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Community Collaborates to Install Rainbow Halo Memorial to Victim of Traffic Fatality

Los Angeles, CA (August 16, 2019)

Family, friends, advocates, and city representatives dedicated the first of several Rainbow Halo Memorials at Woodman Avenue and Addison Street in Council District 4 near the scene of where a hit-and-run driver killed 16-year-old Conor Lynch during afternoon cross country practice in 2010. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) will install 100 Rainbow Halos Memorials around the city to memorialize individuals who died in traffic crashes.

“Even one life lost on our roads is one too many, and the tragedies these families have suffered can never be repaired,” said Councilmember David Ryu. “But our road design and driving behavior can. I’m honored to join with LADOT and these families to bring the Rainbow Halo Project to Council District 4 as a solemn reminder of the lives lost to traffic collisions and the ongoing work to make Los Angeles streets safe for all.”

As directed by Mayor Eric Garcetti, the Vision Zero Initiative brings together transportation planners and engineers, police officers, advocates, and policymakers to create safer streets. LADOT uses education campaigns and traffic-safety awareness efforts to develop a culture of safety in order to advance a safer transportation system.

“Every year more than 200 people die in tragic, preventable traffic crashes on our streets,” said LADOT General Manager Seleta Reynolds. “The Vision Zero Rainbow Halo LADOT commissioned is one small way to honor their memories, each with their unique story, represented by the rainbow in the halo’s reflection. We are grateful to the Department of Cultural Affairs for their support in allowing art to infuse our work.”

LADOT has partnered with Southern California Families for Safe Streets (SoCal FSS), a group of individuals who have lost a loved one in a traffic collision or survived a severe crash to identify locations for the Rainbow Halo Memorials.

“No one should experience the loss our family suffered. SoCal FSS members channel our grief into action to prevent others from enduring the same pain,” said Jeri Dye Lynch, Conor Lynch’s mother. “By honoring those we’ve lost, we hope the Rainbow Halo project inspires people to join us in advocating for smarter street design, slower speeds, and safer behavior.”

SoCal FSS works to raise awareness of the traffic violence epidemic and offers support and opportunities for action to people who share their unique grief.

“Every 36 hours in Los Angeles someone is killed in a traffic collision leaving behind shattered



families and communities throughout the city," said Dr. Debbie Hsiung, co-founder of SoCal FSS, who lost her 7-year-old son Aidan while walking together in a crosswalk in 2014. "The Rainbow Halo project connects individual tragedies to collectively demonstrate the widespread public health problem that traffic violence has become. We know what needs to be done to end traffic deaths; this problem has clear solutions. But it will take every Angeleno prioritizing safety to end senseless traffic deaths."

The Rainbow Halos are multicolored discs that hang overhead on a signal, light, or signpost at or near the site of a fatal traffic collision. When sunlight shines through the disc, it casts a rainbow-colored shadow on the ground. An accompanying plaque explains the significance of the halo.

The project is part of the Department of Cultural Affairs' (DCA) and LADOT's Creative Catalyst Program, which solicits proposals from Los Angeles artists and community organizers to develop and produce creative interventions related to Vision Zero, a City of Los Angeles initiative that aims to end traffic deaths by 2025. The two agencies commissioned artist John Morse to design the Rainbow Halos in 2017.

"Artists create sites of collective meaning and opportunities for the community to gather and reflect. Artists also bring attention and awareness to critical issues facing our city through creative symbolism," said Department of Cultural Affairs General Manager Danielle Brazell. "The Mayor's Vision Zero Initiative and the Creative Catalyst Program is one of the ways we intervene to ensure civic repair, support, and connection to the neighborhoods we serve."

Morse said his choice of a dynamic, rainbow-colored memorial is steeped in symbolism: the rainbow color and circular shape speak to "hope for a better future" and "a celebration of life." The display's intensity to shift with the weather (a sunny day will see a brilliant rainbow, while a cloudy day may see no rainbow at all) denotes the ephemerality of life. The installations are an engaging, joyful memorial and a contemplative way to heighten awareness of traffic safety.

To honor someone lost in a traffic crash with a Rainbow Halo, contact SoCalSafeStreets@losangeleswalks.org. For more information on Vision Zero, visit visionzero.la.org.

Rainbow Halo Plaque Text

Rainbow Halo
By Artist John Morse, 2017

Rainbow Halo honors people killed in traffic crashes. This halo marks the location of an individual life lost. It casts a glimpse of hope for safer, healthier streets.

Subject to the power of the sun, no matter how many times you see this light display, it will never appear exactly the same twice.

#RainbowHalo @VisionZeroLA @FSS_SoCal

A project of the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and Southern California Families for Safe Streets



Commissioned by the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

About LADOT

LADOT leads transportation planning, project delivery, and operations in the City of Los Angeles. We work together and collaborate to deliver a safe, livable, and well-run transportation system in the city and region. Our vision is for all people in Los Angeles to have access to safe and affordable transportation choices that treat everyone with dignity and support vibrant, inclusive communities.

About Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a citywide effort to improve traffic safety on streets and intersections with high collision rates. Starting in places with the highest numbers of traffic deaths, the City of Los Angeles is working towards zero traffic deaths by implementing the most attainable common sense solutions and improvements. For more information about Vision Zero and its traffic safety campaign, please visit: visionzero.lacity.org

About SoCal Families for Safe Streets

SoCal Families for Safe Streets (FSS) is a project of Los Angeles Walks. FSS members each lost a loved one in a traffic collision or survived a severe crash and they bear witness to their pain and suffering in order to eliminate fatalities and injuries on our streets. FSS seeks to make it socially unacceptable to drive recklessly. We advocate for street design solutions that prevent other loved ones from enduring injury, harm, or death. We envision a city where people walking, bicycling, motorcycling, and driving safely co-exist by encouraging the rapid implementation of Vision Zero. www.losangeleswalks.org/fss

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles's vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists. Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike. DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grantmaking, public art, community arts, performing arts, and strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. For more information, please visit culturela.org or follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/culturela, Instagram @[@culture_la](https://instagram.com/culture_la), and Twitter @[@culture_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la)

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