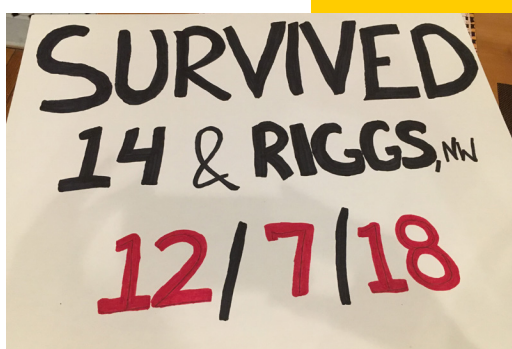


## Aysha Ghadiali, crash survivor



On December 7, 2018, I left my office to walk home. Departing from a crowd on 14th Street, NW, I crossed the street on a marked pedestrian crosswalk. Three drivers stopped for me. I walked in front of the first stopped car and as I took another step, an SUV in the second lane struck me. I was knocked down but stayed conscious. Laying on the street, I feared another car could hit me. With adrenaline, I slowly made my way back to the sidewalk. A crowd gathered, and a man brought me my glasses and purse, which flew off from the impact. He yelled, “She’s bleeding!” I couldn’t stop shaking. I was fortunate a doctor walked by. Parting the agitated crowd, she came to me like a fairy “god-doctor” in a dramatic, yet clinical way. She looked directly into my eyes and said firmly, “You are going to be OK.”



In the emergency room, I learned I had multiple fractures on my nose and my left cheek, which was indented. My facial fractures required surgery in order for me to chew and breathe normally. I also had four fractures in my left foot, and one fracture in my right fibula. I needed a wheelchair and could not eat solid food for a few months. I had stitches, puncture wounds, and bruises. It hurt to wear glasses or simply turn on my left side. The driver that struck me did not have car insurance. From a distance I heard her say, “I’m sorry, I didn’t see you.” If she was driving faster, or if I was one step ahead on the street, my outcome could have been devastatingly different.

From my wheelchair I started to read about traffic violence in the DC metro area. I learned about the Vision Zero movement to eliminate traffic fatalities on our streets. I eventually met the community of DC Families for Safe Streets, which provides a supportive outlet for all persons affected by traffic violence. This network helped me navigate the difficult first year of physical and emotional healing from my crash. Now, I do not accept car “accidents” as the price for free movement in our society. They are crashes and we can fix the systems that cause them. I am fortunate to walk with small scars on my legs to remind me of one DC rush hour commute. I survived when nearly 90 pedestrians in the region were killed by cars that same year. That is why I dedicate my time to DC Families for Safe Streets.

—Aysha Ghadiali



**DC Families for Safe Streets confronts traffic violence** and its epidemic of tragic injuries and deaths. We are comprised of victims of traffic violence and families whose loved ones have been killed or severely injured by aggressive or reckless driving and dangerous conditions on District streets. We represent the full breadth of the District's diversity and demand an end to traffic violence.

**We bear witness** to our pain and suffering to press for the elimination of fatalities and injuries on our streets. Through our stories and advocacy, we seek cultural and physical changes on our streets and the rapid implementation of Vision Zero.

**We envision** a city where people who walk, roll, bike, and drive can safely co-exist, and children and adults can travel freely without risk of harm – where no loss of life in traffic is acceptable.

**We advocate** for life-saving changes and provide support to those affected by deadly crashes in our communities. We seek changes toward safer streets that might have saved our loved ones, or prevented injuries, as a meaningful way to channel our grief and honor our family members. We work so that no other families suffer the loss or life altering injuries that have impacted our families.