



Association for Safe International Road Travel

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ASIRT, Not Your Typical Road Safety NGO

ASIRT, the Association for Safe International Road Travel, was founded in 1995 by Rochelle Sobel in response to the tragic death of her son, Aron, who died in a bus crash in Turkey. A slick road, poor conditions, a sharp curve and a driver encouraged to drive as fast as possible resulted in this catastrophe. Aron's death was completely avoidable. A "perfect storm" of factors occurred that day and it is the identification of these infrastructural issues, education on how to avoid or resolve them and advocacy for these improvements that ASIRT focuses on in many countries on a grassroots level.

In 2010 **Bloomberg Philanthropies** recognized ASIRT as the only NGO among the Bloomberg partners, with the goal of strengthening NGO capacity in target countries through on-the-ground programs in Turkey, Kenya and Egypt. ASIRT staff returned from Turkey this month where they focused on advocating for legislative change to include seat belt and car seat use, and speed control. To that end the staff met with various political and government leaders, including the Prime Minister of Turkey, seeking support for legislative change and implementation of sustainable legislation and programs.

ASIRT works with the US government to promote awareness of road traffic crashes as a serious and growing but preventable global health issue. The **Congressional Caucus on Global Road Safety**, which ASIRT helped create, sponsors educational briefings on the impact of road crashes on US citizens abroad and encourages other government agencies to assume a greater role in addressing the global road crisis through the transfer of US expertise to focus countries, legislation, and funding of research projects. **The Ambassador to Jordan, Stuart T. Jones**, and the **U.S. State Department** have invited ASIRT to come to Jordan in April to educate NGOs there and to assist in creating sustainable road safety programs.

In honor of the **Decade of Action**, the **CDC** recently commissioned ASIRT to draft a publication, *Faces Behind the Figures: Voices of Road Traffic Crash Victims and Their Families in Latin America* based on the original *Faces* book published in partnership with the **World Health Organization** in 2007 including road crash victims in over 20 countries. The book puts a human face on the statistics presented in many road safety reports by offering first-hand accounts of road crash victims and their families. ASIRT will present at the 5th **International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE)** conference in Mexico in April with the goal of launching the new *Faces* publication in early 2013.

Another niche for ASIRT is the **Road Travel Reports (RTRs)** it publishes. Extensive research results in invaluable, accurate information on everything from general road conditions and driver behaviors to driving regulations and pedestrian, passenger and cycle safety tips. Several University Study Abroad programs and Corporations with employees working

abroad become members of ASIRTS Education Abroad Program and receive our Road Travel Reports, the *Global Road Safety Toolbox* and training seminars.

ASIRT and the **Forum for Education Abroad** formed an alliance and Executive Director, Cathy Silberman, will participate in the Road Safety panel discussion during the Forum's Standards of Good Practice Institute, "Beyond the Basics of Health, Safety and Risk Management" at George Washington University in June.

On May 22, 2012 at its annual **Gala**, ASIRT will honor **Deputy Secretary of Transportation John D. Porcari**. ASIRT's annual gala serves as a platform for highlighting the areas where ASIRT makes a difference and for recognizing leaders in the Road Safety world. For more information on the ASIRT Gala or to purchase tickets, please contact gnadler@asirt.org.