Gabriella Grace, was born still at 32 weeks in 2023. She was perfectly healthy except for a small placenta which was found after her death. We had no warning from our doctors and now our life is forever changed. Please continue fighting for all our babies gone too soon.

Sarah Muthler	My daughter, Genevieve, was stillborn in 2011, and her cause of death was not identified. I returned to school after her death to earn a master's in maternal health and now work in the field trying to improve outcomes for mothers and babies.
Chantal Argudo	My daughter, Genoveva, was stillborn in 2024 and could have been prevented with more awareness and medical professionals who actually do their jobs.
Janine Ciccone	My daughter, Giavanna Marie, was stillborn in 2013.
Jacqueline Dahlem	my daughter, Giulia , was stillborn in 2021
Steven Ajami	My daughter, Giulia Faye, was stillborn in 2021
Carlos Arias	My daughter, Grace was stillborn in 2005
Andrea Arias	My daughter, Grace, was stillborn March 19, 2005 at 36w3d
Jillian Merolle	My daughter, Hailey, was stillborn in 2019 due to a cord accident.
Amber Green	My daughter, Haley, was stillborn in 2022. It was extremely sudden of course and I want to do everything I can to support this topic in an effort to prevent stillbirths in the future.
Beverly Dudley	My daughter, Hallie, was stillborn in 2002. I support research and a focus to understand why these deaths happen. Thank you, Beverly Dudley
Sarah Elvin	My daughter, Hannah, was stillborn in 2016.
Gabrielle Deschamps	my daughter, Harlow Grace, was stillborn in 2022.
Kari davis	My daughter, Harper, was stillborn in 2013. I found out after this is over at this one of these talked about pregnancy complications, yet 24000 babies in the United States are born still each year! I ask you to support this cause.
Brett Champlin	My daughter, Harper, was stillborn on November 3, 2022
Jacob White	My daughter, Hattie, was stillborn in 2021
Danielle Rouille	My daughter, Haven, was born still in 2021 at 37 weeks. Healthy, normally pregnancy until it wasn't.
Reese Eschmann	My daughter, Ida, was stillborn in 2023. Her loss is irreparable, and steps must be taken to prevent this from happening to tens of thousands of beloved babies every year.
Kathryn Boutiette	My daughter, Ila Gloria Jean Boutiette, was stillborn on December 28, 2021. I met so many other women who have experienced this horrific loss that completely uproots lives and families.
Anna-Marie Gardner	My daughter, Irenaea Marie, was stillborn in 2021
Chris Piasecki	My daughter, Isabelle, was stillborn in 2018. I am a founder, and member, of a group dedicated to mental health and support post loss.
Kendal Glaze	My daughter, Isla, was stillborn in 2022.
Danya Marlette	My daughter, Isobel Hope was stillborn on April 13th 2021. She was healthy and perfect. Her loss was avoidable. I have committed myself to advocating for change in her memory. Obstetric care continues to be antiquated and needs new research and resources to aid in the stop of preventable stillbirths, like my daughter.
Rachael mcdonough	My daughter, Izzy, was stillborn in June 2023 and my friend lost her son to stillbirth. I don't want anyone to have to experience this pain.
Donohue	My daughter, Jane, was stillborn in February, 2015

Sarah Jones	My daughter, Jetta, was born still in 2019. My pain is unexplainable and so are the countless others' who leave hospitals with empty arms.
Teri Kolsrud	My daughter, Joanne, was stillborn in 2018 and I am an advocate for women's health. I am a healthcare worker.
Natalie Wandstrat	My daughter, Josie, was stillborn on 2/21/22.
Jaelin Persaud	My daughter, Joy, was stillborn in 2017. I am now in an advocacy group for loss mom's and would love nothing more than to save more babies from leaving their parents.
Kari Lim	My daughter, Kaiya, was stillborn on July 2, 2021. No parent should have to go through this when stillbirth is preventable.
Keitha Detwiler	My daughter, Kalli Rynn, was stillborn in 2018. Her little life has changed us and so many around us. Please help us remember her and prevent other families from experiencing the crippling loss of a sweet baby.
Lisa Rose	My daughter, Kaylee, was born stillborn in 2003. Every breath matters, no matter how little time here on earth.
Casey Burks	My daughter, Kaytlynn Grace, was stillborn January 21, 2023. I am an advocate for women's health.
Chelsea Gilyard	My daughter, Kennedy Grace was stillborn January 9, 2019. It was the most devastating loss anyone could ever imagine. We need to help prevent other families from experiencing stillbirth. I am also a labor and delivery nurse who advocates and cares for families that experience stillbirth.
Molly Stack	My daughter, Kinley, was stillborn 12/21/22, full term.
Avery Elkins	My daughter, Kira, was stillborn in January 2023 after a completely healthy pregnancy.
Lyndsey Omar	My daughter, Laney, was stillborn in 2020.
Lisa Larsen	My daughter, Lauren Leigh Larsen, was stillborn on November 9th, 2022. We still don't know why. Everything was perfect at an ultrasound 2 days prior.
Aireen Turner	My daughter, Laylee Joy, was stillborn in 2020.
Kristen Miller	My daughter, Leighton Elizabeth Miller was stillborn at nearly full term on Oct. 19, 2018.
Sydney Long	My daughter, Leighton, died due to cord compression and was stillborn on October 17, 2022 - two days before my scheduled c section. No parent should ever have to give birth to their dead child. I have met countless parents who have lost children to stillbirth. We as a society need to be doing everything that we can to protect our precious children.
Heidi Greenwood	My daughter, Leni, was still born in 2017
Caitlin Federico	My daughter, Lia Jolene, was stillborn in May 2022 at 38 weeks. She was my 2nd child and my first daughter. Her death was preventable.
Erika Ewart	My daughter, Lila Grace, was stillborn on January 21, 2024.
Robert Reider	My daughter, Lila, was stillborn in December, 2017
Amanda Rebhi	my daughter, Liliana Beatrice, was stillborn in 2020 after negligent care received as a result of my military service forcing me to see base providers
Alexis Dietrich	My daughter, Lily Jade 12/19/22
Chris Dietrich	My daughter, Lily Jade, was stillborn 12/19/22 at 40+3 weeks. My wife, Alexis, had a perfect pregnancy. We want more research, more data collected, more support for families for this absolutely unimaginable experience. We don't want any more stillbirths. We want our babies. And, we want a better future for all women and families.

Kasey Brown	My daughter, Lincoln Faye Brown, was born on March 1, 2023 at 31 weeks during a completely healthy pregnancy. I am an advocate for women's health.
Elizabeth Hemphill	My daughter, Lisa, was stillborn in 2021 without reason. I've met many families during the last few years who would benefit from more information on stillbirth, let alone how many could benefit in the future.
Megan Dey	My daughter, Loreli Grace, was stillborn at full term. She was 7 lb 11 oz, 21 inches long, she had my auburn hair and my nose and my husband's toes, and an autopsy could not determine cause of death. And in that moment our lives were forever changed.
Laura Coy	My daughter, Lucy, was stillborn in June 2021. She was 39 weeks, and we don't have answers of what went wrong; everything was "perfect."
Cameron Harmon	My daughter, Lucy, was stillborn earlier this year.
Rosadilya Torres	My daughter, Luna Aurelia, was born still and resuscitated but 12 hours later we had to let her go due to severe brain damage. I hope that in the future no family has to wonder what their child's cry sounds like or if their eyes look full of life.
Jessica Childers	My daughter, Luna James, was born stillborn at 20 weeks.
Kristen Hughes	My daughter, Luna, was born still in 2016. I was an uninformed mother-to-be and expected a normal pregnancy. As a social worker, I am a huge advocate for knowledge and empowerment.
Joslyn Thomas	My daughter, Lyla Adelaide was stillborn in 2021.
Marcy Henry	My daughter, Madeline, was stillborn in 2022. Since this has happened I have researched and educated myself on information regarding stillbirth. Over 21,000 babies were born silent in the US in 2024. That is over 21,000 mothers and fathers who had to lay their children to rest when they should be laying them in their cribs. There needs to be a continued focus on Stillbirth in America. I understand you don't know what you don't know, and if losing a child has never happened to you it might be easy to decide to fund other areas.
Veronica Sublett Breeden	My daughter, Maeve Adelaide Breeden, was stillborn at 39 weeks gestation on December 26, 2020.
Mara Adams	My daughter, Maeve, was stillborn in 2023 and every day is so hard without her
Lillian Preziosi	My daughter, Maeve, will stillborn in 2021
Sandra Diaz Garcia	My daughter, Maia Chillon-Diaz was stillborn at 39 weeks in September 10th, 2023. She had 2 knots in her cord, with an umbilical cord assessment her passing could be avoided. We had the technology to do it. The umbilical cord assessment should be included in the standard protocols. I am a scientist and an advocate for women's health. I won't give up until every single pregnant woman has this test done for her baby.
Kristen secviar	My daughter, Margot Irene, was stillborn in 2022
Abigail Wallace	My daughter, Marian, was stillborn on 2/14/2019 as a result of an undiagnosed cord compression. I will never stop advocating for birthing people and their families. Marian was denied her chance and I will work to make sure others get their shot at life.
Felicia Oliver	My daughter, McKenzie was stillborn in 2022
Kamie Aquino	My daughter, Meadow, was stillborn in 2022 and I am an advocate for women's health.
Stephanie Axtell	My daughter, Michaela Jane was born sleeping in October 2021. I have so many unanswered questions; if we had more funding, I feel that I would have answers.

Kim Markinson	My daughter, Michaela, was stillborn on 7/5/2022, at 38 weeks. It was a devastating loss and I believe could have been prevented if more attention was given to the causes of stillbirth.
Harry Dilley	My daughter, Millicent, was stillborn in 2022.
Nicole Dilley	My daughter, Millicent, was stillborn on August 31, 2022 just shy of 30 weeks gestation. She is our fourth child, meant to be our last, and I truly believe her death could have been prevented.
Heather Brame	My daughter, my firstborn, was stillborn in 2005 after a perfect, uneventful pregnancy. My husband and I were fortunate enough to be able to have more children but losing her changed our lives forever and no parent deserves to not understand as much as possible about what happened and why and how to carry on.
Genevieve Tan	My daughter, Naya, was stillborn in 2022. I was 7 months pregnant at the time after having gone through five IVF cycles.
Thalia Washington	My daughter, Neve, was stillborn in 2015 and her loss changed our lives forever. Please continue to fund the research and committees needed to learn and change practice to prevent stillbirth in our country.
Caitlin Connolly	My daughter, Nia, was stillborn in 2017
Jenn Hatch Knight	My daughter, Nora Claire, was stillborn at 37 weeks in 2019. She should be here with her family and starting Kindergarten next year but she's not.
Lindsey M. Henke	my daughter, Nora was stillborn in 2012
Cori McKenzie	My daughter, Norah, was stillborn in 2011. Another friend lost her son Cohen to stillbirth. And I am a social worker who supports these families every day. I have worked with hundreds of families over the last decade. We have to do something to change the narrative around this silent epidemic.
Lily Garman	My daughter, Paige Louise, was born still on November 2022. We miss her everyday.
Elizabeth Stout	My daughter, Parker, died at 6 hours old due to a failing placenta
Ashley Alexander	My daughter, Parker, was stillborn in 2020. I am an advocate for women and unborn babies.
laura	my daughter, Pearl, died within minutes of her birth, as a nurse I work with families facing the death of their baby for over 16 years.
Diana Diaz	My daughter, Penelope Rose, was stillborn on 10/26/2022.
Joseph Veesaert	My daughter, Penelope Rose, was stillborn on 10/26/2022.
Diana	My daughter, Penelope, was stillborn in 2023. I don't want another woman/family to endure this pain.
Mariah foster	My daughter, Raelynn, was a stillborn in 2017. I know many people now that have stillborns as well. I'm an advocate for perinatal and infant loss and I am a healthcare worker for northside Cherokee hospital.
Erin Sublett	My daughter, Reagan, was stillborn at 35 weeks in 2014 with no apparent cause. A parent shouldn't have to go through this and we are missing something if an almost full term baby dies and there isn't a reason that we know of. It made my subsequent pregnancies stressful not knowing if there was something that was going to harm my child again.
Patricia Bray	My daughter, Rebecca, was stillborn Feb 2022, I am an advocate for women's health and for saving our babies!
Chris Duffy	My daughter, Reese, was stillborn in 2014.
Jamie Farina	My daughter, Remi, was stillborn in 2022

Jenna Ruggiero	My daughter, Rosalia Aria, was stillborn on April 30th 2018, and Women's health and stillborn prevention are very important to me.
Oceana Ball	My daughter, Rosalie, was stillborn on August 16th, 2023 and I have a close friend who lost her son to stillbirth last year. I think it's happening too often and there has to be some way it can be more prevented.
Brian Drake	My daughter, Rowan, was stillborn on January 10, 2021 at 30 weeks. I wish that no one else ever has to experience having a stillborn child. Anything we can do to reduce stillbirths will have an immeasurably huge positive impact on families throughout our country.
Heather Melson	My daughter, Ruthie Kate, was stillborn 12/2022.
Rachel Clark Unkovic	My daughter, Ruthie, was stillborn at term in 2020. This is preventable. Other families can be saved from this loss of a child.
Yifan Li	My daughter, Scarlett Li, was stillborn in 2022 after 200 happy days with us. All tests were normal and there is no clue why this happened.
Lourdes Fanning	My daughter, Siena, was stubborn in 2015.
Katherine Eckstein	My daughter, Sol, was stillborn in 2016. I hope many fewer women will have to endure what we have endured.
Lauren Ciriak Wenger	My daughter, Sophie, was stillborn in May 2021. No one could give me a reason why. She was perfect. She was stillborn at 38 weeks. No one should have to go through this pain.
Sushma Sadula	My daughter, Sowjanya Sadula, was stillborn on July 22, 2022, I am a family medicine physician and women's health advocate.
Erica hemmer	My daughter, Stevie, was stillborn in 2023. I've kept in touch with the nurses in the unit and this happens 6-8x/ mo in just this one hospital.
Kala Gattuso	My daughter, Sydney, was born stillborn in 2019. I am an advocate for women's health and research and help other moms with similar issues.
Jenna Mulry	My daughter, Sylvia Drew, was silently born November 2, 2020, due to a true knot in her umbilical cord. We celebrated her baby shower the day before her heart stopped. Since her birth, I have witnessed 4 other social acquaintances (NOT STRANGERS) locally, also be victims of infant loss. The memories of giving birth should never be as heart wrenching and traumatic as Sylvia's birth. It continues to be a part of my daily memories and significantly impacts the mental health of not only me, but my husband and Sylvia's big sister who was 5 years old when she learned that her baby sister was born but not coming home.
Kelsey Schulz	My daughter, Sylvie was born still in February 2022 at 37 weeks gestation. She was to be our first child and we had absolutely everything ready for her in our home then we lost her unexpectedly. Our lives changed forever that day
London-Gedalje	My daughter, Synthia, was stillborn on February 16, 1995. We still mourn her loss. The shock never goes away again. In the last two years, I personally know of 2 more stillbirths in families close to me.
Leslie Springer	My daughter, Talia, was born still in 2008.
Petya Dryanovska	My daughter, Teya, was stillborn December, 9th 2017
Mamta Karani	My daughter, Thalia was stillborn in 2021. I am a healthcare worker with no risk factors. We lost her at 32 weeks for no known cause.
Hayley block	My daughter, Theodora, was stillborn at 34 weeks in 2022 and is forever missed
Charles C Gardner	My daughter, Tinsley, was stillborn in 2017.
Kathy Gardner	My daughter, Tinsley, was stillborn in 2017.

Kalli Smith	My daughter, Vera Lynn, was stillborn in August of 2022.
Lorraine Ash	My daughter, Victoria Helen, was stillborn in 1999.
Jennifer Viera	My daughter, Victoria, was stillborn in 2021.
Amberlie Humphries	My daughter, Violette, was stillborn in 2016. My mental health deteriorated rapidly and I had no support or help.
Kelsey Giannone	My daughter was stillborn 01/21/23.
Nicole Guess	My daughter, Willa James, was stillborn February 2020. I know too many other parents who have suffered stillbirth. We need more work to be done! These births are often preventable.
Hope Masloski	My daughter, Willa, was stillborn on August 8, 2023. After experiencing this, we have had several people reach out and share their stories of stillbirth as well. It is so much more common than we realized and then it happened to my husband and I.
Angela Carlile	My daughter, Zella, was stillborn 2021. Please help.
Natalie Lopez	My daughters Isabelle and Caitlyn were born still in 2011.
Kelly Henry	My daughter's sister-in-law had a stillbirth last October that devastated their family.
Brittany Day	My daughters, Sophie and Ruby, were stillborn in 2017.
Elizabeth Tavares	My daughters Beatrice and Alexandra were born alive at 21 weeks and lived just moments. They are categorized as stillbirth/miscarriage due to their young gestation. Researching why and how they passed, as well as providing care and resources for coping with their loss, is highly important to me.
Ali Tracy-McHenry	My first and only child was stillborn at 32 weeks last August after having a perfectly healthy pregnancy. I've always been a supporter of yours and have met you at several events you've held in Charlotte, and hope you'll advocate for me.
Erica Bailey	My first baby, my son Rhoan, was stillborn in 2020 from preventable causes. His life matters and he should be here.
Bradley Bailey	My first born son Rhoan Osborne Bailey was stillborn in March of 2020 at 39 weeks after a healthy normal pregnancy. The cause of his death was preventable had measuring his placenta and education on fetal movement monitoring been performed by our care team.
Clayton mayhew	My first born son was stillborn in February 2021 while my wife was in labor.
Amanda Hastings	My first born, Theophilus, was still born in March. Many of my friends have also lost their children to stillbirth.
Lacee Hager	My first child, a son Owen, was stillborn in 2017.
Craig Murphy	My first child died before she was born in 2000, and several family members and close friends have lost children to stillbirth. I feel like the number of stillbirths reported seems low, while the impact of each and every child lost to stillbirth is enormous on the mother, father, and other family and friends.
Cherie Golant	My first child Julia was stillborn in 2003. Eleven months and 5 days later, I gave birth to a healthy baby girl. Words can describe the hope, fear, grief and life that overwhelmed every one of those days, and the months and years that followed. As much of maternal fetal medicine is still shrouded in mystery, families deserve there to be focused research toward preventing stillbirth whenever possible.

Nicole Maier	My first child, Calvin, was stillborn in January 2019.
Lilly Pritula	My first child, Cole, was stillborn at 38 weeks in October 2018. Since then I have connected with, and provided support to, hundreds of parents across the country that have experienced this devastating event. As a healthcare worker, advocate for medical education for providers, supporter of knowledge-based care to empower patients, and a member of the LGBTQ community, my goal is to raise awareness of stillbirth prevention and support for all.
Katie Brown	My first child, Henry, a perfectly healthy baby boy, was stillborn July 20, 2018.
Megan Berlin	My first child, Jackson, was stillborn in 2018. It was devastating and could have been prevented.
Alex Abend	My first child, James Robert, was stillborn on 1/11/22 at 34 weeks pregnant. These bills need our attention because stillbirth is still happening at an alarming rate, especially given where we are as a society.
Vanessa Mazurek	My first child, my daughter Ava, was born sleeping during full term spontaneous labor. Her death was preventable with improved standards of care. The loss of a child is a loss no parent should experience, and a loss so profound it stays with you for life.
Katlyn Harmon	My first child, my daughter Lucy, was stillborn at 25.5 weeks.
Susannah Leisher	My first child, Wilder Daniel Leisher, was stillborn at full-term (38 1/2 weeks) in 1999 with no cause ever found. I have become a stillbirth epidemiologist and advocate to help end this tragedy for other families.
Luca Guazzotto	My first daughter was born still in November 2021. We do not know the cause of her death, but anything congress can do to help other families avoid a tragedy like ours would be a very worthwhile endeavor.

Nadia	My first pregnancy, boy/girl twins conceived via IVF, ended in stillbirth in 2013. It has been ten years since my own heartbreaking loss, and since then I changed careers (to become a perinatal psychotherapist) and have met (and treated) dozens of women/families who have been personally impacted by stillbirth. It is infuriating that so many pregnancies still end in stillbirth, despite all of the technological innovations that have occurred in obstetrics/neonatology.
Lauren Bastian	My first son Henry was stillborn at 33 weeks, August 2, 2022
Danielle Ondarza Cipriani	My first son Jude was stillborn at 39 weeks and 5 days.
Bradley Bailey	My first son was stillborn in March of 2020 at 39 Weeks.
Allison Johm	My first son, Elijah, was stillborn two days before his due date after a perfectly healthy pregnancy. His death could have been prevented if the existing research was implemented and I was educated about fetal movement, kick counting, and measurement of estimated placental volume (EPV). If he was born in another country that had stillbirth education, research, and data collection, he might still be with us today.
Daniel Sparnroft	my first son, Jackson, was stillborn in 2020
Melissa Alke-Sparnroft	My first son, Jackson, was stillborn in October 2020 and I miss him everyday.
Brianna Seifert	My first son, Jaxson, was stillborn at 38 weeks in 2019
Lauren baynard	My first son, Liam, was stillborn at 38 weeks and 3 days. I had a perfect pregnancy up until that point.
Micayla McMillin	My first son, Milo, was stillborn in 2020 and my second son, Greysen, was stillborn in 2022

Kelly Friedrich	My first son, William, was stillborn in 2021 and I don't want any other families to have to bring a box home from the hospital instead of a baby.
Brian Friedrich	My first son, William, was stillborn in 2021.
DeWanda Harris Trimiar, Ph.D.	My first-born son, Baby Joshua, was stillborn at 32 weeks of pregnancy. I am a Black mother, who is also a professional healthcare advocate, who knows that Black women lose three times more than that of any other ethnicity. Join us and the other women who have and who will lose their babies to stillbirth. ce.
Cynthia Johannessen	My firstborn child was stillborn 9 months ago. It's the most difficult thing to endure.
Jordan Kendall Horn	My firstborn child, River, was stillborn in 2019.
Mallory Stacy	My firstborn daughter Tabitha-Rose was stillborn without cause at 40 weeks, April 27th, 2022. We must do better to improve women and children's healthcare at every level.
Chelsea Waggoner	My firstborn daughter was born stillborn four days prior to our due date. Elizabeth Loretta Lynn Waggoner was born stillborn on Jan. 24,2023. Unfortunately, I am now part of a 'club' full of women and families that are forever changed by this.
Jathniel Jerimia Heninger	My firstborn daughter was stillborn at 9 months pregnant on January 14, 2019, and since then I have had 3 friends that have lost their sweet, wanted, loved, and prayed for babies.
Kate	My firstborn daughter was stillborn on October 8th, 2020 two days after her due date. I was 40 weeks pregnant and we were both completely healthy; her loss came as a total shock. As a social worker and stillbirth prevention advocate on a mission to end preventable stillbirth, I urge you to pass SHINE.
Hanna Elam	My firstborn twin sons were stillborn in 2021
Lindsey Afton	My firstborn, Charlotte, was stillborn in 2017 and we have no answers to the heartbreaking question "why?" Please help prevent other parents, families, and siblings from having to live the worst nightmare.
Michele Sperber	My firstborn, Logan Rose , was born still and I miss her everyday.
Brooke Whittington	My firstborn, my daughter, a granddaughter, niece, sister, Scarlett Raine Whittington was stillborn in 2020.

Brittany Whalen	My husband and I lost our first baby, Elias, due to stillbirth. He was born sleeping on July 23rd 2021 at 25wks gestation.
Elizabeth Nguyen	My husband and I lost our first two babies, Jude in 2021 and Frances in 2022.
Breanne Su'a	My husband and I lost our son, Milo, at 17 weeks gestation on November 13, 2022. Losing our son is by far the worst challenge we've ever experienced. Both of us were required to return to work in 5 days or less, since we were at 17 weeks and he was stillborn. However, the trauma and grief from losing our son has continued months later and will continue more. As his mother, I bled heavily for six weeks, even being hospitalized again for hemorrhaging. We planned his funeral when I should've been resting and healing. I started producing breast milk, which was traumatizing and anxiety inducing. Parents who have a child and mothers who birth a child should have the same rights whether that baby lives or dies. Please fund this cause and do what you can to fuel this fight for rights for our stillborn who can't fight for themselves and their parents who need all the help they can get.
Kelli Bohn	My husband and I lost our son, Noah Michael Bohn, on April 6, 2021 at 41 weeks to stillbirth. Noah's death was preventable and we're on a mission to keep other families from feeling this type of loss and tragedy.

Makayla Urich	My husband and I were expecting our first baby in April of 2023. We were beyond excited and couldn't wait! My pregnancy was deemed normal all the way through up until my 20-week anatomy scan. I was told our son was a little small but that everything was fine and not to worry. 2 weeks later I stopped feeling him move and feared the worst. We rushed up to the hospital and our lives that day changed forever. We were told the worst sentence I've ever heard in my life " I'm sorry but we can't find the baby's heartbeat." I was at a loss for words and just felt my heartbreak. None of the nurses or doctors could understand what happened and what caused the death of my son. I was just told that these things happen sometimes for no explanation and that the chances of them ever happening again are low. I think the worst thing is not knowing what happened or why this happened when I was just told a few weeks prior everything was good and nothing to worry about. I delivered my beautiful son that day and held him in my arms for as long as possible until it was time for me to say goodbye.
Anne Kassalow	My perfectly healthy 39 week pregnancy ended in a stillbirth. At 39 weeks and 1 day I just woke up and thought, this is so weird I don't feel the baby. We didn't worry because what could go wrong, I was 39 weeks!? I waited a few hours in the morning and then called my OBGYN office. They told me to go immediately to the hospital. That's when I got nervous. When we got to the hospital Wyatt was gone. After some testing it was named he had a compressed cord accident.
Annmarie Howton	My perfectly healthy baby was stillborn on March 21 of 2024. My family and I miss her everyday.
Heather Johnston Welliver	My perfectly healthy daughter Lydia was stillborn in 2014
Megan Andrews	My perfectly healthy daughter, Brieah, was stillborn at full term in August 2022.
Nicole Mikulich	My son , Dylan, was stillborn in 2010
Shay Jacobs	My son Adam was a stillborn in 2018
Emily Ledesma	My son Adonis H Luke passed away at 40 weeks. I had multiple visits to the triage for low fetal movement prior to his passing and I should have been induced. His death should have been prevented.
Stella Baires	My son Adrian Andres was stillborn in 2020, and I know sooo many of my friends also suffered from this, it shouldn't be happening!
Brianna Tibbitts Ortner	My son Aiden was stillborn in 2021. I will & will always advocate for women's health & our babies
Michele Hull	My son AJ, was stillborn on 11/14/12 and it has changed our lives forever. We never knew about stillbirth until it happened to us. He is our first-born son and we had very few resources to help us through those tough times back in 2012.
Eleni Michailidis	My son Alexander was stillborn in 2015
Angela Lane	My son Amir was stillborn in 2016.
Ebony Mixon	My son Amir was stillborn in 2018. His death could have been prevented. With your help we can save the lives of other children. I am an advocate and would like to see third trimester Doppler and ultrasounds approved especially for women of color to help prevent stillbirths.
Scott Bell	My son and daughter in law lost a child that was stillborn. It is my hope that we can research to reduce stillbirths.

Deana Henderson	My son and daughter were stillborn. It could have been prevented had I been taken more seriously.
Deborah Kovach	My son and his wife have lost two children to stillbirth. I am an advocate and voter for TRUE support for pregnant women and their WANTED babies in the womb. WHY does the U.S. have a stillbirth rate higher than the rest of the industrial world...?!!!
Jessica Drew	My son and my daughter were early term stillborn's 8 months apart after several normal and live pregnancies and births. It's important we know more and how to better prevent these tragedies.
Mona Al-shaalan	My son Anselm was born still on august 11, 2022
Loren Van Oss	My son Archie was stillborn in March of 2018. I have friends who have had stillborn babies.
Rachel Bormet	My son Aris was stillborn in 2022, and the the autopsy wasn't done when I said to do it
Jenny Pou	My son Arturo, was a stillborn in 2018. I am a Registered irse and an advocate for women's health.
Susan Schoenfeldt	My son August was stillborn at full-term in 2014.
Lauren Rose	My son Austin was stillborn March 2023
Derek Jensen	My son Axum was stillborn in January in 2023. I want to help raise awareness to try and help prevent others from losing a child.
Elizabeth nicholson	My son Barret was stillborn in 2022 after 7 years of infertility. The hospital failed our family by giving me an infection from an internal exam. Every odd symptom I reported was said to be "normal" it was only after his birth did we find the infection. They refuse to admit fault. This infection causes 40% infected to any degree to experience premature labor and stillbirth. His death was preventable. Mercy hospital killed him. And they wrote his passing off as inconclusive like 50% of stillborn. Our babies are dying. They are not recognized by our government. They could have been saved.
Autumn Cohen	My son Bash was stillborn March 25, 2020 at 37 weeks
Kirstin Swiggum Halfon	My son Beau should be here now. Wish no other moms have to endure what we have been through
Bryan Fletcher	My son Benjamin was stillborn in 2006.
Stephanie Keslowitz	My son Blake died right after delivery in 2022. My son's death like so many others was fully preventable. It's something so painful I wouldn't wish this upon anyone. I want to do anything I can to prevent this type of horrific loss.
Sarah Buckmaster	My son Blake, was stillborn in 2014 and my friend lost her son to stillbirth.
Michael Lazar	My son Brody was stillborn in 2022 and I want to see change and help more people.
Nicole Gonet	My son Brooks was stillborn is 2022
Jenn glascoock	My son Bryce was stillborn in 2013. It was the most devastating experience of my life.
Jill Lens	My son Caleb was stillborn in 2017
Macey phillips	My son Callum was stillborn in 2021
Amy Campisi	My son Carter was stillborn in 2022.
Jessica McElreath	My son Carter was stillborn in March 2023. I am advocating for women's health & ending preventable stillbirth.

Nicole LaFleur	My son Charles Leonard LaFleur was stillborn at 35 weeks gestation on July 6, 2019. I noticed decreased movements on July 3rd, but was never instructed to do kick counts or warned of stillbirth risks so I didn't know that I should have gone to get him checked out. By the morning of the 5th, when I finally went in, he was dead. Charlie's placenta measured under the 1st percentile and could not support his growth anymore. We never had a growth scan for him or any monitoring because I was low risk. If we had measured the placenta during pregnancy or had been educated about movement, I believe my son would be alive today.
Megan Jaeger	My son Charles was stillborn in 2018. Also because my friend's daughter was stillborn in 2016.
Vonnie janes	My son Clayton was stillborn at 35 weeks in 2018
Holly Van Kempen	My son Collins was stillborn in 2021. In CA, we did not even receive a death certificate because he was "only" 20 weeks gestation. CA needs a change. My son mattered. My grief was real and, to me, supporting a woman through that is women's healthcare.
Joshua Bardon	My son Colter was stillborn on 9/13/22
Emily Wilkerson	My son Cooper was stillborn at 38 weeks in November of 2021.
Nicole Maycock	My son Coy was born still in 2016.
Jeremy Maycock	My son Coy was stillborn in 2016
Brandon Waters	My son Daniel was stillborn in April of 2023. Our family had never heard of stillbirth prior to losing our son. Finding out how often it happens in the US was eye opening in the research & education needed to help decrease the number of healthy babies that die each day. Please help us fight this silent epidemic.
Denise Randazzo	My son Danny. Daniel Webster Cluff V, he is gone. There is nothing I can do to change that, but I can try to help others not go through this pain.
Katherine Lazar	My son died at 37 weeks and was stillborn in January 2022. I am an advocate for change so that other parents do not suffer the nightmare that is the death of your child.
Elizabeth Minton	My son died just a few weeks after birth, and through that process I have gotten connected with so many mothers that have lost their children due to stillbirth. These mothers and their families have suffered substantially as a result of this loss and really need more support. As a result of my own loss, I am now conducting research on how to better support families of stillbirth and other types of baby loss, and through this, I have really seen the need for more support for these individuals.
Yuridia Domínguez	My son Dylan Alexander was stillborn December 2012
Amy LaSota	my son Dylan was stillborn at 38 weeks in 2015, with no risk factors and no explanation
Elaina Vietz	My son Dylan was stillborn in 2014.
Andrea Hoffman	My son Dylan was stillborn in April.
Vivian Richards	My son Edward died in 2020, and since then thousands of babies have been born still.
Reed Richards	My son Edward was stillborn in 2020.
Jocelyn Loehe	My son Edward was stillborn in December 2020, and I care deeply about preventing the same pain for as many families as possible.
Haley Mcdougle	My son Eli was stillborn at 36 weeks in May 2023.
Melissa Lee	My son Eli was stillborn in 2020 at 39 weeks gestation.

Nereida Moseley	My son Elias Moseley was stillborn the day I had a scheduled c-section. All was right at my final OB appointment the day before and received the greatest shock of my life. If you are prolife, you should be anti-stillbirth. Life matters.
David O'Neill	My son Elijah was stillborn in 2018. The pain of that moment shouldn't be felt by anyone ever again as much as it is possible.
Kate crump	My son Ellett was stillborn in 2018
Sarah	My son Ethan
Chelsea Duffy	My son Ewan was stillborn in April of 2021. Words cannot describe the devastation of such a loss, and there is still so little known about the causes of stillbirth.
Christa Katz	My son Ezekiel was stillborn at 27 weeks July 2021
Madison Knotts	My son Ezra was a stillborn in December 2022
Nick Kovach	My son Ezra was stillborn in June 2020
Sasha Williams	My son Ezra was stillborn on October 29, 2022.
Annie Kearns	My son Finnegan was stillborn in 2018 after receiving all recommended care in my "low-risk" pregnancy.
Ashley Vanderpool	My son Finnlee was stillborn in 2019.
Chrissy Kirk	My son Flicht was stillborn in 2017.
Rae Jager	My son Fox Allan was stillborn in 2021 and his death could've been prevented
Joshua Lenze	My son Gabriel Noel Lenze was stillborn November 26th 2022
Christine O'Neill	My son Gabriel was stillborn on March 12th, 2020 at Exeter Hospital.
Jane Rollins	My son Garrett was stillborn in 2020. The current leading cause for fetal demise in America is unknown. This is unacceptable. Please help save lives.
Blaine Chavana	My son Grady was stillborn in 2020, due to a small placenta. I am an advocate for proper medical treatment, when it comes to women and babies. I work in the field of radiology, so I am always advocating for every mama and baby during each ultrasound exam performed in my department.
Jordan Dean	My son Grayson Stone Dean was born still April 26th, 2022
Laken Dean	My son Grayson Stone was born still on April 26th, 2022 due to a small placenta.
Hayley Bloom	My son Gus was stillborn in 2022 and he should be here.
Steve Bloom	My son Gus was stillborn in November 2022. He was perfect, delivered at 40 weeks, and we still do not know why he died.
Lyndsi James	My son Hagen was born silent on February 19, 2013. His umbilical cord was knotted. I go through life everyday with one less child. If we can prevent just one more family from this tragic life changing loss, it is well worth the efforts.
Allie Felker	My son Hank was stillborn on July 1st 2020. We must end preventable stillbirth in the US.

Kristi Slutz	<p>My son Harrison was stillborn at 37 weeks on September 16, 2022. He had a true knot in his cord that was wrapped tightly around his neck. Hearing that our baby had no heartbeat was the worst feeling in the world. The pain of giving birth, knowing I would never hear him cry, was excruciating. Our little boy was born perfect, and every day without him leaves a hole in my heart; our family will never be the same.</p> <p>As a midwife's assistant, I understand the risks and know what to look for. I immediately recognized when Harrison wasn't moving and called my midwife, who came over to perform an ultrasound, only to confirm my worst fears. His death has shattered my heart and opened my eyes to the reality of this loss. I don't want any other mothers or families to experience the pain we have endured. Some days are unbearable without him.</p> <p>Please continue the research so we can prevent other mothers from losing their babies and feeling the same heartache my family has. Thank you.</p>
Ashley Arons	My son Harrison was stillborn in 2014.
Elise Camron	My son Hendryx, was stillborn at 38 weeks, April 2020.
Susan Jacobsen	My son Henry was stillborn at 37 weeks. I am an advocate for women's health and a therapist who works with women who have lost babies.
Andrew Felker	My son Henry was stillborn in 2020 and I don't want anyone else to go through this.
Alexa Gearhart	My son Hudson Daniel Gearhart was stillborn at 38 weeks gestation in 2021
Jennica Hill	My son Hugo was stillborn in October 2021 likely from a small placenta, and my second son Bowie also had a small placenta. More research and more thorough care could have saved Hugo, and without knowing what happened to Hugo, Bowie might not be here either. No parents should have to face the pain of a lifetime without their child, so let's do the work and get the funding for stillbirth prevention research NOW.
Danica LaFortune	My son Ikaika was stillborn 9/3/2015.
Tomeka Isaac	My son Jace was stillborn in 2018
Christine Savage	My son Jack was stillborn in 2011 at MGH.
Helena Arnold	My son Jackson was stillborn in 2018.
Christina Alonzo	My son Jackson was stillborn in 2021
Ann Burford	My son Jake died 30 minutes after being born and several of my closest friends have had stillborn babies.
Susan Valoff	My son James was stillborn in 2015, full-term. I didn't know then I had risk factors, and I don't think my doctor did either. This was a terrible loss for our family, one that may have been prevented. think
Francesca Galan	My son James was stillborn in April 2022.
Bonnie Alvarez	My son Jameson was stillborn in 2020
Nicholas Merced	My son Jameson was stillborn on March 21st, 2019.
Yvette Marie Barajas	My son Jameson, was stillborn in 2020, my aunt lost her son to stillbirth, I am an advocate for women's health
Kathryn Widing	My son Jasper died in a stillbirth in 2022.
Marion Bojorquez	My son Jaxen Rood was stillborn on 4/20/22.

Ashley Heidmann	My son Jaxen was stillborn at 35 weeks in 2019
Danielle Hadad	My son Jayden Shai was stillborn on November 15, 2022 when I was 38 weeks (full term) pregnant with him.
Claudine Alefueh	My son Jesse was stillborn December 2022, and it was and is still painful for me. I am a healthcare worker too so I'm Wishing no other woman goes through this.
Alefueh	My son Jesse was stillborn 2022 and his brother passed away mins after birth. I Really do miss them everyday
Amber Johnson	My son Jesse, was stillborn at 33 weeks in September of 2019. Since then, I volunteer with a group who helps families through stillbirth, miscarriage and pregnancy loss. It affects so many more people than you'd ever guess.
Amanda Smyth	My son Johnathan was stillborn at 28 weeks in February of 2015.
Dorienna Alfred	My son Joshua was stillborn in 2006 and I am a perinatal mental health provider that works with clients who have experienced loss.
Linzey Trapp	My son Judsyn was stillborn in November 2022.
Donovan Lazaro	My son Kane was born still last year. Prior to delivery, we had no indication that there was any complication that could have resulted in what happened. We learned afterward that my wife Diane had an abnormally small placenta, and a simple 30-second check could have identified that there was a higher risk if there were better data and standard operating practices established. Unfortunately, we learned this is way more common in the US than other developed countries, and we're part of a club that will live with us the rest of our lives. Please support this legislation for future babies and families!
Lin Yuan	My son Keelan was stillborn at 38 weeks in April 2023
jojo hertz	my son Landon was stillborn at 37 weeks in 2021
Brittany Clayton	My son Lawson was stillborn in 2019 at 35 weeks.
Raushanah Johnson	My son Legend, was stillborn in 2021.
Tara Varghese	My son Leo was stillborn at 40 weeks in December 2021.
Justine Diffy	My son Leo was stillborn December 31, 2021. It was preventable
Cynthia Gómez	My son Leo was stillborn in 2021 and I miss him every second of every day.
Natasha de Sousa	My son Leonardo passed away shortly after birth .
Anna Calix	My son Liam was stillborn unexpectedly on his due date in 2016 at 40 weeks gestation. At the time I was working in perinatal care and thus had all the knowledge, resources, and tools for a happy ending. Even so, my son died. Since then, we have been fighting to reduce stillbirths and infant deaths by increasing access to resources for marginalized communities who are most impacted by stillbirth.
Elizabeth Miller	My son Louis was stillborn in 2022
William Boyer	My son Lucas was stillborn May 1st 2022. More than 75 of my friends and family have experienced loss via stillbirth in the last 5 years.
Sabrina Rivera	My son Lucian was stillborn on December 10, 2022 at 38 1/2 weeks. I believe that his death was preventable, and he could have been saved if my doctor had been more vigilant and proactive.
Kelly Small	My son Luke was stillborn in 2020, his stillbirth was preventable, but the current medical guidelines and standard maternal care failed us.

Kirstin Glassmoyer-Hecht	My son Luke was stillborn just before Christmas in 2021.
Heather Snowden	My son Luke was stillborn on April 25, 2022 and we still don't know why.
Jennifer Larusson	My son Magnus James Larusson was born still at 37 weeks on July 1, 2023
Lara Aqel Valdes	My son Malek was stillborn in April of this year
Cabrera	My son Manny was stillborn in 2020.
Kora Burton	My son Marlo was stillborn days before his due date this year in April, and his death was preventable. No parent should follow all their doctor's advice and not be able to bring their baby safely home from the hospital. It is my wish as a grieving mother that these bills are passed this year.
Jessica McMillin	My son Maverick was born still at 9 months on August 20, 2023
Kanis Nathan	My son Maverick was stillborn in October 2019 at 39 weeks
Courtney Flowers	My son Micah was stillborn March 14, 2022
Luiza Saunders	My son Mike, was stillborn in 2018 and he is missed daily.
Lindsay Canno	My son Miles was stillborn in August 2020. I believe his death was preventable with the right information and proper medical care. His death has changed my life forever. I am a licensed social worker and an advocate for women and children.
matt walsh	My son Miles was stillborn in October 2014. I'm a firefighter and my wife is a teacher.
Gerald	My son Miles, was stillborn in October 2021, my wife also almost lost her life in the process. I am an advocate for indigenous people's healthcare and human rights. I am also a healthcare professional.
Kristen Cullison	My son Myles was stillborn in 2021 at 35 weeks
Lia Franciotti	My son Nero died from nuchal cord asphyxiation 9 days before his scheduled C-section. I'm an advocate for women's health and this is very important and personal to me.
Alicia Loehlein	My son Neville was stillborn in 2013 and the time for change is long overdue!
Jill DeSilva	My son Nicholas died at birth 12/28/2020. As a result I have become very close with other loss parents.
Kiley Hanish	My son Norbert was stillborn in 2005.
Emily McBride	My son Oliver Flynn was stillborn in November 2022. His loss was earth shattering, and the number of babies stillborn in the US every year (22k) is unacceptable. We need to do whatever we can to prevent as many deaths as possible.
Hilary Hughes	My son Oliver was still born in 2013
Ariel Mendoza	my son Onyx, stillborn in 2018
Melynda Lee	My son Otto was stillborn in 2023.
Alicia Hardy	My son Owen was stillborn 11/25/2020. No one checked the cord. Somehow his death certificate is incorrect, and no one cares. I can't get it fixed. Stillbirth is STILLbirth. It's still losing your very wanted, planned for child and it tears your whole world apart. We need whatever support and resources to research and help prevent this in the future. Parents need counseling and time off to grieve. No one deserves this. Hopefully we can stop it.
Kelly Moran	My son Owen was stillborn in January, 2021
Andrew Hersh	My son Ozzie was stillborn in 2023
Michelle Close	My son Ozzie was stillborn in 2023 and we miss him every single day

Brianne Fegarsky	My son Parker was stillborn in 2022 and I have numerous friends who lost their child to stillbirth
Adriana Castaneda	My son passed shortly after being born in 2019. Also my friend lost her daughter to stillbirth.
Amanda Sheehan	My son Phoenix was stillborn a day before his due date in September 2020.
Mandy Sheehan	My son Phoenix was stillborn in September 2020, one day before his due date.
Jasmine Abraham	My son Qasem was born still in June of 2020. I didn't even understand that stillbirths were happening on a daily basis to completely healthy pregnancies until I was going through one myself. I was a first time mom, and at 37 weeks, a resident looked me in the face and told me that my son's heart had stopped beating. Everything changed, and I truly think we are doing a disservice not teaching expecting families that this is a possible outcome. To say I was blindsided is putting it lightly.
Mike Frenkel	My son Raphael was stillborn on 5/27/2023 and I have no discernable reason as to why. There's literally not enough information to tell my wife and I why our child died. It's all a bunch of maybes and "inconclusive studies." He was there one moment and gone the next. You know what that tells me? That tells me that in 2023, when we can replace a heart with a machine and I have enough data at my fingertips to accurately model a fantasy football draft, my wife's doctor didn't have enough conclusive data to know that my son should have been delivered at 38 weeks. Instead she told us to come back two days later, and by that point, he was dead. How is fantasy football data more important than keeping my son alive? How are we STILL not funding getting the data we need?
Jennifer Keane	My Son Robbie was stillborn in 2010. The grief and sadness never go away. I count him as one of my children. I am a health care worker and I support women's health care. If this could be prevented, it would be so important to so many.
Isabel Vasquez	My son Roman was stillborn on November 10th, 2021.
Whitney Keys	My son Romiko, and two of his cousins were stillborn in 2021 and we miss them dearly.
Amy Ray	My son Rowan was born still in 2011
Lindsay Keller	My son Ryan was stillborn in 2020, I work in the healthcare profession
Kristine Urbano	My son Ryatt was stillborn in 2021. I had absolutely no knowledge of it being a possibility until it happened to me.
Lacey Schoff	My son Ryker was stillborn in June of 2020 while I was 37 weeks pregnant
Kate Wilson	My son Sam was born still in 2019 and my family never received full answers as to why it happened. There is just not enough research and focus on this devastating issue impacting families.
Shivani Patel	My son Sam was stillborn at 33 weeks
Natalie Pugar	My son Samuel was stillborn at 33 weeks in 2019.
Danielle Killian	My son Scooter was stillborn in 2017 and 37 weeks
Stephanie Crawford	My Son Simeon was stillborn at 39 weeks
Tera Heinzerling	My son Simon was stillborn in 2018 after a cord accident
Gretell Sanchez	My son stillborn in 2022
Danielle Franck	My son Tanner was stillborn in 2016
Hannah Gardner	My son Theodore was stillborn in December 2020.
Jade Rogers	My son Tilsyn Francis Rogers was born still on August 28, 2021. I want better for future families.

Carl Shatraw	My son Timothy was stillborn in 2021.
Drew Fedczuk	My son Vincent was stillborn in 2017
Kaitlyn Chebowski	My son was a stillbirth in 2022
Holly Selde	My son was a stillborn in 2016 and a friend had a stillbirth as well in 2020
Lindsay Stonelake	My son was born alive and later passed but since I have met so many families who have suffered a loss to stillbirth.
Jennifer Blevins	My son was born at 18 weeks and this cause is very personal to me.
Ana Padilla	My son was born prematurely in a late miscarriage at 19 weeks. My baby brother was sent home only to die hours later due to hospital negligence. Too many babies are dying for reasons that seem can be corrected if doctors are catching things before babies get worse and die.
Breanna Yeary	My son was born sleeping at 22 weeks on 03/05/2022. My provider was very veg with me at my 20 week ultrasound, he told me that he was measuring a little small and wanted to send me off to a specialist and be seen within a day or 2. 1 week later after going back and forth with the office about not being contacted I found a different hospital system in the area and asked to be sent to their MFM providers instead. They called me within 3 hours and wanted me to be there ASAP the very next morning. I go in for what they told me would be a 3 hour appointment starting with an ultrasound. I was in the ultrasound for less than 5 minutes. The tech stopped, then threw the towel on my stomach and told me I'm sorry I don't have good news for you today and walked out for 10 minutes. I later found out that my original provider had seen multiple abnormalities on my ultrasound at 20 weeks and never bothered to share them with me. I was neglected by my health care system. Had I been seen right away like was asked at the beginning my son could be seen here today. That's only a very small sample of all of the horrific events that took place through my loss. Please help make the change so others don't have to go through what I have.
Holly Drag	My son was born still 8/10/22. It is far too common in our country and as a NICU nurse, I know how much we can change things we put our minds to.
Caronda Robinson	My son was born still in 2007. I stand for women's health
Sara Curiel	My son was born still in December 2021.
Becky Dohrmann	My son was considered stillborn on 11-18-17 due to a medical error made by the dr.
Lisa Gonzalez	My son was still born at 37 weeks last year.
Amy Sileski	My son was still born in 2010, I am a bereavement Doula
Marny Smith	My son was stillborn
Latricia Bemis	My son was stillborn 5-9-23 and my daughter stillborn 4-15-24
Carolyn Webster	My son was stillborn at 36 weeks in August of 2022.
Taylor Higgins	My son was stillborn at 36 weeks in October 2020
Kanis Mackenzie	My son was stillborn at term after a perfect pregnancy in 2019. No answers could be given to us as to why.
Faye Chapman	My son was stillborn in 1983, I am an advocate for Women's Health
Melissa Jones	My son was stillborn in 1995
Emily Grorus	My son was stillborn in 2010, I lead monthly support groups for parents who have had stillborn babies, I volunteer in hospitals to visit with patients who have had stillbirths.
Angela Moeller	My son was stillborn in 2012.

Christina Fedczuk	My son was stillborn in 2017.
Melissa smith	My son was stillborn in 2018 ! In 2018 there should have been enough resources to prevent this from happening, but yet there was not despite this day and age. I would not inflict this pain on anyone or any family. This must be addressed.
Carrie Mottau	My son was stillborn in 2018.
Maria Augusta Mackeldey	My son was stillborn in 2019
Breanna English	My son was stillborn in 2021
Carlos Angeles	my son was stillborn in 2022
Dr. LaRhonda McLemore	My son was stillborn in 2022
Katy drew	My son was stillborn in 2022
Angela Holden	My son was stillborn in 2022. There was no cause of death found, we were told sometimes these things happen. There's a reason my son died, that means there's a possibility my son's death could have been prevented as well. We were both healthy and perfect. I will forever be traumatized and in mourning for my baby boy that should still be here.
Danielle Quinoñez	My son was stillborn in April at 38 weeks
Emily Coakley	My son was stillborn in August 2022 after an otherwise healthy, normal pregnancy. His cause of death is still unknown.
Joseph Crugnale	My son was stillborn in December 2018. With more awareness of maternal health, I think this could've been prevented.
Brian Knopick	My son was stillborn in Jan 2021.
Katrin Schulz	My son was stillborn in January 2023 at 39 weeks gestation.
Megan McGeady	My son was stillborn in March 2021
Lauren Puckett	My son was stillborn in March of this year, 2023
Kristina Mamone	My son was stillborn in September 2022
Desseree Lysne-Burson	My son was stillborn March 2021 after a massive bleed (placental abruption). Several high risk specialists said the only answer they have is it was a lightning strike.
Dana Manning	My son was stillborn March 2023 at 36 weeks pregnant
Elizabeth Moore	My son was stillborn March 7,2023 dies to placental abruption
Teresa Snyder	My son was stillborn on June 16th, 2008
Loni Landon	My son was stillborn the end of 2023 and I miss him everyday
Ellen Larson	My son Will was stillborn in 2015.
Jennifer Leonhard	My son William was stillborn in 2016, and even after autopsy and testing we have no real answers for why. My friend Kristi just lost her daughter Karmyn to stillbirth last summer, and again, no answers, just guessed. We need more information on why this happens and education for doctors and nurses who dismissed our concerns for our babies.
Eric Woodruff	My son Wyatt was a stillbirth in 2022.
Valeria Silva-Woodruff	My son Wyatt was born still in 2022, and we want to help prevent further stillbirth and heartbreak this causes in families.
Shawn Soumilas	My son Zach was stillborn at full term in 2010 after an otherwise healthy pregnancy.

Laura Duncan	My son Zachary was stillborn in 2012.
Keli Hansen	My son, Adam was stillborn in 2004
Natallie Foster	my son, Addison-Coke was stillborn October 14, 2004.
Zachariah Luke	My son, Adonis Henry Luke was born sleeping September 27th, 2022 after MULTIPLE trips to the ER for low fetal movement. On each visit our drs assured us he was doing just fine in mommy's tummy. Well as we found out a couple days later, he wasn't.. we have to put an end to this nonsense.
Kaitlyn Beurjey	My son, Adrian Wells was stillborn in 2021
Lindsay Davis	My son, Aidan, was stillborn in May of 2020 when I was 37 weeks pregnant.
Tiffany Sordo	My son, Aiden, was stillbirth in 2022 and this should not happen to anyone else
Eve Blumenfeld	My son, Alex, was stillborn in July 2022
Carolyn Mara	My son, Alexander Nicolas Mara was Stillborn at 39 wks 5 days on Oct 13, 1995 with no cause determined. I am very passionate about helping baby loss families and I help with the baby loss support groups and I am the leader of the Subsequent pregnancy after a loss support group. I also had 3 other miscarriages with no cause determined. I am a strong advocate for this bill.
Shannon Vaccaro	My son, Alfy, was stillborn in 2012.
Tricia Rausch	My son, Andrew, was stillborn at 38 weeks gestation in 2007. I want to support families who are going through the same sort of loss and decrease the number of fetal and infant deaths.
Ka Vang	My son, Angel, was stillborn in 2023. I am an advocate for women's health and making sure women like us get support in every way.
Franco Recavarren	My son, Angelo, was stillborn in 2022
Patrick Sullivan-Wood	My son, Ari, was stillborn in 2022
Rachel Gould	My son, Ari, was stillborn in May 2022
Andrea Cook	My son, Asher, was stillborn in 2021.
Ben Rose	My son, Austin Daniel Rose, was stillborn at 38 weeks on March 3, 2023. Austin should still be here, as should countless more stillborn children, and we need more research to prevent these deaths from recurring.
Melat Tadesse	My son, Axum was stillborn in January 2023
Gisselly Kimbrough	My son, Azhari Walter Kimbrough, was stillborn 2/19/2023.
Clarence Collins	My son, B.B., was stubborn in January 2019.
Jen Rogalski	My son, Baby Rogalski, was stillborn in 2023
Shelby Border	My son, Barrett was stillborn on January 25th 2023
Jentry Lee	My son, Bear, was stillborn in 2021.
Alexis Traasdahl	My son, Beck, was still born in April of 2021 after a perfectly healthy and normal pregnancy. We never found out why he died and that is unacceptable.
Yolanda Carrill	My son, Benjamin, was stillborn June 2022. Since my tragic preventable loss, I have become an advocate seeking improvements in the standards and care provided to moms and babies.
Mariah	My son, Benson, was born stillborn 2/9/24
Carly Gardner	My son, born sleeping 2024

Kelly Debald	My son, Brandan was stillborn in 2013, I have many friends who experienced stillbirth.
Morgan McConnaughay	My son, Braxton, was still born in 2022.
Anna Stephens	My son, Brayden William was stillborn in 2021.
Maddy Bohn	My son, Brooks, was stillborn in 2020.
Carley Hamann	My son, Brooks, was stillborn in 2021.
Valerie Herbert	My son, Cameron, was stillborn in 1988 and my grandson was still born in 2007
Jill Davis	My son, Canaan, August 2016
Charlie Ramage	My son, Carson, was still born at 34 weeks. I am an advocate for change!
Chloe Loving	My son, Carter, was stillborn April 9, 2022.
Lauren Ritchie	My son, Carter, was stillborn at 40 weeks gestation in June of 2022.
Melissa Moniz	My son, Carter, was stillborn in 2016 and I am a healthcare worker
Lauren Fifield	My son, Carter, was stillborn on Aug 20, 2009. My aunt's son was stillborn in 1970. Several of my friends also lost babies who were stillborn in 2009. I'm a social worker in a psychiatric hospital and there is a huge need for more research to be done surrounding this devastating loss for parents nationwide.
Aubryn Falk	My son, Cedric, was stillborn in May of 2022.
Nathaly Dos Santos	My son, Cesar Jr was stillborn in 2022, my friend lost her daughter to stillbirth, I am an advocate for women's health. I think it's very important to continue to reach for women's health to prevent stillbirth as much as possible.
Namanda Willis	My son, Charles, was stillborn 10 months ago. So many women like me are hurt by stillbirth. Please prioritize our care.
Kerry Rea	My son, Ciaran Rea, was stillborn at 40 weeks in September of 2020. My husband and I grieve our son every day, and it is a loss no family should encounter.
Leslie Holler	My son, Cole Wyatt and many other women I know have lost their child or children to stillbirth.
Nicole Coqueran	My son, Colin James, was 38 weeks stillborn in 2019
Jordan Hegge	My son, Colter James, was stillborn September 13, 2022.
Jordan Bardon	My son, Colter, was stillborn Sept 13, 2022.
Amanda Rolston	My son, Conor, was stillborn June 12, 2020, 2 and a half weeks before his due date. I am also a Registered Nurse in women's health, and this tragedy happens more often than people like to acknowledge. Please help!
Ashley Waters	My Son, Daniel, was stillborn in April of 2023. We had a picture perfect pregnancy until he died due to a cord compression. To find out how often this happens after it was too late to save my son was an extra blow to our family. Please help us save the lives of innocent babies. They don't deserve to die & parents don't deserve to live a life of pain because of lack of education and research.
Diana Kelley	My son, Derek, was stillborn in 1985. I am the founder of Infants Remembered In Silence, Inc. based in Faribault and work as an advocate for infant loss and women's health.
Kara Kelly	My son, Dex, was born still in October 2021.
Lauren Reichert	My son, DJ, was still born last year. This was a preventable death.

Andrea Tayek	My son, Dominic James, was stillborn in January 2019 at 37 weeks gestation. I am an advocate for women's health and hope to see a change around stillbirth in our city, state and country.
Heather Rotondi	My son, Dominic, was delivered stillborn in 2006.
Leah Pack	My son, Draco, was full term stillborn in July 2022 at 40 weeks, 5 days.
Micaela Wattenbarger	My son, Eddie, was stillborn in 2019.
Jennifer Johnson	My son, Elliot, was stillborn in 2012 and I miss him every day.
Dani Anderson	My son, Ellis, was stillborn in 2017
Danielle Smith	My son, Emmett was stillborn 15 days before Christmas last year. He was our third loss. The loss of a child is something I may never get over.
Marissa Leon	My son, Enzo, was stillbirth
Adam Vander Tuig	My son, Eoin Francis, was stillborn in 2022.
Katherine Collins	My son, Ethan, was stillborn in 2021.
Patti-Rae Arocha	My son, Evan, was stillborn in 2014
Michelle Goldstein.	My son, Evan, was stillborn in 2021
Angelica Kovach	My son, Ezra, was stillborn in 2020. 21,000 babies are stillborn every year in the US; 65 babies die every day, and at least 25% of them are preventable. My son's death was preventable with the appropriate research and implementation of fetal movement education.
Charissa Ponzer	My son, Finn Liam Ponzer, died before birth in 2016. I also know many other mothers that have been impacted by stillbirth, and that some of these losses could have been prevented by better education and a higher standard of care.
Gemma Anguiano	My son, Gianni, was stillborn at 38 weeks in 2021.
Karen Lynch	My son, Gregor, was stillborn on November 13, 2021. He was so important to us and we want to help others in any way possible.
Kelly Sargent	My son, Greyson, was stillborn in 2019.
Julianna Rivas	My son, Greyson, was stillborn in 2020 and it was the most devastating time of my life.
Holly Tran	My son, Harry Ezra, was stillborn on January 31, 2023. I don't want any other family to go through what we are currently enduring.
Allison Demke	My son, Harvey Thomas, was stillborn at almost 31 weeks. He was born on March 23, 2022, and we have not found any causes for his death. We lost our son for no known reason.
Lillian Pipa	My son, Henri, was stillborn in 2021.
Brandon Lindberg	my son, Henry, was stillborn in 2021
Alice Seiler	My son, Henry, was stillborn in 2021.
Laura Robison	My son, Hudson was stillborn in 2021.
Jessica Atassi	My son, Hugo, was stillborn in 2023.
Mahira Mir	My son, Hussain, was stillborn in 2022. I am a grieving mother who does not wish this tragedy on anyone.
Katherine Newman	My son, Ira, was stillborn in 2022.
Kelly Newman	My son, Ira, was stillborn in 2022.

Lindsey McTush	My son, Isaiah, was stillborn April 2009. It's been FIFTEEN years and I want him here more than anything. This has to stop and with your assistance this can be done.
Jesus Gonzalez	My Son, Issa, was stillborn in July of 2022 at 37 weeks. Our life's have changed with this tragedy, we miss him, and we love him.
C Brown	My son, Jabe, was stillborn in 2021
Tomeka James Isaac	My son, Jace, was stillborn in 2018
Jovana Arvizu	My son, Jace, was stillborn on Dec of 2022. I am an advocate for the moms that did not get to leave the hospital with their babies.
Eric Buncie	My son, Jack was stillborn in 2019
Christy Zail	My son, Jackson was stillborn in 2016
Tiffany Taft	My son, Jackson, was stillborn in 2007 and I am a doula, mindfulness and healing justice advocate, and advocate for women's health
Priscilla Moore	My son, Jacob Tyler, was stillborn in 2003 and my daughter, Olivia Hayden, was stillborn in 2009.
Rebecka Rosmann	My son, Jacob, was stillborn in 2021 at 37 weeks gestation. I am an advocate for women's health and am a licensed psychologist in the state of Iowa.
Jyoti Agarwal	my son, Jai, was stillborn in 2021 and we still don't have enough information to fully know why or how to prevent such a tragic loss in future pregnancies
Susan Valoff, LCSW	My son, James, was stillborn in 2015. At the time, I thought this was a rare event, but I have since learned it is much more common than it should be. We need to take action to improve maternal health and reduce pregnancy loss.
Katelyn Perkins-Neaton	My son, James, was stillborn in 2021 after 38.5 weeks of a healthy pregnancy.
Allison Valvano	My son, James, was stillborn in 2021 and I pray everyday that no more others and fathers have to face that devastating reality. Fighting for babies to live is such a basic part of humanity and ending preventable stillbirth is something entirely within our control. I request your support to help fund research to prevent more families from living with this tragedy.
Michael Naclerio	My son, James, was stillborn in 2021.
Ben Spicehandler	My son, Jasper, was stillborn in 2022.
Julia Liston	my son, John, was stillborn in March 2023
Julianna Caldara	My son, Joseph, was born stillborn in March 2024.
Dr. DeWanda Harris Trimiar	My son, Joshua Harris Trimiar was stillborn in November 2006.
Jerica Hinson	My son, Judah, was stillborn in 2021.
Katie Cashion	My son, Jude was stillborn at 39 wks in 2018.
Andrew Green	My son, Jude, was still born on February 16, 2023.
Jennifer Smith	My son, Jude, was stillborn in 2017, my friend lost her daughter to stillbirth, I am an advocate for women's health, I am a healthcare worker and Long Island resident.
Margaret Citta	My son, Jude, was stillborn in 2019. This is personal to me, and saving any family from this experience is a worthwhile investment.
Allison Siadatan	My son, Kiyon, was stillborn in 2012.

Greg Giarmo	My son, Knox, was stillborn in 2018.
Kathryn Langin	My son, Knox, was stillborn in September of 2017 and i am still suffering major mental illness from it
Hannah Kirk	My son, Koda, was stillborn in 2022.
LaZette Smith	My son, LaSaaun, was stillborn in 2020, and a number of my friends and family lost their child to stillborn. I am an advocate for maternal health and fathers who have lost their babies. I am the executive director of LaSaaun Lives Foundation
Hamdi Abdi	My son, Leeban, was stillborn in 2020 and I am currently a health services researcher who focuses on pregnancy loss.
Cynthia Gomez	My son, Leo, was stillborn in 2021 and I miss him every single second of everyday
Nathan Wittstruck	My son, Leo, was stillborn in 2021 and it was incredibly hard to access and provide information that could ease my grief. We need to study this issue and provide solutions that limit stillbirth deaths in this country.
Justine Duffy	My son, Leo, was stillborn on December 31st, 2021
Alexandria Carter	My son, Levi, was stillborn in December 2021
Katherine Hays	My son, Liam, was stillbirth July 4th 2023. That day has forever changed me, I miss my son every second of every day. The pain will never go away. I have to learn to live with it.
Kimberly Grenelle	My son, Liam, was stillborn in March 2020. It has been the hardest to date experience I have been through. Most healthcare workers need to be available to these moms and dads of stillborn babies.
LaRhonda Cockrell	My son, Lorenzo, was stillborn in 2021, my classmate lost her daughter to stillbirth, I am an advocate for women’s health. I am a mother and educator.
Amanda Dowd	My son, Louis, was stillborn February 2024 and I believe if there was more education and awareness, some of these tragedies could be avoided.
Natalia Aquino	my son, Luca, was stillborn in june 2022
Natalie Rensi	My son, Mac, was stillborn in 2012, my cousin’s daughter, in 2015. I am a nurse and an advocate on stillbirth education and prevention. This is something that is understudied, under communicated and could be prevented. Please make this stillbirth a priority.
MacKenzie Fitzpatrick	My son, Malcolm, was stillborn January of 2022 and as an advocate for women's health, a doula, and a mother expecting her second baby, this work is essential for the progress of lowering stillbirth in the United States.
Maritza Gomez	My son, Marcus, was stillborn in 2019. It’s a shame how the United States is among the top countries in medical innovation and stillbirth is not a priority.
Daniel Winslow	My son, Maren, was stillborn in 2021, I am an advocate for women’s health, I am a healthcare worker, and I am a father.
Hailey Winslow	My son, Maren, was stillborn in 2021, I am an advocate for women’s health, I am a mental health worker.
Marie Walter	My son, Mason, was stillborn in 1985. I am also an advocate for women’s health. As a retired nurse I spent 45 years working in obstetrics and in bereavement care.
Kennedy Minarik	My son, Maverick, was stillborn at term in June of 2022
Kirsten Leng	My son, Max, was stillborn in 2017.
Liliana Pareja	My son, Max, was stillborn in February of 2022 and far too many babies are stillborn every year.

Angelica Diaz	My son, Maximiliano, was stillborn in 2022. I was not given an answer as to why it happened.
Colleen Liptrap	My son, Michael, was stillborn in 2014.
Heather Del Castillo	My son, Miles, was stillborn in 2019 at our home birth in Fort Walton Beach
Jenn Esser	my son, Miles, was stillborn in 2021
Jessica Coe	My son, Milo James, was stillborn at 28 weeks. No pregnancy is safe from this being reality. In 2023, we should NOT have infant death numbers this high. A state with one of the highest stillbirth rates and one of the lowest rankings in education - get your priorities in order!
Sarah Stillman	My son, Nathaniel Wyatt Stillman, was born without a heartbeat and while revived, died 64 hours after birth in February of 2022. I stand with all pregnancy and infant loss parents who have had to ensure this traumatic and tragic loss, not only as a mother but as a maternal and fetal health advocate, healthcare and public health administrator, and Worcester community member.
Kristen Gluck	My son, Nicholas was born stillborn at 39 weeks. I had a completely uncomplicated pregnancy and fit no risk factors for this. No cause was ever found. No family should ever have to live through what we did.
Laura Kida	My son, Nicholas was stillborn in January 2023
Carrie Diaz	My son, Nicholas, was stillborn in 2019
Jessica Marin	My son, Noa Gabriel, was stillborn on January 18,2024 at 40 weeks and 2 days. He was a perfectly healthy baby boy. This needs to stop happening.
Dayana Zuniga	My son, Noah was stillborn in 2021
Jen Paterchak	My son, Noah, was stillborn 14 years ago
Sarah Edwards	My son, Noah, was stillborn in December 2022.
Kareen Bronstein	My son, Noam, was stillborn in 2015
Jane Johnson	My son, Noble, was stillborn 2 days past his due date in 2000.
Megan Haley	My son, Nolan, was stillborn at 40 weeks in 2020.
Tyler Hughes	My son, Oliver Cohlan Hughes, was born still in 2013
Margaret Courtney	My son, Oliver, was stillborn at 37 weeks in 2021.
Cody Lee	My son, Otto, was stillborn on July 1, 2023. Anything I can do to prevent others from having to feel this level of pain is worth it
Eleni McNell	My son, Owen, was stillborn in 2021.
Jennifer Uithoven	my son, Parker, was stillborn in 2014
Valerie Meek	My son, Patrick, was stillborn in 2014, which has led me to support and advocate for parents after loss through my work as the Operations Director at Pregnancy After Loss Support. Too many families need our services, and we need to do all in our power to end preventable stillbirth.
Kevin Cox	My son, Ray Larry Cox, was stillborn July 2022. His death may have been preventable. I know others certainly were.
Amy Rocha	My son, Raymond Ezra, was stillborn two weeks ago on February 18, 2023. My baby should be at home with me right now, but instead I am planning his funeral arrangements.
Amanda Snelson	My son, Ren, was stillborn in 2013 and I have two friends that lost their children to stillbirth.
Alissa Hensleigh	My son, Rhys, was stillborn in 2017.

Karen Allyn	My son, Richard Glenn, was stillborn 35 years old and I was told after his autopsy that he was going to be "perfect" but there was a knot in his umbilical cord, wrapped around his neck and he "probably cut off his blood flow when he turned". Now a friend of mine has delivered a silently born ginger haired boy Jude, and I feel like nothing has progressed in stillbirth mortality. I believe we owe it to the 1 in 4.
Crystal Sanborn	My son, Rush, was still born on December 31, 2022. It could have been prevented with the proper monitoring and support.
Jessica Keet	My son, Ruvane Asher, was stillborn in 2009 and there are still way too many families experiencing this heartbreaking end to their pregnancies
Amy Wetjen	My son, Ryan was stillborn in 2010 at 37.5 weeks.
Amy Wickenheisser	My son, Sam, was stillborn in 2007 and I almost lost my life from sepsis after the c-section. I am an advocate for women's health. More work needs to be done to prevent this painful loss of life and emotional grief that so many women, and their loved ones endure.
Anna Caggiano	My son, Samuel, was stillborn in June 2023 at 38 weeks gestation
Kenneth D Pugar	My son, Samuel, was stillborn on Sept 26, 2019. I am also a physician, and have a deep appreciation for the importance of scientific research to help shape preventive medicine. Funding such research is vital to ensure improvements in our nation's fetal mortality rates moving forward. Thank you.
Patria Lohvinski	My son, Sergio Gil, was stillborn in 2020 and I believe no more babies should die of preventable stillbirth.
Kim Schamburg	My son, Seth, was stillborn 2012. I was 39 weeks pregnant.
Mallory Keen	My son, Shepherd, was stillborn in 2022. He was born at 33 weeks gestation and was 5 lbs 9 oz. After almost a year, I still do not have a cause of death and have exhausted every avenue searching for answers.
Brett Heinzerling	My son, Simon, was stillborn in 2018.
Jenny Bender	My son, Simon, was stillborn on April 8, 2020 and it is something no one should ever have to endure.
Lesley McCollum	My son, Syllas was stillborn in 2013. It changed my whole world and every person close to me. It's a loss that I will never recover from. During my first year of grief it was the most isolating and horrible experience of my life. No one wants to acknowledge your baby, you don't fit into any category and are treated like a patient with the flu by insurance companies, you just get left in the wind and many are barely surviving. The father of my son ended up dying from alcohol, after our child died, as he couldn't cope with his grief in a healthy manner.
Heather Hales	My son, Tace, was stillborn in 2013.
Kimberly Constable	My son, Theo, was born still in 2020; today I advocate for maternal health in honor of him.
Katherine Garon	My son, Theo, was stillborn in 2018. It's been nearly five years and I miss him everyday. Too many babies are stillborn everyday. We must do more to end stillbirth.
Megan DuBose	My son, Theo, was stillborn in 2019. I have two other friends who have experienced the stillbirth of their beloved children. I am a mental health care worker who works with people experiencing the trauma and aftermath of stillbirth. The severe risks are terrifying for the surviving parents and the impact to family's generationally cannot be measured. We HAVE to make change.
Brooke Schneckloth	My son, Theo, was stillborn in 2021
Julie Plyler	My son, Thomas, was stillborn in 2021.

Fernando	my son, Thomas, was stillborn in 2023
Chelsea Thurn	My son, Tucker, was stillborn in February of 2022.
Christina Ruscio-Fedczuk	My son, Vincent, was stillborn in 2017 at 38 weeks gestation.
Kristen Maxwell	My son, Walker Conway McGill, was stillborn on February 7, 2022.
Karla Wright	My son was stillborn at 36 weeks. He would be 20 today. His name is Nahum, because God was our refuge in those horrible, unthinkable moments.(Nahum 1:7) Hospitals, nurses, drs, etc. need resources and training.
Kim Eiden	My son, Wyatt, was born still at 27 weeks gestation.
Lindsey Haselden	My son, Wyatt, was stillborn in 2022.
Candie Allen	My son, Zakhary, was stillborn in 1991
Rabbi Emily Losben-Ostrov	my son's heart stopped during my 3rd trimester and was subsequently stillborn. Eleven years later we still have no answers and are still struggling to get pregnant.
Nicole Villers	My son's, Ethan and Evan, were stillborn at 31 weeks in late 2022
Erin Davis	My son's Devan and Ross were stillborn on June 24 2022 at 38 weeks. We need this so we can prevent more moms going through the pain of losing their child
Lindee Nittler	My son was stillborn about 4 months ago after 39 weeks of a healthy pregnancy. More education on kick counts could have prevented this.
Michael Peasley	My sons Rowan & Reid were born and died in Nov. 2022 at 22 weeks gestation. Stillbirth and preterm birth are important public health issues that need more support.
Kenya Kirkman	My sons, Aiden and Carter, were stillborn due to an incompetent cervix in 2019.
Christina Heaney	My sons, Emmett and Eamonn were stillborn at full term in 2022
Danielle Pomykala	My sweet Hannah Grace was still born 6/26/2022 at 39 weeks gestation
Laura Harer	My third child, Cecilia, was stillborn in 2019.
Kyla Crawford	My twin boys were still born, please help fund other women and families going through these tragic losses.
Maria Gallardo	My twin daughter Isabella was stillborn in July 2022.
Victoria Penny Gilliam	My twin daughters were stillborn 28 Feb 23, this cause is worth supporting in hopes that continued study will lead to less stillbirth in the future
Melissa DiMaio	My twin daughters, Magnolia & Penelope were born still October 7, 2021. I am an advocate of this imperative women's health crisis, too many women & children are not being properly supported during pregnancy and birth.
Jasmine Adams	My twin sons Sebastian and Blake were stillborn 5/11/2007
Amanda Bryce	My twin sons, Samuel and Joseph Bryce, were stillborn at 33 weeks in January 2019.
Cheyenne Millsap	My twins Finley and Lawson were born in 2022 stillborn.
Tamorra Walker	My twins Sekani and Imani was stillborn
Madelyn Stahle	My two daughters were stillborn in 2020 and 2021
Micaela Petty	My two sons were stillborn, one in 2021, the other in 2022. I run a support group for parents of stillborn babies and our numbers grow each month.

Courtney Faltersack	My son, Charlie was stillborn in 2021
Andrew Wenger	We lost our little Sophia unexpectedly at 38 weeks and still don't know why.
Erin Burns	We lost our second daughter at 8 days old. She was born in an emergency C-section and resuscitated but could not survive from loss of oxygen. She would have been stillborn. We miss her immensely and grieve our loss every day.
Natalie Eisenhut	We lost our son and daughter in 2010. We have constantly been active in our community supporting families at our local hospitals who tend to suffer alone. I am an advocate for this and will continue to support their families and local healthcare workers who are our Frontline for these families.
Evelyn Park	We lost our son Liam in 2022 and miss him every single day. It has since blown me away how many stillbirths happen daily, ESPECIALLY in the US!
Parul Patel	We lost our son, Aman, in 2017 late in my pregnancy.
Jenna Crum	We lost our daughter as a stillborn, Stevee Marie in 2023 and if more monitoring had occurred, her death was preventable.
Joshua McGill	We lost our daughter Leni in March 2023. Through our support groups for child loss, we have met many great people who are affected by stillbirths.
Patrick Slebonick	We lost our daughter Sloane to stillbirth.
Heather Monzo	We lost our daughter Vivian in 2021
Katie Patrick	We lost our daughter, Imogen Rose, on November 7, 2020, when I was 36 weeks pregnant. There were no warning signs and even after an autopsy was performed, we have no answers as to what happened or why Imogen died.
Jennifer Naylor	We lost our first baby to miscarriage but firmly believe support is critical for stillbirth loss.
Eleni Tsigas	We lost our firstborn, our only daughter, to stillbirth at 29 weeks. I am a leader in maternal and infant health advocacy as the CEO of the Preeclampsia Foundation. Since preeclampsia is a leading cause of stillbirth, I'm in support of continued focus on the leading causes of stillbirth.
Hannah Johnson	We have had a son born at 28 weeks. It is so important that these families get to spend time with their babies!
Jane Freeman	We lost a child to stillbirth
Kelly Wieser	We lost a daughter to stillbirth in 2018. A coworker recently lost a son to stillbirth. This is a health issue that impacts many more families than the public realizes, and it deserves more research and education.
Tahia Puello Gonzalez	I had a healthy pregnancy with Victoria. No comorbidities or risk factors. She was stillbirth at 36 weeks and 2 days after low fetal movement brought us to the hospital. Postpartum workup was entirely negative and otherwise we have no indication or explanation about what could have caused her death.

Morgan Furman	Our second daughter was stillborn on 8/18/22. As of today, we have received minimal answers to her exact cause of death. Though we would love to one day become pregnant again, this thought is scary because we are unsure of exact ways to prevent another loss. We miss our daughter tremendously and are advocating for her, ourselves, and other families of loss. We need better prevention and detection strategies for stillbirth. We need changes to standards of care and outdated protocols. We need to support the education and training of medical specialists. And, we need to empower all patients.
Kassie Wiggs	Our second son Finn Wilder was stillborn at 38 weeks because the ACOG believes estimated weight isn't a reason for induction. Finn was 11lbs 8oz and his autopsy confirmed what we already knew. He was perfect and he should be here.
Lauren Freauf	our second son, Ezra, was stillborn in 2020. There needs to continue to be research and support for these families. If Texas truly is a state that believes in life begins at conception, then these kiddos' lives need to be respected and honored and researched to reduce the number of stillbirths. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Neely Zervakis	Our son Baylor Thomas Zervakis was stillborn at 39 weeks. We have been heartbroken ever since. The doctors had no reason why, would love any support you can give to help prevent stillbirth and give support to families going through such tragedy.
Debbi Clarke	Our son Eason was born still at 36 weeks after a completely “normal” pregnancy. I delivered him at UNC women’s hospital in February of 2013. Our OB described it as a “lightning strike” and could not give us any information about why it happened because the condition that I had was so exceedingly rare, massive perivillous fibrin deposition. More research and attention is needed so that other families won’t have to endure the heartbreaking experience of going home from the hospital without their baby.
Joshua Vick	Our son Jackson was stillborn on Oct 3rd 2015
Christine Rose	Our son James was stillborn in 2019. The importance of funding research to end preventable stillbirths cannot be overstated.
Matt Small	our son Luke was stillborn in 2020 at 34 weeks, and his death was preventable. We were failed by current medical standards and guidelines for maternal care. These need to be updated to reflect
Shannon Martin	our son Patrick was born too early in October of 2008. As a nurse, I know how important it is to advocate for women’s health, and this issue touches me personally.
Alexander Kaysin	our son, Anik, was born premature in 2018 and did not survive.
Adri Atanasoff	Our son, Gabriel, died at birth in April 2018. He may not have been stillbirth but his death was preventable. No parent should hear the devastating news that their baby is gone. We need better research and resources for preventable infant deaths. BABIES LIVES MATTER.
Erika Heller	Our son, Jack, was stillborn in 2023. I also work in Perinatal mental health and know many families affected by this
Erin Koller	Our son, Liam Michael Paulette was born sleeping in 2018.
Joshua Miller	our son, Louis Winston Miller, was stillborn on August 24, 2023. As a nurse and hospital administrator, I thought I knew the pain a pregnancy loss can cause (especially at a late stage), but it’s unimaginable. The depth of despair it causes, and the yearning for answers cannot be overstated. This research is VITAL.
Matt Peeters	Our son, Oliver, was stillborn in 2016, and we should do everything in our power to find out why we continue to lose children to this.
Shantae Webber	Our son, Oliver, was stillborn on January 7, 2020 and I have been opened up to the extensive works of pregnancy and infant death. I believe there is so much that needs to be done to

	address the stillbirth crisis.
Paula Miller	Our son, Sebastian, was stillborn in 2013.
Alexander DiMaio	Our twin daughters were born still on October 7, 2021.
Athena Triantafillides	The loss of my son, Jayden who was born still in 2023 was the most horrific experience of my life. I will always carry the pain of his loss with me. I can't even begin to explain how important advocacy is for families who have gone through this awful experience.
Margaret Goodwin	Our daughter Emma-Méabh was stillborn in 2017.
Jamie Amadeo	Our daughter, Avery, was stillborn in 2020. A focus on prevention and improvement in resources for families who experience this is imperative.
Emily Holmes	Our daughter, Eloise Jane, our first child, was born stillborn on September 7th, 2011. I wish to continue research and funding to prevent tragedies like mine from happening to other families.
Stephanie Barrett	Our daughter, Evelyn, was stillborn in 2021
Alexa Van Hal	Our daughter, Harper Jane, was stillborn in May of 2018. She died due to a tight knot in her umbilical cord. My family incurred expenses not only for her hospital birth, but also for her funeral and burial. We grieve her every single day as we wait to be reunited with her in heaven.
CarlyAnn Carruthers	Our daughter, Ryan Marie, was born still in 2020. We honor her life by working to save other families from the pain. Research, prevention, and awareness are key.
Jaye Wilson	My voice is one of many who has experienced the loss of a child that could have been preventable. My daughter, Nyiiema Renay, was born still in 2007 and I use the feelings I had holding my still daughter as inspiration to continue to push for more moms like me to be seen and heard through legislation.
Patrick D. Flynn	My wife and I are the founders of 1st Breath, a 501 (C) 3 non-profit, which has been around for more than two decades. My wife lost her son, Christopher Lee Milford in 1978. She was treated very poorly in the hospitals in Oklahoma. She wasn't even allowed to see her son before burial. Similar events have been discovered across the nation, and MANY around southeast North Carolina. We have visited with our nation's House Reps in DC a couple of times since kicking up the effort to get it part of EVERY state back about 2009. She has since helped get "Certificates of Birth resulting in Stillbirth" in more than 20 states of the US where they did not exist. North Carolina? Well, you can check that on your own. Since retiring to Leland in 2015, we've gotten October 15th declared an "Infant Loss and Stillbirth Remembrance Day" passed by the Leland Town Council, as a permanent proclamation. We have established a Memorial Garden next to Leland Town Hall (land contributed by the Town) and hold Annual October 15th gatherings of anyone in the Cape Fear Region that has had, or been affected by stillbirth in their family or friends.
Dennis Herbert	My wife and I experienced the loss of a child to stillbirth. Unfortunately, our daughter did as well.
Larry Star	My wife and I lost a child due to stillbirth.
Keith	My wife and I lost our daughter
Jonathan Adams	My wife and I lost our daughter, Maeve, 2 days before her due date due to a cord compression accident. Nobody told us about the importance of kicks or movement intensity,

	or that perfectly healthy babies can die before labor even begins. More awareness would have given us the knowledge of what to look for. Our Maeve would still be here and our lives wouldn't be destroyed.
Albert Thomas	My wife and I lost our son August to being stillborn last year. We as a country and a society need to do more than just shrug our shoulders as if we are incapable of preventing the hardest tragedy anyone has to go through.
Joe Bryce	My wife and I lost twins at 33 weeks in 2019.
Ashley May	My youngest daughter, Vivian, was stillborn in 2018. I have a ton of friends that have lost babies to stillbirth.
Angelica Rideaux	My only child was stillbirth.
Jennifer Watanabe	My own son, Luke, was stillborn at 39 weeks in 2012. His death was an absolute shock to me, after my perfect 39 week pregnancy. I'd seen my provider on a Friday, and on Sunday, he was gone. I don't have answers to what happened to him. I didn't have any testing done that last appointment that might've told me he was in distress. He didn't have a knot in his cord, and nothing obvious caused his death. We MUST do better for our families. Stillbirth is trauma--for life. It affects our parenting. It affects our lives--Forever. It's a forever grief, and it is an INCREDIBLY understudied event in the medical community. We're close to finding answers on what causes SIDS. Please.
Virginia Dow	My identical twins, Larson and Emmett were stillborn in 2016.
Maggie Schieffer	My life has been affected by multiple stillbirths and I care really about preventing it in any possible way.
Hannah Fisher	My beautiful son Angel was still born at term after a textbook pregnancy. I went to the Dr 3 times that week saying there was less movement. Each time I was told it's normal at the end of pregnancy which is not true. I went in one final time saying there was no movement and there was no heartbeat. I was in labor for 24 grueling hours and delivered my perfect son breathless. It has impacted my family and myself beyond measure, but I've used Angel's story to educate others and make sure no one else goes through this terrible pain of child loss.
Cali Brutz	my beautiful, healthy son, James Edwin Brutz, was unexpectedly stillborn due to a nuchal cord accident just a few weeks before his due date in September 2020
Angelica Vogel	My beautiful daughter Cricket was stillborn in June 2022. Until our devastating loss I had no idea the prevalence of stillbirth in the US. More needs to be done regarding education and support for this devastating loss.
Rhonda Nino	My beautiful daughter had a stillborn on 12/1/21. I have since become an advocate for women's health and stillbirth. This horrible outcome happens to everyone else until it happens to you.
Evelyn Rosario	My beautiful daughter was stillborn on Nov 6, 21 at 39 weeks due to a small placenta. I support SHINE in honor of my daughter and all the babies that are gone too soon. This is a health care crisis that is preventable and it needs to end.
Laken Alexandria	My baby died and it was preventable.

Frances Kern	My baby died at 32 weeks from Toxoplasmosis. His name was Liam Robert Kern. He was born on April 13, 2023. If we screened during prenatal care, there are medications that could have saved his life. Toxoplasmosis is in wild game, raw and undercooked meat, soil, well water, and contaminated fruits and vegetables. Toxoplasmosis is preventable. I have done a lot of research. We can save lives just by creating a law that changes the standard of care by screening pregnant mothers for these congenital infections and helping prevent stillbirth.
Kimberly Muecke	My baby girl was stillborn, July 6th 2021.
Michelle Doherty	My baby girl Stella Joy born sleeping on 1/6/2020
Stephanie Newton	My baby girl, Hayden, was stillborn on 2/10/2018. I went in for my 32 week appointment and learned she no longer had a heartbeat. I was in shock and there are days it still doesn't feel real. Stillbirth wasn't even on my mind or something I knew happened. In an instant my world changed. I wish I had more knowledge about counting kicks. She had been moving slower and I had an NST a week earlier, but didn't realize I should keep watching. I always have that "what if I did something more" in my head and don't want anyone else to feel that way.
Katlyn Landeros	My baby was still born at 22 weeks with little to no research after.
Rachel Page	My baby was stillborn in 2021
Marissa Villapiano	My beautiful and sweet son, Anthony John was stillborn on April 27, 2020. I have no answer as to why his little heart stopped. He and I both went for multiple tests and no answers. I don't want another family to experience this.
Natalia Williamson	My beautiful baby boy, Luke, was stillborn at full term after what was supposed to be a textbook pregnancy. He would have been 5 years old now and I miss him every day.
Cheri Keperling	My beautiful baby girl Robyn Nikole was Stillborn at 39 weeks gestation. On February 1st, 1994
Aza Erdrich Abe	My beautiful baby son Apichi died during labor last year. I am currently struggling through a complicated pregnancy and funding for stillbirth prevention makes a huge difference in the lives of so many families. Miigwech.
Jaylyn Posten	My daughter, Josie, was stillborn in 2022
Melissa Tolbert	Maxton went to heaven at 23 weeks on 05/12/21 and was born sleeping on 05/13/21, with zero answers or reasoning why. I support SHINE to help with stillborn education and awareness and to help find ways to prevent babies being stillborn whenever possible.
Derrek Anderson	Lost my son at 28 weeks, that is why it is important to me.
Kataryna Ross	Lost my son at 38 weeks 4 days. Totally could of been prevented
Christina Blosser	Lost our baby girl Harper at 40 weeks and 3 days due to a true knot that we had no idea existed.
Emily Monts	Mack was born sleeping on Monday, February 20, 2023 weighing 6.4 lbs, 20 inches long. I was 36.4 gestational. He is my first child. The Thursday before, I went in for my first NST and Mack passed the test 100%. Come Saturday, I didn't feel Mack move as much so I went into triage and heard the words no mother should ever hear, I'm sorry, there is no heartbeat. At that moment, my life stopped. How, what, why! I was told at my 20 week appointment that I only had a 2-cord vessel, when normal is 3, and it was brushed off like it's no big deal. Well, turns out it is a big deal. It is 6x more likely to have a stillbirth type of BIG DEAL. This is why we need to talk about it, get more information out to parents, especially first time parents! I

	should have my baby boy in my arms but I have been robbed.
Elizabeth Qunell	Lincoln Edward Qunell was born still 12/2/15. I was 35 weeks pregnant when the doctor told me his heart had stopped beating. Given I was a high risk pregnancy, my specialist assured me everything was great until the day Lincoln's heart stopped. I found out later, in records, that Lincoln had slowed down on growth at 32 weeks. I was induced on Monday and delivered a beautiful baby boy Wednesday morning, 1:15am 4 lbs 17 1/4 inches long. But doctors concluded at birth that everything was "normal" and sometimes these things just happen. My husband and I were devastated, Lincoln was our first born. We got an autopsy but everything had come back to normal. Left the hospital empty handed, hearts broken and so many questions unanswered. Lincoln Edward Qunell would be 8 years old this December.
Brittney Chapman	In November of 2021 I called my midwife, scared because I was having abdominal pain and was quickly told that it was more than likely muscular pain and rushed off the phone. A few days later I had an appointment with a specialist OBGYN to discuss a VBAC delivery for my daughter. They did an ultrasound and told me her heart was no longer beating. I was induced for labor later in the day and two days later I delivered my daughter Juniper. She passed at 21 weeks 5 days.
Danielle Arrieta	In October of 2021 my daughter, Julia, was stillborn.
Katie Wilson	In December 2019, my precious son Samuel Mark Wilson came very unexpectedly into this world still. In our attempt to find answers in the aftermath, my husband and I were often met with "sometimes these things just happen and despite our best efforts we just don't know why." There is little research even available to providers and many of their practices in educating women about stillbirth prevention falls short of being effective. I support SHINE to help close this gap and prevent any other family from experiencing the devastating, lifelong loss associated with losing a baby.
Rachel Sanburn	In 2021 my daughter was stillborn on her due date
Nina Newborn	In 2020, I lost my full-term baby boy, Kolby Lane, to stillbirth.
Kristen Samuelson	In 2014, after a routine prenatal appointment, I was told my baby, a girl named Jimmie, would be stillborn. Naturally, our worlds were rocked. After saying hello and goodbye in what seemed like minutes, we were left unsupported as to what was next for us when we were discharged. What really rocked us was the fact that pregnancy/infant loss affects 1 in every 4 families. Despite this, I felt very alone. After a life-threatening ectopic pregnancy a few months later, and months of healing after, my husband and I founded Three Little Birds Perinatal - a peer-led non-profit supporting families like mine, giving them everything I wish I had, including bedside bonding and photography support, a nest of support of other families walking similar journeys and resources that support physical, emotional and spiritual healing in the wake of this tragedy. We provide our services at NO COST to the families. Yet major healthcare systems struggle with even giving the slightest of support to families. We have also developed a comprehensive and pioneering bereavement training program for medical professionals and advocates, so every family has what I wish I did. Hence, Three Little Birds is how we parent our two children we carry in our hearts. We are being the change we wish to see in the world and making it a better place for others. We stand united with our fellow advocates in the family building community and encourage you to support this and all other efforts like ours.

Debbie Nail	In 1997 I lost my son Samuel James to stillbirth.
Chandra Lewis	<p>In 2009, Chandra experienced a heartbreaking and isolating tragedy when she became the mother of a stillborn daughter, Adonijah Janai. The circumstances surrounding her daughter's birth were both devastating and solitary, as she presented at the hospital already in labor and ended up birthing alone, without the opportunity to call for support. The medical professionals, unable to provide answers, conveyed that "these things happen, and no one knows why." This left Chandra grappling with profound grief and self-blame for years, questioning if there was anything she could have done differently.</p> <p>It took time for Chandra to unpack the complex emotions tied to her experience. In 2021, driven by her personal journey and a deep sense of empathy, she founded Reimagining Full Spectrum Doula Services. This initiative was fueled by the philosophy that no one should ever have to give birth or navigate life's challenges alone, particularly in the face of such a profound loss.</p> <p>Chandra's commitment to supporting individuals through their unique journeys led her also to become a Certified Grief Support Specialist. Her personal experience informs her approach, recognizing the importance of companionship and understanding during the delicate process of grieving.</p> <p>Chandra passionately supports the SHINE for Autumn Act, driven by a recognition that pregnancy loss is regrettably common and research into stillbirth is imperative. By advocating for increased understanding and awareness, she aims to contribute to a world where the reasons behind stillbirth are comprehended, offering solace and information to those who have experienced or may experience similar heartbreak.</p>
Samantha LaCroix	In 2012, I lost my first born son, Xavier at 40 weeks. He was stillborn at the end of a perfectly healthy pregnancy. I had great care through a team of physicians at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and still lost my son.
Tempestt Wesley	I recently lost my baby girl Phoenix at 38 weeks 5 days after my weekly checkup when they told me everything looked good. It hurts like no other when my son asks about his sister who also bonded while I was pregnant.
Ray Izquierdo	I recently lost my baby to stillbirth and I think this deserves more attention than it gets.
Michelle Williamson	I recently lost my son, Atticus, to stillbirth.
Stephen Rowell	My daughter was stillborn in 2013.
Stacie Borgaard	I lost my only biological child as a stillbirth on 1/1/2021, after waiting to conceive for 20 years. Due to having PCOS and my age, I will likely never conceive again. I am 1 in 4.
Aimee Viera Lardizábal	I lost my second child to stillbirth
Angela Krug	I lost my son almost 10 years ago due to a cord accident in 2nd trimester
Erin DiLorenzo	I lost my son at 32 weeks and no family should have this happen.
Kasie Jones	I lost my son at 38 weeks' gestation. We need to better understand how this happens and put measure in place to prevent fetal demise
Jennifer Andrasko	I lost my son at term in 2022

Leah Gause	I lost my son Ben on 11/28/23. I am a healthcare worker and continue to show up daily for my patients but feel strongly about the advocacy for parents of stillbirths and for the many babies that are lost each day. Thank you!
Adaora Arachie	I lost my son due to a negligent doctor back in November 2022. It was a preventable death, but my doctor did not give me my test results several times during prenatal care which led to an infection and my son's death.
Amanda Slentz	I lost my son during pregnancy and there is no worse pain in the world than your baby dying.
Tammy Fournier	I lost my son Gunner in 1991 to stillbirth. I have since dedicated my work as a stillbirth Doula So parent have to walk alone during such a difficult time in their lives. I have assisted so many families in the last 30 years who have faced this devastating loss.
Miranda Chappell	I lost my son in 2020.
Carla Holloway	I lost my son in November 2020
Diane Pham	I lost my son Kane at 38 weeks already in active labor. Babies should not be born still or dead, especially in America.
Kyle Brahm	I lost my son Kase at 34 weeks in 2022. We were told we likely would never find out why after having a seemingly healthy first pregnancy. Kase was conceived on our honeymoon and was everything we ever wished for. Something needs to change.
Elizabeth Hutchings	I lost my son Marcus in December of 2021 to stillbirth.
Jennifer Kern	I lost my son shortly after birth in 2017. We have made so many medical advances, but we don't know enough about stillbirth and infant loss prevention and levels remain high. Please do all you can to save others from this pain.
Jennifer Morgan	I lost my son the day he was born prematurely, however I have 2 friends that lost their babies to stillbirth and we need to know more and do more to support these efforts.
Elizabeth Breza	I lost my son this summer at 32 weeks due to a placental abruption. I was a healthy person, and we don't understand how or why this happened.
Amanda Reagan	I lost my son to preventable stillbirth in 2019.
Nicole Shear	I lost my son to preventable stillbirth in August 2022. I was 38 weeks along, at the hospital at the time, and he died with no one noticing on the hospital's watch. No one measured my placenta until after birth, and found out I had a small, 3rd percentile placenta, which is the #1 cause of stillbirth in the US, and yet placentas are still not measured. I found out that this is not uncommon, and 21,000 babies die from stillbirth in the US alone. Additionally, there are multiple diagnostics that are available and not being utilized to prevent stillbirth, because it is "rare". It is not rare. 1/275 is the equivalent of every school shooting kill rate approximately, except every pregnant woman is in a "school" of babies, and 1 out of 275 will die. Please, help us change this story.
Ana Hasni	I lost my son to stillbirth in Oct 2022, one week before he was due.
Karissa Vincent	I lost my son two days before my induction date due to lack of testing for a well-known disease I developed later in pregnancy. Cholestasis doesn't happen to everyone, but it happened to me. The cure is to give birth. While my induction date was set early and in place I was not tested again to see my bile acid levels and check the rise. Bile acid levels rise every 24 hours. I lost my son four weeks later. At 36 weeks and 6 days.
Lauren Zaleski	I lost my son, Beau, to stillbirth in 2021.
Melinda	I lost my son, Birdy, in 2013

Kayce Lawcewicz	I lost my son, Evan, at 24 weeks. We never received an answer as to why he was stillborn. Any answer would have offered us some closure.
Nicole Hansen	I lost my son, Keaton, stillborn in 2021
Laura Franchella	I lost my son, Leo, at 20 weeks, in 2020. Then my daughter, Sophia, was born still at 29 weeks in 2021. We miss our angels every day and hope for a better future growing family so they don't have to suffer the same grief.
Whitney Ash	I lost my son, Shannon, in August 2021 at 8 months (33 weeks) pregnant. Absolutely worst thing to go through and would like to prevent for other women/families
Bryan Beurjey	I lost my son.
Andi Tieszen	I lost my twins to premature labor and know this along with stillbirth should be researched and cared more about ! No one should lose a child .
Jeanie Watts	I lost twins to stillbirth in 2007. Since then, I've become a voice for other parents navigating this journey. We need your support.

Aminah Coleman	I lost my first son Muhammed Ismaeel in Oct 2020 during labor. He was stillborn. It is the greatest loss I have ever known, and I want it prevented for other families.
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Jennifer Parks	I lost my child in utero in January this year and in the process of healing, have met many mothers affected by the trauma of stillbirth.
Marisa Muzyka	I lost my daughter Charlotte in 2014 during childbirth, and I have seen the devastation of stillbirth for many of my fellow baby loss moms.
Alissa Christensen	I lost my daughter in 2018 to Stillbirth, and nearly lost my own life as well during the complication. It is 2023 and the stillbirth rate is shockingly high. We need to do more, not less in the funding and research surrounding stillbirth.
Jacqueline Morales	I lost my daughter in 2022 at 20 weeks' gestation. No answers, no help. I am an advocate for women's health and we need more support in pregnancy loss.
Mattiya Sowards	I lost my daughter in July 2022 at 40 weeks along, and nobody knows the small stressors us bereaved parents have to endure on top of losing our child. We need all the advocacy and research we can get for these little babies
Crystal Long	I lost my daughter late term during labor on 10/25/2020. We need advocates for stillbirth research and prevention.
Henderson Lafond	I lost my daughter Madison to stillbirth in 2015.
Chase Sheridan	I lost my daughter Natalie in 2018
Heather Schraepfer	I lost my daughter on the night of my scheduled induction at 40 weeks.
Jillian Uhlir	I lost my daughter shortly after birth. We need your support
Felicia Hancher	I lost my daughter to stillbirth last year
Karissa Starcher	I lost my daughter, Lainey, in January 2021. I am an advocate for infant/pregnancy loss. I am also a mental health registered nurse. Our community would really appreciate your support.
Stephanie DeMarco	I lost my daughter, Wilhelmina, due to complications of prematurity in 2017. By funding research into the causes and prevention of stillbirth, you are helping to give all babies and birthing parents a better chance at life. The US continues to have one of the highest rates of stillbirth and this HAS to change. Our babies deserve better.

Shoorideh Asgari	I lost my first baby at week 38 plus 3 days in August 2022. Something which could be prevented given all technology exists today. The US can't do better till we decide to do better and make positive changes.
Gabrialle Lutz	I lost my baby girl Lillian Mae on March 28,2023 at 35 weeks.
Mounika Gaggara	I lost my baby girl on December 28th, 2022. I sincerely believe the funding will help all the families who have experienced the tragedy like my family.
Margaret Peachy	I lost my baby to stillbirth.
Silvia Bischoff	I lost a son in 2014.
Natalie Dench	I lost my beautiful daughter Olive at full term. She was stillborn in June of this year and had no health complications.
Holly Weldon	I lost a child to stillbirth
Kendra Jozif	I lost a daughter in February 2022. She was stillborn, and it could have been prevented had I been properly educated and had placental volume measurements been taken.
Melanie Walk	I lost 2 babies in 2020 and I used to work as a hospital chaplain on the mother baby unit. I'm especially concerned with the mental health effects of infant loss.
Sarah Hughes	I lost a baby and although my loss was not a stillbirth, I know the pain of losing a child and want to prevent others from having to experience this kind of all-consuming loss.
Whitney Langas	I lost a baby at 23 weeks. I delivered a stillborn girl, Lucy on 1/11/11. It was so traumatic both physically and emotionally not just for me, but our entire family.
Catie Hein-Carter	I lost a baby due to stillbirth in 2017 and it could've been prevented with appropriate tools and prevention strategies.
Melanie Cannon	I lost a baby girl in 2007 had an autopsy but no answers and was treated like it was a cold, it just happens. We deserve more
Amanda Love	I just recently lost my son at 25 weeks and had to fight to even get bereavement days from my district. I work with autistic preschoolers, helping other people's children while I had to have emergency surgery to try to save my own. I went to work while I was in labor for two days and still had to fight for FMLA and bereavement days. We need to do better for our teachers and other women in NJ.
Liz Glazer	I had a stillbirth: Leo Pearl Glazer 11/10/21
Amy Tatum	I had a stillborn daughter in 2018.
Natalie Hogan	I had a stillborn son in October of 2022. It has been by far the hardest thing I have ever gone through. Losing a child, delivering a dead baby is nothing short of traumatic and life changing in the most devastating ways. The pain and heartache associated with the loss is unimaginable. We need prevention and also support for those who have a stillborn. You are not the same after the loss.
Eileen Foley	I had an emergency c section because science still does not know how to reliably induce labor when your water breaks

Ashlee Griffith	I had my daughter Brynlee Griffith stillborn at 38 weeks on October 21, 2022. She was perfectly healthy, and we were just days away from meeting her. I feel as if it could have been preventable as I also feel MOST stillbirths can be prevented. We want to be the voices to the babies who didn't get a chance
Megan Smith	I had my first daughter Adalyn, unexpectedly when I was 19. She was stillborn at 38 weeks' gestation. 🦋 That definitely turned my whole world upside down and from that day I've just been trying to find my purpose and my mission has been wanting to give her a voice and spread awareness for stillbirth.
Ann Rounseville	I had stillborn identical twins in 2009. It could have been prevented.
Katherine Hyde-Hensley	Helen was stillborn and continues to impact our life 17 years later! I am a therapist serving bereaved parents.
Shannon Myers	I am a bereaved mother of a stillborn baby 15 years ago. I am a psychotherapist who has dedicated my work to supporting bereaved parents in my practice and through volunteering.
Jordan Deadrick	Charlotte Deadrick, my only daughter, 2021
Cathy Farmer	Claire Elizabeth Hudgins was stillborn in 2020
Marc Amade	Daughter Avery was stillborn in 2020
Rosanne Darrow	Both my sons were stillborn, something needs to be done to prevent this
Megan Fillbrandt	Ashton Gary Koch was born sleeping 7/13/2022 at 34 weeks. I support SHINE because there was absolutely no reason as to why he was stillborn. Mothers, fathers and siblings deserve a why or prevention! We miss him so much and pray every day that one day we have a way to stop/prevent stillbirths for every family.
Alicia Sheppard	Baby girl stillborn May of 2022 at 34 weeks
Kendra DeWolf	Because my daughter Ellie was stillbirth in 2022. From this journey I have met other parents that have suffered this great loss as well
Artrell Jones	I had a son that was stillborn.
Jan Leatherman	I had a stillbirth and I am an RN
Tracy Hazelton	I had a stillbirth boy in 2021
Julie Jackson	I had a stillbirth in 2004, and I am also a healthcare worker
Laura Sirolli	I had a stillbirth in 2021, and my life has never been the same.
Jaimie Hobbs	I had a stillbirth in 2022. This is so important for all women.
Andrea Brown	I lost my first child on 2/12/23 and was a stillborn. Due to strep B which is tested at 36 weeks. It has been seen as 1 in a million cases.
Lisa Jennings	In March 2009 we went from preparing for the arrival of our daughter, Ryleigh, to losing her just 3 weeks before her expected arrival.

EXTENDED FAMILY:

Janet McHenry	In August 2022 I got the call that no mother ever wants to hear. My son said can you come mom we lost the baby? My daughter-in-law was 32 weeks pregnant ever drank, smoked and as a vegetarian very healthy no cause was ever found. I was able to hold her. She was beautiful. Please help prevent this tragedy.
Jim Sublett	Daughter lost her child at 39 weeks, was full term. This was devastating to think this was preventable. Please find this worthy cause.
Robert Bacon	Granddaughter Aoife Elizabeth Bacon stillborn.
Dena Wilson	Granddaughter stillborn September 2021
Lynn Ruscio	Grandson Vincent stillborn days from due date alone with the 21,000 in the U.S. in 2019
Larry Maycock	Grandson was still birth at 21 weeks
Abel Celiceo	I lost my first grandchild to a stillbirth that could have been prevented if there were more resources available to the parents.
Renee Revelez	I lost my first grandchild to a stillbirth that could have been prevented if there were more resources available to the parents. Instead of watching my first grandchild go through milestones I have to watch my daughter and son in law grieve the loss of their child. The medical field is advancing every day, please continue funding so others do not have to suffer through the unnecessary pain of having to have funerals for their babies.
Lynn Ruef	I lost my full-term baby grandson the day before he was due.
Casey Hyatt	I lost my granddaughter to stillbirth a month ago and our family struggles for answers for what was a healthy pregnancy that left us heartbroken the day my daughter in law went into labor. I am also a nurse and want to advocate for patients that experience this type of loss. We need answers that research and data can give us. We need your help, so that stillbirth can be researched and hopefully one day preventable. We hope no one has to feel the pain we have suffered losing our sweet Avery Layne.
Bonnie Downey	I lost my grandson Simon to stillbirth four and a half years ago. With help stillbirth can be prevented in many cases.
Donna Ormond	I lost my grandson to stillbirth, and it was traumatic for all of us
Mike Tendall	I lost my grandson, Samuel, on September 26th, several years ago.
Mickayla Ochsner	I lost my nephew at 10 days old, and all of these babies deserve to know how much they were and are still loved.
Mariah Bailey	I lost my nephew to a stillbirth that was 100% preventable. Instead of checking in to deliver her living baby boy she checked in at 39 weeks to deliver his still body that could have been prevented with more education and measuring the placenta size.
Linda McManemim	I lost my nephew to stillbirth.
Kris Anderson	I lost my niece at 39 weeks of pregnancy. And with proper training, knowledge, and awareness, it was preventable.
Johnathan Bartholomew	I lost my niece right before she was due to be born.
Anna Sparapani	I lost my niece to stillbirth and it could have been prevented.

Danielle Green	I lost my son's kids to stillbirth in Feb. He was a beautiful boy with a full head of red hair. At 36 weeks he was big enough to live had this been caught. Losing Jude has hurt every part of our lives. This devastation is life changing and I don't want anyone to experience- please sign and pass this legislation!
Nancy Bredberg	I've lost 2 grandchildren to being stillborn.
Danielle King	In 2013 my cousin's first daughter was stillborn, and this should not have happened. She had the best medical care available to her throughout her pregnancy however our beautiful Alana was born sleeping due to an umbilical cord defect that should have been caught.
Juliana Serrao	In 2013 my sister-in-law lost her daughter to stillbirth
Terry Ellis	Last March our oldest daughter gave birth to our first granddaughter, full term, no pregnancy complications, no heartbeat. I cannot begin to explain the devastation and despair she, and the rest of our family suffered, going to the hospital and coming home with nothing but grief. Every day is a reminder of what should have been. Funding into stillbirth prevention will hopefully prevent others from sharing our experience.
Heather Runyan	Less than a month ago, a cousin lost her daughter at 34 weeks. I cannot imagine the devastation and believe we can do better for these women and families!
Eileen Dahlem	My 1st grandchild was stillborn Oct. 13, 2021
Amanda King	My 1st grandchild, Sam, was stillborn in November 2022.
Lora Harding Dundek	my beautiful granddaughter, Violet, was stillborn in 2020. Please work to support funding for research to help lower the rate of stillbirths in the U.S.
Tiffany Norton	My beloved nephew was stillborn in 2019.
Elvia Rojas	My brother and sister in law lost their son Issa to stillbirth July 15 2022. A deeply loved son, nephew, cousin, and grandson will now be grieved for a lifetime.
Johanna Dominguez	My brother and sister in law suffered the most painful loss in 2012 as they lost their son to stillbirth.
Brooklyne Giger	My brother and sister in law's baby boy was stillborn on February 1, 2023 at 40 weeks and 5 days. I saw and experienced the soul crushing impact it had on their family and mine. No one needs to suffer through this kind of loss.
Dana Smith	My brother and sister in-law lost a baby boy to stillbirth.
Lydia Miller	My brother and sister lost their daughter Arla to a still birth in May of 2021
Jenny Schneckloth	My brother and sister-in-law lost their son to stillbirth
Dixi Beason	My brother and sister-in-law's son, Greyson, was stillborn at 37 weeks in 2017. I believe families deserve all the support and resources we can provide for them.
Ian Trask	My brother-in-law and his wife lost their first son at birth in 2021. They've worked hard to process their grief and understand what might have gone wrong, and how they might avoid another devastating stillbirth. Supporting legislation like this is important and necessary.

Lisa Novack	My cousin and friend each lost their stillborn babies, Austin and Reese, at the end of the third trimester. These tragic losses impact families forever. More attention, research, support and resources are needed to address this public health crisis. Thank you.
Kristen Ball	My cousin and his wife lost a full-term little girl, Callie, and have continued to advocate for answers and education about stillbirth.
Alisha Dierdorff	My cousin Erica lost her son to stillbirth.
Marci Hirst	My cousin gave birth to a full term still born baby. She was healthy, had a healthy pregnancy, and the baby was healthy. This was caused by a kink in the cord. I thought this was something that only happened back in the 1800s. Why is there not more awareness around stillbirth? It can happen to anyone and the rates in the US are much higher than that of other first world countries.
Nikki Fly	My cousin had a stillbirth at 34 weeks
Sarah thompson	My cousin had a stillborn
Deborah Ozment	My cousin had a stillborn baby
Catherine Popell	My cousin had a stillborn girl. I am a psychologist (retired) and understand how devastating stillborn births are to a couple.
Nicole Green	My cousin had a stillborn son.
Natalie Zeiger	My cousin lost a son in stillbirth
Hannah Warren	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth in 2018
Talia Gonzalez	My cousin lost her baby 6 weeks before her due date and additionally I am an advocate for women's health.
Marlene Simon	My cousin lost her baby 8 days before his due date. I am an advocate for women's health.
Tess sarafiny	My cousin lost her daughter 2016
Jade Mercado	My cousin lost her daughter in 2019. She was born stillborn and there were no indications that anything was wrong with her. It tore my cousin and her husband apart and they are still dealing with grief and PTSD today. No family should have to go through this.
Danielle Berg	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth
Kari Pennington	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth
Mary Kate Morgan	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth
Maia Kreis	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth and I am an advocate for women's health
Lisa Hotz	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth.
Alida Watts	My cousin lost her first child to stillbirth.
Alison Freer	My cousin lost her first son in 2019 to stillbirth at 38 weeks. I am a healthcare worker and an advocate for women's health.
Danielle Schwartz	My cousin lost her firstborn to stillbirth at 38 weeks gestation and I've seen the impact it can have firsthand.
Diem Nguyen	My cousin lost her firstborn to stillbirth.
Madeline Beyer	My cousin lost her son and I am an advocate for women's health because of it.
Theresa Harris	My cousin lost her son at 8 1/2 months
Melissa Moody	My cousin lost her son Grayson to stillbirth.

Debbie Thompson	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth
Maria Mesaros	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth
Yvonne Green	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth
Carly Levine	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth last year.
Patricia Miller	My cousin lost her son to stillbirth.
Danica Noskey	My cousin lost her sweet baby boy two years ago.
Kathleen	My cousin lost his grandson to stillbirth on the day he was due.
Abby kaplan	My cousin lost their child to stillbirth
Saba Shu	My cousin Melat lost her son Axum
Marcus Cohan	My cousin Oliver was born still
Lisa Schwartz	My cousin Oliver was stillborn.
Robyn	My cousin Oliver was stillborn as well as 21,000 babies every year.
Lexi Calcagni	My cousin Oliver was stillborn in 2013 and will forever be remembered by our family. As a labor and delivery nurse I see the beauty in birth every day. Everyone who wants a baby should be able to experience that joy
Ashton Fischetti	My cousin Rowan was stillborn.
Robyn Paul	My cousin's son Oliver was lost to stillbirth.
Maria Popperwell	My cousin suffered a stillbirth.
Amy Beers	My cousin tragically lost her baby to stillbirth and I've witnessed the effects it's had on the family. I'm also an advocate for women's health.
Tina Truong	My cousin was devastated with her stillborn.
Jessica Deangelis	My cousin was stillborn and his mother never recovered emotionally.
micah moody	My cousin, Greyson Stone was stillborn in 2022. My great grandmother has a still born as well.
Gabriella Iraola	My cousin, Julia, was stillborn in 2021. This is a public health crisis that no family should have to endure, the trauma that ensues is felt for a lifetime.
April Slaughter	My cousin, Lisa Lunsford, lost two children that were born sleeping.
Debra Nanus	My cousin lost her daughter to stillbirth. I am an advocate for women's and fetal health.
Lauren Dardick	My cousin, Oliver, was stillborn.
Jade Hernandez	My cousin, Rowan, was stillborn and it deeply affected our family.
Jacqueline Bartram	My cousin's baby boy Brayden was stillborn.
Carmen Gonzalez	My cousin's baby was stillborn
Stephen Harrison	My cousin's baby, Wren, was stillborn three years ago, and the effect on my cousin was awful. She has since had a healthy daughter, thankfully. But no doctor could tell her how or why she lost Wren. There needs to be more research and information on this!
Kim Anderson	My cousin's daughter was stillborn & my sister was stillborn.

Cora Williams	My cousin's daughter, Terra, was stillborn in the summer of 2021. It was preventable. I think birthing people and their children need to be advocated for.
CJ Jacobson	My cousin's granddaughter
Loren Truong	My cousin's kid 03/2020
Jessica Meyer	My cousin's recently lost their sweet baby Jude to stillbirth. One person is too many to know who has suffered this tragic loss. I
Lisa Sims	My cousin's son was stillborn in 2022 and it was preventable.
Danielle Brewer	My cousin's son was stillborn
Natalie Shemaria	My cousin's son was stillborn at 37 weeks
Kayleigh Leaver	My cousin's son was stillborn in 2022. We should do everything we can to prevent more mothers from having to go through this terrible loss.
Katie Selinga	My cousin's son, Ira, was stillborn, due on Christmas 2022.
Gabe Fine	My cousin's son, Samuel, was stillborn in 2022, and I witnessed the profound toll it had on my family and loved ones.
Chelsea Haas	My cousin's baby was stillborn at 39 weeks and it could've been prevented by measuring her placenta.
Laura Byrne	My cousins baby was still born and recurrent pregnancy loss is prevalent in my family
Gavin	My cousin's child was stillborn.
Emily Hendrickson	My cousin's daughter was still born at 39 weeks in 2020.
Christopher Hoffman	My cousins lost their baby to stillbirth.
Jenn Wineski	My cousins lost their son Austin to stillbirth.
Samantha Jacobson	My cousin's son , Jude.
Zachary Legg	My cousins who lost their daughter to stillbirth

Haley budge	My nephew AJ was stillborn March 2023. We truly believe this was avoidable.
Wendy Kappers	My nephew and his wife have suffered from this happening to them and our family
Barbara Deeb	My nephew and his wife's daughter Margot were stillborn in 2023.
Jean Brozena	My nephew and niece lost their firstborn son to stillborn at full term. The pain they experienced with this horrible loss is still palpable. If research and knowledge gained would prevent anyone from experiencing this horror and sorrow it would be worth every penny.
Madeline English	My nephew Angelo
Carolyn Soto	My nephew Azhari, was stillborn 2/19/2023 at 35+5 weeks.
Bridget kopek	My nephew Brayden was stillborn in 2020. I am an advocate of children's health. Previously chairperson of Health Commission in Fairfield County initiating programs for healthy menus for our school children and redeveloped physical education programs for middle schools.
Kristen King	My nephew Charles Martin Corvi died just shy of his due date. His stillbirth has greatly affected his parents, siblings and extended family. I am an advocate for stillbirth awareness and prevention. My brother and sister in law established the Charles Martin Corvi fund for this cause.
Misty McInelly	My nephew Coy was stillborn

Kristy Bolli	My nephew Coy was stillborn and just recently my friends baby Bennett
Danell Elswick	My nephew Daniel was born 10 days after his due date and he was stillborn.
Peter Najarro	My nephew Edward was stillborn 2020.
Lauren Waldrop	My nephew Grayson Stone was stillborn in 2022 due to a small placenta and it could've been prevented. He should be here.
Kairey Martell	My nephew had a stillborn baby. We need answers and help.
Sarah Hannen	My nephew Isaac was stillborn. His death and the medical complications caused to his mother affect our family every day.
Nataly Gonzalez	My nephew Issa Gonzalez was a still born baby July of 2022
Victor Rojas	My nephew Issa was still born. With higher awareness and attention to women's health I think the slightest chance for a different outcome may have presented itself.
Wil James	My nephew Jace was stillborn in 2018.
BART DeNitto	My nephew Jonah Mikenas was stillborn in 2021
Samantha Dubreuil	My nephew Kase Brahm was born still and I support this necessary and overdue change
Kaitlyn Spears	My nephew lost his life to preventable stillbirth in 2020. His undetected small placenta took his life way too soon.
Tina Wasserman	My nephew lost his son to stillbirth in 2022
Chris Justice	My nephew Theo was stillborn and I am signing this in his memory.
Whitney Farrar	My nephew Theo was stillborn in 2021
Anthony Curatalo	My nephew Vincent was stillborn
Ocielia Flowers	My nephew was a still born March of 2022. My sister lost her son as a stillbirth, 3 days before his scheduled due date. I am also a healthcare worker. Watching her and my family go through this was a living nightmare. It is something that is going to live with us forever. Holding your passed away first nephew was the worst thing I have ever experienced. Having to watch my sister give birth to her deceased son was indescribable. Watching my parents hold their first grandchild that had died 2 hours before hand was something I never thought I would ever see. There are no other words to describe losing a miracle baby other than devastating and with no real answers. Thank you for your time. I appreciate your consideration. I hope this can help solidify the need for more funding in this area.
Cheyenne Kato	My nephew was born full-term, sleeping, and was healthy the whole time. It was unexpected and quick and we need more research to help prevent this.
Becca Behar	My nephew was born still please help!
Daisy Valencia	My nephew was born stillborn in April 2022.
Alondra Garcia	My nephew was still born in 2022
Kathryn Balestracci	My nephew was stillborn July 31, 2022.
Laura Taylor	My nephew was still born on February 20th, 2022 and my friend lost her son at 20-weeks pregnant.
Richard Fisher	My nephew was still born this past summer.
Cynthia Bradshaw	My nephew was stillborn and I have three daughters who are having babies that I worry about

Amber Rowe	My nephew was stillborn at 39 weeks.
Becca	My nephew was stillborn in 2013
Linette Hodges	My nephew was stillborn in 2015, a life that should be counted among the living. His life should be just as important as the babies you fight for not to be aborted. The color of the skin should not determine if the doctors should care less or not.
Alyssa Curatalo	My nephew was stillborn in 2017
Meghan Gay	My nephew was stillborn in 2019
Brenna Gutierrez	My nephew was stillborn in 2021
Caroline Manik	My nephew was stillborn in 2021
Terra Jones	My nephew was stillborn in 2021 and I am supporting efforts to help prevent other families from having to go through preventable loss and heartache
Daniella Trask	My nephew was stillborn in 2021 and I don't want anyone to have to go through that at all if avoidable.
Amanda Guyer	My nephew was stillborn in 2022
Danielle Kida	My nephew was stillborn in January.
Deborah Sua	My nephew was stillborn in Nov. 2022.
Breanna Torres	My nephew was stillborn in the 3rd trimester and my whole family has been affected. We love that little boy so much and so does my sister.
Cara Caplinger	My nephew was stillborn.
Kathleen Nicolaides	My nephew was stillborn. The mother was healthy, took very good care of herself during the pregnancy, went to all her check-ups, but lost the baby 2 days prior to her due date.
William English	My nephew, Angelo was stillborn in 2020
Christina Wolf	My nephew, Austin, was stillborn in 2020. My brother lost his son to stillbirth.
Luis soto	My nephew, Azhari, was still born, 2/19/23 at 35+5 weeks
Katie Manik	My nephew, Beau Lennox Moore
Amy Noblett	my nephew, Benjamin Fletcher, was stillborn 2006
Mamie Paseka	My nephew, Brooks Dewet Bohn was born still on May 18, 2020.
Mindy Keenan	My nephew, Brooks, was stillborn in 2020. My twin sister lost her baby boy to stillbirth. I am an advocate for women's health and a mother and an aunt.
Alyson Clark	My nephew, Bryson Walker, was stillborn at 35 weeks. Instead of bringing home a baby, my sister brought home a teddy bear and absolutely no answers on what changed so drastically. No parent should have to experience the pain and uncertainty that comes with this.
Joslyn Noonan	My nephew, Caden Pence Foley, was born sleeping/stillborn on August 18, 2017. That day was one of the most painful of my life. It forever shaped us all and Caden's light should not be dimmed. I am an advocate for women's health - to ensure that healthcare providers be provided with adequate education and funding for change. 1 in 4 babies... over 21,000 babies a year in this country... gone too soon, too many are preventable. Be a part of creating real change. No family should have to endure this loss. Thank you.
Sabrina Hegge	My nephew, Colton, was stillborn in 2022.
Ellen Bryan	My nephew, Cooper, was stillborn in 2021. Standard prenatal care missed many symptoms that could have prevented his death. A 1st world nation shouldn't have 3rd world deaths.
Abigail Hook	My nephew, Cooper, was stillborn in 2021.

Abbey Hook	My nephew, Cooper, was stillborn in 2021. I think about him every day. I mourn that he doesn't get to be a big brother to my other nephew, Luke.
Brenda Payton	My nephew, Coy, was stillborn in 2015. He is still lost and greatly missed.
Gabriela Vallo	My nephew, Ezekiel, was stillborn in 2020. Everyone who loved him has never been the same since
Ann Rathbun	My nephew, Grady, was born still in 2021. The effects on Grady's parents have been long lasting physically and psychosocially. I am truly an advocate for the cause! Please help others who may experience this terrible event by supporting funding for care, research and support. I am a registered and active voter! Thank you, Ann Rathbun, Ph.D.
Eric Rathbun	My nephew, Grady, was stillborn in 2021. It affects my family every day.
Laney Waldrop	My nephew, Grayson, was stillborn in 2022.
Mattie lindberg	My nephew, Henry, was born stillborn.
Maureen Annunziata	My nephew, Hugo, was stillborn in 2021.
Lauren Kolojchick-kotch	My nephew, Hugo, was stillborn in 2021, and I am currently 9 months pregnant. I've spoken with many people about placenta measurements and among the most hesitant to act on my concerns have been medical professionals. I understand that this response comes from lack of research about this crisis. I fully advocate for this type of research and the efforts outlined in current legislation, to protect parents and families in the future from this type of loss.
Sonya P. Moore	My nephew, Jace, was stillborn in 2018
Cheri White	My nephew, Joshua Dudley was still born.
Paige Green	My nephew, Jude, was stillborn in 2023! I'm an advocate for him!!!
Whitney McDowell	My nephew, Kainoa, was stillborn.
Meghan Gleeson	My nephew, Kase Brahm, was born sleeping on July 31st, 2022. As a mom of two young kids I am a strong advocate for increased health care for women and babies. Even one preventable infant death is unacceptable in today's America. We can and need to do better.
Carissa Teff	My nephew, Kase Thomas Brahm, was born a sleeping angel in 2023. As a mother of two babies and one angel baby myself, I want to advocate for women's health as well as prenatal care, postpartum care, and mental health services.
Rob Cohan	My nephew, Oliver, was born still in 2013.
Maha Kashani	My nephew, Qasem, was born still in 2020. He was full term and he was perfect... he just didn't have a heartbeat. It has crushed our family and although almost 2 years have gone by it is still so fresh for us. I want to have another child but I am scared this could happen to me too.... Because stillbirth doesn't discriminate.
Sara Gustafson	My nephew, Ray Larry Cox, was stillborn on July 30, 2022. His death has devastated his entire community, and we are making it our mission to make sure no other family has to go through this horror.
Mary Gamble	My nephew, Ray Larry, was stillborn July 2022 in Baltimore, MD
Joshua Daniell	My nephew, Rhoan, was stillborn. Rhoan's death could have been prevented.
Hanna Pate	My nephew, Silas, was stillborn in 2021.
Bre Torres	My nephew, Summit was stillborn.
Alex English	My nephew, was born still in 2021.

Ivette Fournier	My niece lost her son to stillbirth in January 2023.
Nancy Mack	My niece and her husband lost their first child, Emma Lynne, to stillbirth. My niece works tirelessly to support and counsel others who have lost children to stillbirth.
Cristina Calcagni	My niece and nephew lost their baby boy to stillbirth.
Sharry Harrison	My niece and nephew lost their son.
Colleen Donoghue	My niece and two of my friends delivered stillborn infants.
Katelyn James	My niece Andelyn was stillborn on 12-7-2022. My sister had an ultrasound in the morning and everything was fine. At 1pm she got a bad pain and sweet Andelyn was born sleeping at 3:17pm. Placental abruption
Amy Pellettiere	My niece Ann's first son was stillborn. I am an advocate for women's health and making data available that allows for more equal distribution of resources and services.
Jennifer Pietrzak	My niece Annie was a stillborn in 2014 and I try to advocate for her however I can.
Rachel	My niece Autumn was stillborn.
Vi Le	My niece Avery.
Tram Doan	My niece Avery was a stillborn and my sister lost her baby to stillbirth.
Trinh Holth	My niece Avery was a stillborn in 2020 and it forever changed our family.
Jennifer Scott	My niece Eleanor Kay Scott was stillborn in 2022 and I'm fighting for her and the life she could have had.
Gabriella Rodriguez	My niece Elise was stillborn in 2022, we'll never stop saying her name.
Bridgitte Rodguez	My niece Emma was stillborn on April 2, 2019– at 35 weeks. She was 5lbs. There was no reason for her not to be born alive. In the 21st century. In the United States. When her mother had excellent healthcare, went to all her doctor's visits, was a healthy person. I could go on and on. They don't know why it happened. Even after an autopsy. There is no reason. There should be a reason.
Bailey Johnson	My niece Evelyn Celeste Floria was stillborn in January 2022.
Carol Sanchez	My niece gave birth to a stillborn baby girl.
Heather Bozeman	My niece had a full-term stillbirth. He was perfect and beautiful, and looked as though he was just sleeping. Hardest thing EVER !
Harvey Kaplan	My niece had a stillborn son, and I feel strongly that a great number of stillbirths in the U.S. can be prevented with better care.
Julia Lane	My niece Harlow Grace Deschamps was stillborn in 2022 when my sister was 8 months pregnant. She was the first grandchild of our family and we miss her everyday. I urge you to provide funding and resources to prevent stillbirth from devastating American families.
caitlin doyle	My niece Harper was stillborn October 5, 2022.
Emily Paul	My niece Juniper was stillborn in October 2022.
Tyler Blevins	My niece Layla was stillborn. It would mean a lot to my sister and I.
Lucia Andrade	My niece Leilani Rose Martinez was stillborn and I am advocating for Women's Health, for my sister, for my niece.
Everett	My niece Lily born and died December 19, 2022

Loreena Anderson	My niece lost a baby and it didn't have to be this way had there been more advocacy in place.
Julie Staiger	My niece lost a baby to stillbirth
Rosemary Codispot	My niece lost her baby at 36 weeks after losing 3 within the first trimester and the fourth had knots in the cord.
Linda Harrison	My niece lost her baby girl, Reese Christine to stillbirth.
Mary Lynch	My niece lost her daughter Sarah to stillbirth in 2022, and I have seen how devastating a loss of this kind is to an entire family.
Nancy Felts	My niece lost her daughter to Stillbirth
Jill Kreis	My niece lost her daughter to stillbirth at 8 months!
Karl Klapper	My niece lost her daughter to stillbirth in 2018.
Diane Donoghue	My niece lost her daughter to stillbirth in 2022.
Erika Lewis	My niece lost her son to a senseless stillbirth.
Denise Massey	My niece lost her son to stillbirth
Jackie Annunziata	My niece lost her son to stillbirth
Arthur Brand	My niece lost her son to stillbirth at 38 weeks.
Kelley Doby	My niece lost her son to stillbirth July 31, 2022.
Lara Daly	My niece lost her son to stillbirth.
Sue Noskey	My niece lost her son to stillbirth. It is a very traumatic experience and seemed to be able to be identified there were problems at a much earlier point.
Amy Theobald	My niece lost her son, Sam in November 2022 and we are devastated.
Ali Dench	My niece Olive was stillborn at full term in June of 2023. Since then, I have connected with countless other families who have experienced the same devastating loss.
Georgina Dench	My niece Olive was stillborn in June 2023. She is so loved and so very missed. The rates of preventable stillbirth are shockingly high. There needs to be more funding and research dedicated to stillbirth to prevent further families from experiencing this tragedy.
Justine Anderson	My niece Reese was stillborn at 39 weeks
Nick Rizzo	My niece Rowan
Francesca Kraft	My niece Rowan is a stillborn in 2021
Jamie Colby	My niece Rowan passed at 36 weeks. Still birth continues to be stigmatized and deserves to be addressed with the urgency it so desperately needs.
Rebecca Grover	My two grandchildren Juniper and Samson that I care deeply about and miss everyday.
Mary Jedlicka	My twin grandsons were stillborn in 2019, 3 weeks before scheduled delivery.
Katlyn Locklear	My niece was a perfectly healthy baby the entire pregnancy. She had a perfect checkup, and everything was looking amazing and her mother left the doctor with the date one week away to be induced. When her mother got to the hospital that week to be induced, she received the devastating news that there was no heartbeat and she delivered a stillborn. We have absolutely

	no answers as to what happened. We have been left to just accept the fact that we now have a beautiful angel.
Amanda Kolenda	My niece was a stillborn at 35 weeks. The saddest day to endure for her sweet parents. Please consider helping this not happen to other parents.
Marisa Jahnke	My niece was a stillborn February 6, 2021 and I watched it tear my sister and brother-in-law to pieces. During that experience many people shared their miscarriage and stillbirth stories with me and I realized how common it was but hushed.
Kevin Doherty	My niece was a stillborn in 2020.
Christine King	My niece Alana was stillborn, I am an advocate for women's health. I'm a retired housewife and mother.
Tyra Chinaka	My niece was stillborn. It still continues to affect our family.
Carly Hoyt	My niece was born stillborn and we miss her everyday.
Mohan Subrahmanyam	My niece was lost to stillbirth.
Lisa M Eastman	My niece was pregnant with twins and she lost both. We were all devastated!
Angel Rainey	My niece was recently still born at 38 weeks and I want to see other women along with my sister to have answers in light of tragedy.
Erica Hernandez	My niece was still born in 2021.
Samaya Brizard	My niece was still born on October 2021.
Nicholas Durante	My niece was stillborn.
Kathleen Sylvester	My niece was stillborn 5 days before her due date.
Tim Doan	My niece was stillborn a few years ago. I am also a healthcare worker.
Katie Anderson	My niece was stillborn and I think about her all the time.
Jennifer Brown	My niece was stillborn at 23 weeks.
Claire Gahler	My niece was stillborn at 38 weeks. Babies shouldn't die.
Julie Secviar	My niece was stillborn forcing delivery at nine months . Tragic and more needs to be done to prevent this.
Kelly Roessner	My niece was stillborn in 2010 at 38 weeks. I am an advocate for women's mental health.
Brianna Wootton	My niece was stillborn in 2021.
Jill Fuchik	My niece was stillborn in 2021.
Kristen Dahlem	My niece was stillborn in 2021. I'm also a nurse trained in women's health.
Eric Secviar	My niece was stillborn in 2022.
Hemanth Venkataraman	My niece was stillborn in October of 2021. My brother and sister in law did not have the necessary support from employers.
Cami Brookover	My niece was stillborn in September of 2021
Brianna Andrews	My niece was stillborn October 2022. I am an advocate for women's health.
Teresa Kilburn	My niece was stillborn on July 24th, 2013.
Kerry Mackie	My niece, Aaliyah Briscoe, was stillborn in November 2020.
Michael Parker	My niece, Alana, was stillborn in 2013

Madelyne Rosario	My niece, Amelia was stillborn in 2021.
Zach Schlagel	My niece, Autumn, was stillbirth in 2010 and it's sad that I never had the chance to meet her
Alex Hartel	My niece, Charlie, was stillborn in 2021 and I wish her nothing but love and support from our government.
Matthew Menzel	My niece, Charlotte, was stillborn in 2022
Leigh Hubert	My niece, Diana Hope, was born still in 2017. This was a preventable loss that so many must endure. I am an advocate for change and for women's health- and for life.
Alice Simmons	My niece, Eleanor was stillborn at 36 weeks due to a cause that is still unknown after significant testing. 10 weeks later, her cousin was stillborn at 40+3, due to a small placenta. I know 3 other families that have had stillborn babies in the last two years, they are all grieving and it didn't have to be like this.
Keavy Handley-Byrne	My niece, Eleanor, and my wife's cousin's son, Leo, were both stillborn in 2022 and we miss them every day.
Marla bunnell	My niece, Eleanor, was born stillborn in 2022. My sister in law lost her daughter. My niece lost her sister. I am a registered nurse and want to advocate for women's health.
Ariana Rodriguez	My niece, Elise was stillborn in 2022
Courtney Sylvester	My niece, Freya, was stillbirth
Nicole Caffiero	My niece, Harper, was still born on October 5th 2022. I am a healthcare worker and maternal health is not prioritized!
Rachael Blosser	My niece, Harper, was stillborn in 2022 and it's taken a toll on my brother and sister in law.
Abby webb	My niece, Hattie Jean was born stillborn is 2021. My sister and brother in law lost their first daughter, their bundle of joy and little girl they were so excited to meet.
Becky Nikolai	My niece, Ida Marie, was stillborn in 2023 and I think of her daily
Benjamin Pyne	My niece, Ida, was born still in 2023.
Rebekah Thayer	My niece, Ida, was stillborn in 2023.
Kim Rabideau	My niece, Juniper, was stillborn in 2018 and the hurt is deep for her parents and extended family
Laura Johnston	My niece, Lydia Welliver, was stillborn in November 2014.
Daniel	My niece, MacKenzie, was stillborn on July 16th 2022. I am committed to raising awareness and advocating for families like my brother's who have and are enduring the heartbreak of a stillbirth.
Ellen Cruze	My niece, Maeve, was stillborn in 2020.
Daniela Rizzo	My niece, Maria Clara was stillborn in 2010.
Kayley Mayhew	My niece, Natalie, was stillborn in 2016. My friends Sara and Vicky lost their babies to stillbirth in 2018 and 2022. Stillbirth is extremely preventable and these wanted babies are worth saving.
Kortney Belongia	My niece, Paisley, was born still in 2019.
Felix hernandez	My Niece, Rowan was stillborn in 2020
MyKeldine Hernandez	My niece, Rowan, was stillborn in 2021
Joel Page	My niece, Sienna Grace, was stillborn in 2022.
Monica McClellan	My niece, Stella, was stillbirth in Jan 2020 and we all miss her every day

Viet Doan	My niece was stillborn in 2020
April Schulz	My niece, Sylvie Schulz, was a stillborn on February 2, 2022
Estevan Velez	My niece, Valentina, was a stillborn in 2021. Her absence is not forgotten
Lisa Holder	My niece, Valentina, was stillbirth and I never got to hold her or tell her how special she is.
Marie Cuccia	My niece was stillborn in 2022.
Laura Widing	My niece's baby will be stillborn in 2022.
Paula Zeidman	My niece's baby was stillborn in December 2022.
Bea Waller	My niece's daughter was still born
Teirney Dunnigan	My niece's daughter was stillborn.
Catherine Schroeder	My niece's son Eoin Foran Vander Tuig was stillborn on December 9,2022. I am an advocate for women's and children's health. Every effort should be made to end preventable stillbirths.
Audrey Zucker	My niece's son Oliver was stillborn 8 years ago, and we continue to grieve.
Craig Annunziata	My niece's son was born still in 2021 at 39 weeks.
Mary Hoffman	My niece's son, Owen, was stillborn after a completely normal pregnancy. We need to understand why this happens, educate the public, and support parents through this horrendous experience.
Alka Dev	My older brother was stillborn in 1966 and my mother still remembers him
Carissa Schmadeke	My older brother, Brandon, was a stillborn, two high school classmates lost their babies to stillbirth, as well as a college classmate.
Megan Tracy	My older sister (my mother's first born) was stillborn in 1988 and my friend lost her son to stillbirth in 2020.
Linda Greenstein	My oldest daughter lost her first baby , Kenley Evelyn to stillbirth. Kenley was my first grandchild. Stillbirth is a devastating event for all.
Hodges	My oldest niece and deceased nephew on what your thoughts are lost her baby due to the baby being stillborn. I am her Aunt. I wanna support her and my deceased nephew.

Barbara Bennett	My second grandson was stillborn and the impact on our family has been devastating.
Beverly Joseph	My sister & niece both lost their daughters to stillbirth and the emotional toll is quite devastating. I am also a physician and delivered babies for over 20 years. I have seen how devastating this is across the board to women who lose their term babies.
Victoria english	My sister and brother in law went through a troubled time losing her first baby and I am in support of her.
Julia Doan	My sister and her husband lost their daughter Avery to stillbirth in 2020 at the height of the pandemic.
Cecilia Andrade	My sister Angie lost her daughter at 21 weeks, 1 day to stillbirth. If doctors were better equipped at monitoring pregnant mothers at gestation, perhaps stillbirth rates could be lowered drastically.
Darby Ellis	My sister carried her child to full term and her daughter died in childbirth.
Nikki Heilman	My sister gave birth to my nephew sleeping eternally on 12/7/17. She ended up with UNDIAGNOSED preeclampsia even after many signs were present, resulting in quicker aging of her placenta causing blood clots that cut off his food source. He was declining in size and ended up in the 4th percentile and her drs still didn't show concern until they couldn't find his heartbeat. Completely preventable because his autopsy came back that he truly was perfect.

	The system failed my sister, brother in law, my family and most of all my nephew.
Lidiya Ervin	My sister had a miscarriage later in her pregnancy & research is important as to what could have prevented it from happening.
Mary Snyder	My sister had a stillbirth many years ago.
Sara Coleman	My sister had a stillborn baby girl.
Rachelle Forburger	My sister had a stillborn baby, and I believe it's important
Daniel smith	My sister had a stillborn baby. She cares deeply about mothers and all children.
Cheryl Johnston	My sister in law and good friend both lost their full term daughters to stillbirth and something needs to be done to prevent and improve care for women in the aftermath.
Hanna Durbin	My sister in law lost her daughter to stillbirth in February of 2022. I am an advocate for women and baby's health. I have worked in healthcare. I have lost a baby of my own as well. Please consider this.
Jennifer Kent	My sister in law lost her son to stillbirth!
Lindsey Schmidt	My sister in-law lost her son Charlie to stillbirth. I'm a woman who likes to think of herself as an advocate for women's health.
Katie Swope	My sister lost a full term child to stillbirth in February of 2020. This was devastating to our family. I'm also a nurse anesthetist and have had the extremely traumatic experience of anesthetizing patients to deliver babies they will never take home. This should not happen to anyone, and my hope is that advances can be made in researching causes and prevention of this catastrophic event.
Christina Jacoby	My sister lost her baby girl at 36 weeks to stillbirth
Dani Novack	My sister lost her daughter Lily Jade on December 19th, 2022... just 10 weeks before I gave birth to my own baby boy just on February 21st, 2023
Stephanie Paul	My sister lost her daughter to stillbirth at 32 weeks.
Brittany Ottarson	My sister lost her daughter to stillbirth.
David Rosario	My sister lost her daughter to stillbirth
Julie Bailey	My sister lost her daughter to stillbirth in 2020.
Kimberly Lagaard	My sister lost her daughter to stillbirth years ago and my daughter's best friend lost her son just this past summer. Seeing the difference in support between the two events is eye opening. My sister received little support following her loss. However now there are greater resources available to help cope with the unthinkable loss. Please don't let these women experience any more loss.
Lauren Tahbonemah-Trayler	My sister lost her daughter, my niece, to stillbirth on Jan. 4, 2023. Losing Haizely impacted the whole family and the struggle she went through just to get basic healthcare was more emotionally damaging than that process should have been.
Dominique Gillam	My sister lost her son Summit to stillbirth.
Amanda Woodruff	My sister lost her son to stillbirth.
Hannah Thome	My sister lost her son to stillbirth. My husband's brother was lost to stillbirth. My cousin was lost to stillbirth.
Kim Newton	My sister was born still, and I advocate for families and children affected by stillbirth. I'm a published children's book author and VA high school teacher.
Kayla Medlyn	My sister was stillborn and so was my best friend's baby.

Caitlin Huber	My sister was stillborn.
Megan Barber	My sister was stillborn.
Alisha	My sister-in-law and brother-in-law lost their little girl at 37 weeks. It was a tragedy that shook our world, and we miss her everyday. She would have been 1 year old in February 2023. It's been over a year and we always wonder what milestones she would be reaching. Our goal is that no families have to experience this same type of grief and loss.
Kelly Stokes	My sister-in-law lost her baby at 38 weeks. She had called two days before to let the OB staff know there was a change in her fetal movement. She was told this was normal for that late in the pregnancy. We all believe this baby would be alive today if someone would have taken her concerns seriously.
Nicholas Rowell	My sister-in-law lost her daughter to stillbirth and since then we all have become advocates for wanting to see research into all aspects of it.
Zachary Schlagel	My sister-in-law lost her daughter to stillbirth, which was devastating to her and our family.
Andrew Campa	My sister, Catherine, lost her stillborn daughter in 2022.
Allison Doherty	My sister's first born child was stillborn.
Anna Trenga	My sister's friend had a still born baby last year.
Briana Daly	My sister's son (my nephew) was stillborn. It was the most tragic experience for our family. I'm beyond supportive of any measure that can help prevent this from happening to other families.
Nakidra Taylor	My uncle (born in the 80s) and sister (born in 2005) were both stillborn. My friend's great nephew was stillborn a couple years ago. These losses have impacted our families tremendously. My grandmother and mom still talk about their lost babies to this day. One of the hardest things for all of us is that we have no clue what caused their deaths. I am a pregnant nurse who believes in the power of research to solve social and healthcare issues. This topic should get more attention than it does from lawmakers.
Kaleb Lisonbee	My wife's brother was stillborn in 2016.
Donna Steffek	My sweet daughter-in-law and son lost their daughter to stillbirth. I am a nurse and an advocate for women's health.

Debby Johnson	My nephew , August, was stillborn in 2014.
James Payton	Nephew Coy was stillborn 2015.
Karen Kashchy	Nephew Jacob 2010, daughter died at birth 2021.
Susan Congdon	My niece lost a full term healthy baby to stillbirth for no discernible reason. With more research this could have been avoided.
Tracey Lichtinger	Oct 5, 2022 our daughter Christie delivered her full term daughter, Harper, stillborn.
Betty Hughes	Oliver-Grandson with seven cousins, four grandparents-extended family members of 68 of immediate family.
Cynthia Gottfredsen	Our daughter and son-in-law lost their sweet daughter, and our granddaughter Chloe Marie.
Vickie Runyon	Our granddaughter lost her first born daughter to stillbirth .
Lisa Ellis	Our granddaughter was born stillborn in March 2022. No one knows why. She looked perfectly healthy.
Jose Solera	Our granddaughter was stillborn in 2020.
Julie Van Hoosen	Our granddaughter, Ida, was stillborn in November 2023.

Kathy Sublett	Our granddaughter, Maeve A. Breeden, was stillborn on December 26, 2020. Please help.
Cheryl Robertson	Our grandson was full term stillborn.
Cynthia O'Neill	Our grandson, Elijah O'Neill, was stillborn July 2, 2018. Our precious daughter-in-law has tirelessly advocated for still born families...
Sharon Waldrop	Our great grandson Grayson Stone Dean was born still.
Mickey Sheridan	Our great nephew had a terrible loss of his daughter to Stillbirth. They were blindsided.
Chris Scuderi	Our loss of a daughter and niece.
Helen Jackson	Our twin grandchildren were stillborn in 2023.
Jerriann Wenget	Our granddaughter, Sophia Ardan, died just a day before her due date. We advocate for all families who grieve as we do and wish for sound measures to be put in place to help prevent stillbirths, and to gather data necessary toward this effort.
Kelly Foran	We lost my nephew, Eoin, to stillbirth earlier this year.
Jason Rice	We lost our goddaughter, Makenzie, at the 7-month mark & never want anyone to have to go through this type of loss again.
Cary Hagen	We lost our grandson at 38 weeks.
Gail Atanasoff	We lost our grandson to a very preventable stillbirth! The impact on our family has had a lifelong impact!
Beth McGovern	<p>With over two decades of experience as a Registered Nurse specializing in labor and delivery, I've had the privilege of being part of numerous life-altering moments for families. These range from joyous occasions like welcoming a newborn into the world to providing support during heartbreaking events such as stillbirths.</p> <p>In April 2019, I was assisting my sister-in-law and brother during the birth of their son, Miles. However, upon arrival at the hospital, we discovered that he no longer had a heartbeat. This was an incredibly difficult experience, as I had to navigate both the role of a grieving family member and that of a healthcare professional simultaneously.</p> <p>This personal tragedy has motivated me to support SHINE in Miles' memory. No one should have to endure the pain and heartache that my family and I went through that day. It's essential to have a unified approach to research and education on stillbirths, along with providing comprehensive support for affected families and healthcare providers. Together, we can work towards preventing and managing this all-too-common tragedy.</p>

Sue Jordan	<p>My daughter was ignored by her two OB-GYN practices in Indianapolis, Indiana when she tried to tell them her second pregnancy (2010) did not feel right during the last trimester. Her non-stress tests and biophysical profile numbers were not in normal ranges. She was told she had a "laid back" baby boy. The nurses who did the testing were very concerned and told her so. On August 11, 2010, she delivered a beautiful full term boy, born still. She knew when she went into the delivery room that he was dead. No mother or father or their families should have to live this nightmare in the United States. This death touched not only parents and grandparents, siblings and young cousins but also friends. One set of grandparents were never the same after this happened. Healthy Birthday and Count the Kicks was not around at that time. My daughter was told to "monitor her baby's movements", but there were no directions or guidance at all. She knew intuitively that he was not moving well. He had two knots in his cord and his cord wrapped around his neck. He was slowly suffocating in what was supposed</p>
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to be the safest place in the world to thrive because the medical profession would not pay attention.