

# Dominic Durden: 'Death by Sanctuary Policy'

*One of our country's very best stolen from us*

BY DAVE GIBSON

On July 12, 2012, Dominic Durden, a 30-year-old Riverside County, California sheriff's dispatcher was on his way to work, when Juan Zacarias Lopez Tzun, 24, made an illegal left-hand turn in his pickup on Pigeon Pass Road, striking Durden's motorcycle. Durden's injuries were massive and he died at the scene.

Tzun, an illegal alien, was charged with vehicular manslaughter and for driving without a license. Despite the fact that Tzun killed an innocent young man, he was booked into the Robert Presley Jail in Riverside, on only \$7,500 bail.

On April 3, 2013, Riverside County Superior Court Judge Raphael A. Arreola sentenced Tzun to 90 days in jail and to 180 days in a work-release program. Tzun had already spent 56 days in jail, and only served an additional 30 days, before being released on May 2, after which, he was eventually deported.

Not surprisingly, the crash that killed Durden was not Tzun's first run-in with the law...what follows is Tzun's criminal history in California:<sup>1</sup>

- On May 13, 2012, he was arrested, and charged with suspicion of driving under the influence and not having a license.
- In November 2010, he pleaded guilty to driving under the influence and was sentenced to three years' probation, 10 days in jail, and a \$1,660 fine. Under the terms of his probation, he was required to obtain a driver's license...he never did.
- In 2009, he was charged with grand theft auto.

Despite these charges, Tzun was never reported to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials for possible deportation, and was allowed to

roam freely, continuing to place the citizens of Riverside County, in grave danger.

In fact, The *Riverside Press-Enterprise* reported that the California Highway Patrol refused to investigate Tzun's immigration status, following his first DUI arrest.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the paper also reported:

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department does not inform ICE of impending releases after receiving an immigration detainer, Sgt. Mike Manning said.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to serving as a sheriff's 911 dispatcher, Durden was a volunteer firefighter, and an accomplished pilot. "Dom," as his mother, Sabine called him, loved animals and was the "ultimate prankster, ...who would do anything to make you laugh."

It was Durden's lifelong dream to become a police officer, and he spent much of his 30 years on Earth helping others and bringing a smile to the faces of his friends and family.

I recently spoke with Sabine Durden, and asked her about the impact of Dominic's untimely death and the incredibly unjust circumstances surrounding it. Her heartfelt and inspiring words can also be found on the website she created to honor her son's memory, known as DOMHUGS.<sup>4</sup>

Her words follow:

**TSC:** *Can you describe what life was like with you son, "Dom?"*

**SD:** Dominic was my only child, my best friend, the love of my life, the best friend of so many and an incredible human being.

In his short 30 years of life, he accomplished more than some people do in a lifetime. He was named Volunteer of the Year 2004 in our City, managed to get his Private Pilot license, and rescued his beloved Cyrus from the pound.

His motorcycle, traveling, and hanging out with friends were very important to him, and even though he led a very busy life, he was never too busy to spend time with me. I now have 30 years of wonderful memories of times spent together.

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**Dave Gibson**, a former legislative aide to a Virginia state senator, has been working as a freelance writer for many years. His work has been published in many newspapers and magazines, including the Washington Times.

Dominic was also known to be the most dependable and reliable friend, coworker, and also the kind of man every parent would want for a son in law.

My sweet son lived life to the fullest and truly enjoyed life as if he knew he wouldn't be around for a long time.

His sense of humor was second to none, his deep and contagious laugh and his photo bombing bug eyes became his trademark. Many people, including me, became victims of his pranks, and many stories are still being shared and fondly remembered.

Dom's best prank was one that involved a local Police Officer that helped him pull off the ultimate prank of all times. He arranged for that Officer to pull him over as he was on his way to the airport to go flying with a friend [Tom] who visited from out of town. The Officer pulled them over and after some questioning of who, what, and where, he asked Dominic to step out of the truck and handcuffed him.

Tom was visibly shaking and upset as the officer asked him where they were heading to. He shared that they were on their way to the airport to go flying and the Officer replied: "oh, is that what they call it now? Do you know he is the best known and busiest male prostitute known around here? You are under arrest."

As poor Tom was about to lose it and pass out, Dominic and the Officer busted out laughing so hard and could barely stand up any longer.

This prank and so many others he pulled on unsuspecting friends will always put a huge smile on all of our faces and broken hearts.

Dominic taught all of us to enjoy every moment in life. He made us realize to live and love to the fullest, seize every moment, and most of all, live without regrets.

He will never be forgotten and his presence is still felt by many who knew him.

I miss my "German Chocolate" son and his great Domhugs.

**TSC:** *Has the loss of your son changed you?*

**SD:** My answer is **YES** and **NO**.

When Dominic was killed that horrific day on July 12, 2012, I knew I would never be the same. I knew I was forever changed and had to come to grips with a new reality. A new way of life without the most important person in it.

I realized that I could just slowly die or that I could make a difference and continue my amazing sons legacy. The choice was easy. There was no way I would let his death be in vain.

There are many days that I can barely breathe and the pain of missing Dominic is so intense that it takes every bit of strength to make it. I also learned to be great actress and hide my pain, put on a smile, and crack a joke.

No matter what, I knew I just had to continue and be Dominic's voice. After all, I was all he had left.

July 10, 2015, I got to meet Donald Trump in Beverly Hills, and after sharing my story with him privately, I had the chance to share Dominic's story with the world at a press conference set up by Mr. Trump.

My life changed even more after that. More news



**LEFT:** Presidential Candidate Donald Trump, on July 10, 2015, addressing family members who lost loved ones to criminal aliens on. Standing next to Trump is Dominic Durden's mother Sabine. **TOP:** Dominic Durden, a licensed private pilot, poses next to a small propeller plane. Durden was an accomplished pilot and volunteer firefighter.

stations were now suddenly interested in what happened to my only child, and I took advantage of every chance to share who Dominic was and why he was no longer alive.

A few visits to Washington, D.C., starting Twitter (@Sabine\_Durden) posts, a few more interviews on TV and radio stations, and a lot more knowledge about politics became my “new Life.”

*Yes, I have changed.*

*No, I am not better. The pain will never go away and my heart is forever broken.*

I could have stopped living after Dominic’s death. I could have just let life go by. But I chose to share my experience, connect with other victims of illegal alien crime, speak up and get active. I became a voice for many who can’t or are not able to speak up.

Sadly some people who were in my life, didn’t appreciate it or like what and who I was talking about.

Some disappeared, some tried to change my way of thinking and talking. They wanted to change who I became and didn’t like or understand the why and how.

While I lost some, I gained a lot of new friends and supporters that are by my side no matter what.

No matter what tragedy happens to us, we have a choice how we continue after it happens. Will it stop us from living or will it make us stronger?

I found out so much about me, my strength, and just how resilient I am.

My sweet Dominic lets me know in many ways that he is around and very proud of his mom. I honor my son by continuing to share his story and be his voice.

While I make sure his legacy continues, I am also making sure that people will get to know DOMSMOM.

Never take a moment with your loved ones for granted and make sure they know how you feel.

Sabine Durden has established a scholarship in Dominic’s name to assist students enrolled in Emergency Medical Technician programs at Moreno Valley College.<sup>5</sup>

*Unlike President Obama’s so-called “DREAMERS,” who, in reality, are nothing more than criminals, Dominic Durden was a true “dreamer” who also put those dreams into action (he achieved a 4.0 GPA, became a pilot, and always donated his time to his community...all by the age of 30!). His death is a loss, not only to those who were fortunate to have known him personally, but to every American.*

*“Dom” was a young man whom all of us would be proud to call brother, son, or pal.*

*So, go ahead and weep for this true “dreamer!” ■*

**Endnotes**

1. <http://www.pe.com/articles/tzun-655699-driving-license.html>
2. <http://politicalhotwire.com/current-events/126464-another-obama-dreamer-proves-trump-may-right-25.html>
3. <http://www.pe.com/articles/enforcement-773765-ice-immigration.html>
4. <http://www.domhugs.com/>
5. <https://rcc.academicworks.com/opportunities/2959>



**LEFT:** Dominic Durden sits on his motorcycle. An illegal alien struck and killed Dominic on his motorcycle on July 12, 2012. The alien made an illegal left turn. **TOP:** Dominic poses with his mom Sabine.