A Year Following Sept. 11 Attacks, UD Student Still Struggling with Father's Death

University of Dayton

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DAYTON NEWS RELEASE

A YEAR FOLLOWING SEPT. 11 ATTACKS, UD STUDENT STILL STRUGGLING WITH FATHER'S DEATH

DAYTON, Ohio — Becca Scott, 19, isn’t sure what she will be doing Sept. 11. She, her mother and two younger sisters may join the official memorials in New York City or they may stick around the house in Stamford, Conn. But on Sept. 12 the family will head to Disney World, aiming for a respite from grief.

Now a sophomore, Becca was in Kennedy Union for breakfast on Sept. 11 last year. She overheard someone mention the World Trade Center Towers and asked what was happening. A woman simply pointed to the television.

“Twent back to my room, I was hysterical crying,” she remembers. “‘My daddy works in that building’ was all I could say. I couldn’t get my dad’s office or his cell phone. I finally reached my mom’s school, and she said he had called her and told her the plane hit the other building.”

When the family still had no news the next day, Becca left campus for a jury-rigged car trip that included her two of her dad’s best friend’s cousins, two of her uncle’s employees and her own cousin as drivers for different legs of the trip. She got home at about midnight to find the extended family at home and one great aunt calling hospitals. “They were still finding people who were tapping (on debris), or he could have been conked on the head and was wandering around without knowing his name,” she remembers.

But Randy Scott, the gregarious “16-year-old in a 48-year-old body,” didn’t surface. The overflowing memorial service was held Sept. 27.

“He was so much of a kid,” Becca says. “When he was on leave from his job, he used to come to my high school and help decorate, he came to every one of my basketball games and he even went to the guys’ hockey and football games. He was the loudest person there. He was fun, he hung out, that was his personality.”

At Eurobrokers, Randy worked European hours, meaning he was out of the house by 4 or 4:30 a.m. He used to check in with the girls, though, and Becca misses the morning e-mail or
phone call from her dad. She spent some time over the summer watching home videos just to hear him because she couldn’t remember his voice.

And it helps, sort of, to be away from the East Coast saturation of grief.

“I say I want to be home, but there are reminders everywhere, constant reminders,” Becca says. The family faced mundane decisions with emotional sinkholes. “We had to replace his car, because of course it was gone. So do we get an updated model of the same car? Can it be the same color? How comfortable would you be driving it?”

The family settled on the same car, but in a different color. But they didn’t replace the Beanie Baby duck Randy had placed on the dashboard. “My mom said, ‘You can’t deal with the color, I can’t deal with the duck.’”

Her friends at home helped Becca in the immediate aftermath of the loss of her father, and group counseling continues. She’s going to be part of an online support group that will connect her with other college students in her situation — away from home in a community where few others experienced that kind of personal loss.

“You know, 10 children in my church lost fathers and two teachers lost husbands,” Becca says. “If you lose someone in a car accident, that’s a hit on just one family. This was an entire community, an entire country.”

“My friends here, they try really hard to understand but it’s really difficult for them,” she says. “It’s one thing to lose a parent, but it’s another thing to have him blown up into a thousand pieces. They found a piece of my father, just enough to get a DNA match, in March. At least it’s some kind of closure.”

Visit http://www.randyscottmemorial.com for more on Becca’s dad.

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For media interviews with Becca Scott, contact Pam Huber at (937) 229-3241 or via e-mail at huber@udayton.edu.