

# 2016

# ANNUAL REPORT



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



It was an honor to take on the role of President & CEO at Operation Lifesaver, Inc. in 2016, and to join this passionate group of rail safety professionals. Our State Coordinators, Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAVs) and national staff

work hard to save lives every day, across the country, and I am proud to be part of the team.

In May, OLI brought together state program leaders, our committed partners and rail safety experts for our biennial Leadership Conference and Training Seminars in San Antonio, Texas. With the theme "Rail Safety: A Mission for Life," the gathering was both informative and inspirational, reminding us all that we share a common goal. Leveraging each other's experience and expertise, we can truly make a difference in preventing tragedies on the tracks.

Responding to continual increases in trespass incidents, both in the US and abroad, I attended the Global Level Crossing Symposium in June to report to international rail safety colleagues on OLI's trespass prevention efforts surrounding photography and filming on tracks. It is critical that we harness the power of our international partnerships to help fight this deadly trend.

Our efforts to reach offending photographers and filmmakers included digital ad campaigns targeting specific online demographics for trespass prevention and grade crossing safety, as well. See page 3 for more details on these campaigns and how OLI is reaching new audiences.

On behalf of the OLI Board of Directors, thank you for your continued partnership and support of our rail safety mission. Together, we will save lives.

Sincerely,

**Bonnie Murphy**

## Our Mission

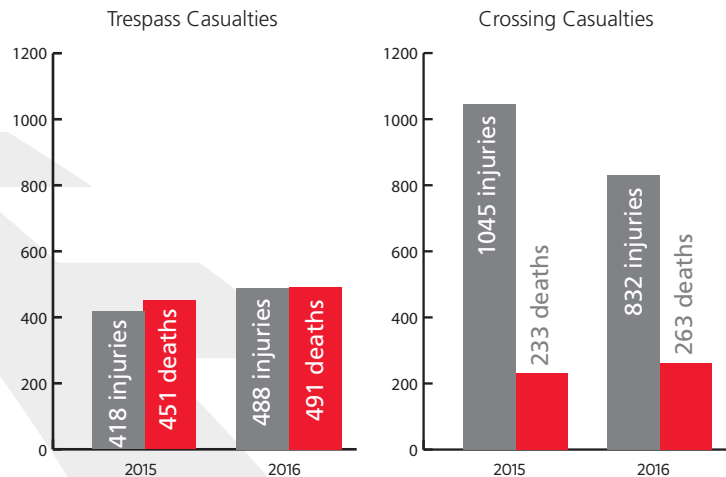
Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit public safety education and awareness organization dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and trespassing on or near railroad tracks.

With a nationwide network of passionate volunteers, Operation Lifesaver provides free safety presentations and creates award-winning education programs and public awareness campaigns to reach audiences of all ages.

Our safety partners include federal, state and local government agencies, highway safety organizations and America's railroads to promote the three E's—education, enforcement and engineering—to keep people safe around tracks and railway crossings.

## Rail-related Incidents

### 2015 vs. 2016\*



\*Based on preliminary FRA data

## Education Reach Overview:

In 2016, Operation Lifesaver reached **1.6 million** people directly via **19,552** safety presentations, **324** training sessions and **1,386** special events conducted by state programs nationwide.

In addition, **7,053 CDL drivers** and **4,366 school bus drivers** were exposed to Operation Lifesaver's online e-Learning safety programs in 2016.

# EDUCATION & TRAINING

## Leadership Conference & Training Seminars



In May 2016, OLI gathered rail safety professionals in San Antonio, Texas for “Rail Safety: A Mission for Life,” the biennial Leadership Conference and Training Seminar. Keynote speaker

Dave Carroll, famous for his “United Breaks Guitars” song, inspired the audience to make a difference in the world and never underestimate the power of one voice. He debuted “Think Train,” a music video about rail safety, to an enthusiastic audience.

Other highlights included an overview of Federal Railroad Administration safety initiatives by Jamie Rennert, Office of Program Safety Director; a panel on the dangers of photography and filming on railroad tracks; an update on the “See Tracks? Think Train!” campaign; a discussion on international rail safety efforts by partners from Mexico, France, Estonia and Canada; panels on connecting with the next generation and leveraging technology to enhance rail safety; and updates from partner railroads on safety initiatives.

OLI announced the recipient of the Operation Lifesaver Champion award as Dr. Lanny Wilson from DuPage Railroad Safety Council, for outstanding dedication to rail safety efforts. The F. Tom Roberts Award, given to an individual who has exhibited unparalleled commitment to rail safety through volunteer activities and other personal contributions, was awarded to OLAV Lynn Selby.

## State Coordinators Day at Leadership Conference

The Operation Lifesaver State Coordinators who run the state member programs gathered for a one-day seminar before the Leadership Conference to receive training and updates on new rail safety education resources, nationwide safety programs and public awareness efforts. State Coordinators shared best practices, including a session on writing grant proposals, and the Federal Railroad Administration updated the states on incident and safety trends.

## OLI Expands Network of Coaches

Operation Lifesaver Coaches work with individuals across the country by providing guidance, mentorship, and support to the talented and passionate volunteers who join the Operation Lifesaver team. OLI held two Coach training classes in 2016, welcoming 11 new coaches to the group.

All current Coaches had the opportunity to gather in San Antonio for a training seminar before the Leadership Conference. Over 100 Coaches enjoyed an interactive session discussing four behavioral and communication styles from Valerie Vincent, senior facilitator, executive coach, at Take Flight Learning.

Coaches are critical to Operation Lifesaver’s success, as we rely on a robust, nationwide volunteer corps, which wouldn’t be possible without the Coaches to train and ignite the passion in our many volunteers.

## Uptick in Bicycle/Rail Incidents Leads to New Bicycle Safety Tips

Reports of rail incidents involving bikes prompted OLI to develop new safety tips as a resource for OLAVs to use in presentations. The safety tips accompany existing safety presentations, targeting middle school-aged audiences to adults. Thanks to Operation Lifesaver State Coordinators and our partners at railroads across the country for identifying opportunities to reach new audiences and save lives.

## 2016 New State Coordinator Orientation

In January 2016, new leaders of Operation Lifesaver state member programs from California, Missouri, North Carolina and Washington gathered at OLI headquarters outside of Washington D.C.



for a 2 ½ day orientation.

The sessions allowed the new team members to learn about the legal and financial aspects of running a successful state program; best practices on working with the media; OLI’s federal partnerships; recruiting and managing OLAVs and other valuable topics. This in-person training is always a highlight for the OLI national staff; developing strong working relationships with each state coordinator ensures success in each state program and at the national level.

## Transit Safety Resources Debut Across Country



To raise awareness of the need for safety around transit systems and service areas, OLI developed a new presentation deck in 2016 for OLAVs to use in transit communities.

The transit slides, which are customizable to feature agency-specific rolling stock, are interchangeable with the standard Operation Lifesaver safety presentation slides, allowing volunteers to strategically address safety issues and audiences based on potential dangers they may encounter in their communities.

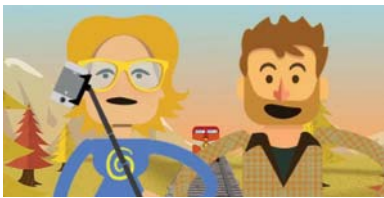
## OLI Develops Online Learning Opportunity for First Responders



For firefighters, EMS and police officers, knowing how to safely get to an incident scene is as important as how to respond once on the scene. If there are railroad crossings on the route, it's critical that emergency vehicle drivers know how to operate safely. OLI did a preliminary launch of a new e-Learning Program for First Responders to provide virtual, interactive training on maneuvering near tracks and responding to scenes near the tracks. The entire training can be done online, accommodating first responders' busy schedules and emphasizing scenarios that could save their lives and others. This interactive e-Learning is available at no charge and can be found at [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org).

# SHARING OUR SAFETY MESSAGE

## Targeting Critical Audiences with Digital Ads



OLI ran digital advertising campaigns in 2016 to reach critical audiences with rail safety messages. With the launch of "No Selfie is Worth the Risk," an

animated video depicting the dangers of taking selfies in unsafe scenarios, including on railroad tracks, OLI used YouTube, Facebook and a digital ad network to reach teens and young adults. The video ran in states where recent photography and filming incidents on tracks had occurred, extending across the country through social media sharing. The campaign garnered 1.1 million impressions on YouTube with more than 315,000 unique video views, as well as 143,500 views on Facebook and 18,500 unique video views through the ad network. The videos can be viewed at [www.oli.org/video](http://www.oli.org/video).

For International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) in June, OLI ran a similar campaign with the "Can" video PSA to encourage safe driving habits near railroad crossings. The video ran in English and Spanish for two days, earning 208,000 views on YouTube, as well as reaching 97,000 people on Facebook.

Overall, paid campaigns and non-paid social media posts during 2016 increased followers and engagement:



**Twitter:**

**1.4 M** impressions,  
Followers up **16%**  
Impressions up **60%**



**Facebook:**

**8.7 M** impressions,  
Likes up **77%**  
Impressions up **10%**



**Pinterest:**

**70 K** impressions,  
Followers up **7%**



**Instagram**

Followers up **28%**

## Track Photography & Filming: A Global Issue

OLI President & CEO Bonnie Murphy addressed the issue of photography and filming on railroad tracks to an audience of international rail safety experts during the June 2016 Global Level Crossing Symposium (GLXS) in Helsinki, Finland. With several high profile deaths in 2014 and 2015, OLI responded by developing materials and partnerships to address the trend. Murphy highlighted an ongoing partnership with the Professional Photographers of America, as well as the series of video PSAs highlighting the dangers of filming and taking photos on or near the tracks. International colleagues commented on similar safety issues in their countries, sharing concern about such images spurring copycats on social media. Murphy asked attendees to help promote safety by sharing OLI's graphics and posts related to the issue, to broaden our reach and reduce these incidents around the world.

# OLI GRANTS

In 2016, OLI provided 23 grants to states, and supported eight transit agencies in implementation of safety grants, to spread critical safety messages and multiply the impact of our rail safety education initiatives.



California Operation Lifesaver talked about the dangers of trespassing at a university orientation as part of a rail safety grant.

1. Competitive grants were funded by the **Federal Railroad Administration** to 12 states for trespass prevention and grade crossing safety initiatives. Several state Operation Lifesaver programs ran programs that built on the success of the "See Tracks? Think Train!" public awareness campaign, leveraging mobile and social media platforms to reach target audiences, as well as movie theater advertising. Grants also brought awareness to communities with new rail service areas or lines that were once dormant, through billboards, in-person safety presentations and events. Target audiences reflected the wide range of demographics frequently involved in incidents, and included professional truck drivers, college students and young adults. Grants totaled \$200,000 for these various public education and awareness projects.
2. OLI awarded 11 competitive state grants for crossing safety education projects, funded by the **Federal Highway Administration**. The projects also featured "See Tracks? Think Train!" elements, ranging from digital ad campaigns and PSA and billboard placements in high incident areas to public awareness efforts surrounding the Emergency Notification System and event advertising at sporting events. The grant funding totaled \$175,000.
3. Also in 2016, eight transit agencies that were awarded competitive Transit Safety Education Grants in December 2015 completed public awareness campaigns. In addition to train wraps and signs at stations and on vehicles, activities included a video PSA that was shown in movie theaters in California's Sonoma and Marin Counties, a printed safety message on the back of bicycle cabs in Houston, a safety video shown on screens in Atlanta's subway trains and "See Tracks? Think Train!" sidewalk clings in Hampton Roads, Virginia.

# PARTNERSHIPS



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