

THE MAKING OF A TFAN E-CHAMPION

THE STORY OF DIANE JONES, CLEVELAND, OH

In June of 2003, Diane Jones was inspired to take action on Smoke-Free NASCAR, a paid advertising campaign of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Since then, Diane has taken action on other alerts from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids but has largely been uninvolved with the Campaign and is listed in the E-Champion database as a “Prospect” – an E-Champion that has not taken action on an action alert for a period of six months.

When Diane received an email alert from Smoke-Free Ohio asking her to submit a story about her experience with second-hand smoke, Diane was again moved to action. About 23 years ago, Diane quit smoking. A single mother and desperate to find work that would accommodate her family’s schedule, Diane worked in restaurants and bars. According to Diane, “Single parents get stuck in these kinds of jobs. If you lose the job, it’s easy to find another.” But, in Cleveland, OH, where smoking is permitted in bars and restaurants, Diane was exposed to dangerous second-hand smoke for many years. Today, years removed from the restaurant industry and currently working at a legal firm and pursuing a JD, Diane suffers from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Doctors informed her that the condition was a result of a combination of her smoking and the second-hand smoke that she was subjected to in the bars and restaurants in which she worked.

About five years ago, Diane lost her best friend due to complications from lung cancer. Her friend had also worked in bars in Cleveland but she had never smoked. Diane’s friend learned that she had received lung cancer as a result of exposure to second-hand smoke.

Figure 1:
Smoke-Free Ohio Print Advertisement: Diane Jones



Diane Jones

Secondhand smoke steals the freshness from your clothes, but even worse it can steal someone you love.

I quit smoking 23 years ago on Mother's Day in 1980 and I thought I was home free. But I continued to be exposed to secondhand smoke. When they told me that I had COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), it was like someone hit me with a shovel. The hardest part is that it shortened my lifespan and I have five kids.

My best friend Sherry died five years ago from lung cancer at the age of 50 and she never smoked. But she was a bartender, and worked at restaurants in Cleveland. And when I have a crisis in my life or a happy bit of news, I want to call her, but I can't. Neither can her kids.

Restaurant and bar workers exposed to secondhand smoke have 200 times the acceptable risk for lung cancer and 2,000 times the acceptable risk for heart disease. (Source: U.S. EPA 2004)

To support smoke free public places in Cleveland, visit smokefreeohio.org or call 216 781 2944.



It's about health.
It's about time.

www.smokefreeohio.org

Diane sent her story to Smoke-Free Ohio and was selected to record a radio advertisement and appear in a print advertisement for Smoke -Free Ohio's Clean Indoor Air campaign. The radio advertisement is chilling:

My name is Diane Jones and I quit smoking 23 years ago. I quit on Mother's Day in 1980. My kids had been after me "Mom, we don't want you to die."

Sherry was my very best friend; we were like sisters. Five years ago, she died from complications due to lung cancer and she never smoked. But she was a bartender. She worked in restaurants and she went from being a really vibrant woman to being a stick with no hair that I could pick up in my arms out of her bed. And whenever I have a crisis in my life, or a happy bit of news I want to tell somebody, I want to call her and I can't.

TFAN Ohio partner Shelly Kiser related that during the recording, "we were all in tears. It was all we could do to not snifle and ruin the taping."

In a follow-up interview, Diane shared that she thought her story could make a difference. Diane believed that her story "cuts to the heart of people because it could be your friend, family, or you." She believes that the story is particularly relevant in Ohio- "people realize that everyone deserves clean indoor air and just because you're on the lower end of the economic scale doesn't mean that you should be subjected to second-hand smoke."

Today, Diane's image and her story have reached thousands in Cleveland. Shelly Kiser reported that while the radio ads were running, over 100 people took action per day on Tobacco-Free Ohio's website. Diane remarked that her friends have teased her claiming that she "won't be able to walk by a single bar in town!" One friend, a radio personality at WTAM-Cleveland, called Diane and invited her to be interviewed on his Saturday morning talk show. Diane plans to give the interview and continue to get her message out to others in Ohio.