

# DAILY TIMES

DELAWARE COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER

**24-HOUR  
UPDATES**

Local information  
seven days a week



**Get Breaking News**

[twitter.com/delcotimes](https://twitter.com/delcotimes)

Serving Delaware County since 1876

75¢

# 'WHAT WILL IT TAKE?'

Springfield woman  
killed at shore  
becomes national  
symbol of toll of  
distracted driving

A new video features the story of  
Springfield's Casey Feldman, who  
was struck and killed by a  
distracted driver in Ocean City, N.J.,  
two years ago.

**Page 3**



Photo courtesy of caseyfeldman



# Late Springfield woman featured in USDOT video

By TIMOTHY LOGUE

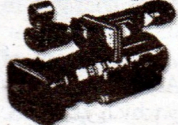
[tlogue@delcotimes.com](mailto:tlogue@delcotimes.com)

**SPRINGFIELD** — A U.S. Department of Transportation video series on distracted driving now includes the story of Casey Feldman, a 21-year-old Springfield resident who was killed July 17, 2009, while walking to her summer job in Ocean City, N.J.

Released Tuesday, the three-minute spot features several of Casey's friends from Fordham University, where she was a rising senior and news editor of the campus newspaper. Her mother, Dianne Anderson, and fellow Springfield High School alumnus Melissa Zirolli also appear in the video, which was produced by Casey's father, Joel Feldman.

"I had seen the other videos in the 'Faces of Distracted Driving' series and I was very moved by them," Joel said. "I thought Casey's story was a very good one so I contacted her friends and asked if they could help out."

**ONLINE  
VIDEO**



While the rest of the videos were shot at the

Department of Transportation's annual distracted-driving summit, Joel decided to shoot Casey's piece at their home in Springfield.

The video — which can be viewed at [delcotimes.com](http://delcotimes.com) — is the first in the campaign filmed by a member of the public.

It begins with several pictures of a smiling Casey with family and friends and an introduction by narrator Matt Thornton, another Springfield High School classmate.

"She was kind, caring, had a great sense of humor, lived life to its fullest and was loved by many," Thornton says before the video transitions to Casey's friends and the details of the accident.

Casey was struck by a van during daylight hours while walking to her summer job on the Ocean City boardwalk. The driver took his eyes off the road for a few seconds to grab an iced tea and hit Casey while she in the crosswalk on Central Avenue.

A communication and media studies major at Fordham, Casey interned with several news organizations while also volunteering her time at homeless shelters, an AIDS clinic, soup kitchens and a no-kill animal shelter.

In the video, Zirolli and Fordham friends Katie Feeney, Janine Repka, Kelsey Butler and Brooke Burdge talk about their driving habits and how they have changed as a result of her death. Repka recalled how she used to eat, apply makeup and even write speeches while driving her car.

"I make sure my purse is in the backseat now — my phone is in the backseat," she said.

Zirolli, who appeared in a number of high school theater productions with Casey, also confessed to being a multitasker behind the wheel. "I would take my eyes off the road to do makeup, to text message, to use my phone," she said.

On Tuesday, Transportation Secretary



*Courtesy of caseyfeldman.com*

**Casey Feldman, left, poses with her brother, Brett, after Brett's high school graduation ceremony in 2008.**

Ray LaHood praised the piece on his blog.

"When I first watched this video, it was immediately clear to me that Joel Feldman poured a tremendous amount of love for his daughter Casey into this project," he wrote. "I can't thank him enough for sharing his video with us and for explaining so eloquently why he chose to record Casey's story."

LaHood also posted a commentary from Joel that touches on the pain of losing his only daughter and the closeness he feels for the other families — families he has never met — who have shared their stories for the distracted-driving campaign.

"Casey died because a driver took his eyes off the road for just a few seconds," Joel wrote. "And after it happened, I knew I could easily have been that driver. I had driven while distracted many times. And it took losing Casey for me to realize how lucky I was not to have killed another family's child, spouse, parent, or friend."

Casey was among the nearly 5,500 people who were killed and 450,000 injured in 2009 as a result of distracted driving.

"It was the first time I ever lost somebody, a friend, and someone my age," said Burdge. "And it made me realize that that could easily have been me. That could have been my sister. It could have been anybody."

The most wrenching part of the video features Casey's mom, Dianne.

"I think of Casey lying on the roadway after the accident and when the police officer asked her how it occurred, she said, 'I want my mom,'" she said. "And I wasn't there to comfort her in those last moments."

A moment later, her voice cracking, she

asks, "What will it take to change the way we drive?"

Joel said he and Dianne feel fortunate to still see Casey's friends on a regular basis, including Tuesday-night dinners at their home, a tradition that started shortly after Casey's death.

"We wonder why they continue to hang around us," Joel said. "Obviously, it's great for us because we see a little bit of Casey in each of them. And I guess they must see a little bit of Casey in us."

The distracted-driving video is a follow-up to Joel and Dianne's work on a New Jersey law, known as "Casey's Law," which requires motorists to stop and remain stopped for pedestrians in crosswalks. Their daughter's image has been used to promote the law, which took effect April 1, 2010.

Public safety is just one area of focus for the Casey Feldman Memorial Foundation — [www.caseyfeldmanfoundation.org](http://www.caseyfeldmanfoundation.org) — which was founded by the family to support charitable, educational and literary pursuits and encourage volunteerism and good citizenship.

Joel has received more than 100 e-mails and calls about the video, which has already been shown as part of a class presentation at Interboro High School and at two schools in Philadelphia.

Though he edited himself out of the final cut — "I didn't think my parts were as good as the others," he said. Joel expects to use some of the leftover footage for a future project.

"There's always a drive to keep Casey's name out there and to see that something good comes of it," he said.