

In memory of Bianca & Mykel: Mom of road-rage victim seeks to help others



Michelle Roberson was inspired by her children Bianca Roberson and Mykel James Rowley. Since their passing, she established a grant program as a way to celebrate their lives and dreams.

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WEST CHESTER >> Michelle Roberson is giving back to the community that gave her so much support.

Roberson lost her 18-year-old daughter Bianca back on June 28 when she was fatally shot in a case of road-rage on Route 100 back on June 28.

In memory of Bianca as well as her late son, 22-year-old Mykel James Rowley, Michelle has teamed with the Chester County Community Foundation to establish a charitable grant fund.

Roberson lost her only two children in less than four years. She wants to make sure that they will be remembered and honored, and in their memory, the community will benefit.

Scholarship funds also have been established through West Chester Area School District and Jacksonville University. Bianca was a June graduate of Rustin High School. She was scheduled to start as a freshman in August at Jacksonville University.

Also planned by Roberson are several fundraisers, including a fall 2017 Walk/Run and a “Purple Gala” scheduled for June 2018 to mark Bianca’s death and her favorite color. “It helps me have a purpose,” Roberson said. “I’m able to give back and help other families dealing with awful tragedies, whether it’s from gun violence, diseases or hate crimes.”

Bianca was killed by a single bullet during a road rage incident on Route 100 in West Goshen Township, police say. A nationwide manhunt led to David Desper, of Trainer, Delaware County, who turned himself in to face charges a couple of days after the shooting.

Karen Simmons is the president/CEO of Chester County Community Foundation and is heading up efforts to establish the grant program. “You want to call it a traffic accident but it’s a hate crime,” Simmons said. “It feels like some people want to hide the truth and call it a traffic accident.”

Roberson said she raised two “good kids.”

“They had good lives,” she said. “I gave them the best lives I could.” Her son Mykel lived with Muscular Dystrophy and worked as a tractor-trailer driver. He followed in his father’s footsteps as a trucker. Bianca had dreamed of becoming an FBI agent.

Roberson noted that both died in vehicles. Rowley had a massive heart attack while behind the wheel. “Bianca was so excited about going to school,” Roberson said. “She couldn’t wait. It was a life-long dream.”

Rowley was a trucker for about a year. “Mykel had a chance to live out some of his dreams. He did get to do what he wanted to do.”

“I have to stop making sense out of something that doesn’t make sense,” Roberson said. “There is no justice, no good reason.” Roberson will meet with other grieving mothers.

“For women just like us – to encourage each other,” she said about simple conversation with mothers faced with a similar situation. “I’m going to rise for Bianca and continue to help other mothers.

“There’s no greater pain than losing a child.” The loss is huge. “I’m never going to be called mom again,” she said. “I’ll never have the opportunity to be mother of the bride or mother of the groom.”

The response from the community was overwhelming.

“The outpouring was awesome and from people I didn’t even know,” Roberson said. “Saying thank you isn’t strong enough.

“The outpouring of love and caring and support touched a lot of people’s hearts.”

To support the Roberson/Rowley Foundation honoring Bianca and Mykel, checks can be sent to CCCF, 28 W. Market St., West Chester PA 19382, or call 610-696-8211.

For the West Chester Area School District Bianca Roberson Scholarship Fund, write to Dr. Mike Marano at Rustin High School, 1100 Shiloh Road, West Chester PA 19382

For the Jacksonville University Bianca Roberson Scholarship Fund write to Kimberly Jones, 2800 University Blvd., North Jacksonville, FL 32211