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Killen man receives state volunteer award

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It's been almost 11 years since Denny Kimbrell's son was killed in a traffic accident involving a man police said was driving under the influence.

There isn't a day that Kimbrell doesn't think about his son, Darryl, who was 31 at the time.

"He was our only child and it changed our lives forever," said Kimbrell, speaking about the loss he and his wife endured.

Shortly after the accident in 1999, Kimbrell got active in the local chapter of the Victims of Crime and Leniency.

"I was able to meet a lot of people (right after the crash) who have gone through similar things," he said. "It really helped. Now, I try to help others deal with their loss."

It's a show of compassion that has not been overlooked.

For his efforts with the local VOCAL chapter and for helping victims of crime statewide, Kimbrell has been chosen Volunteer of the Year by the Victims of Crime and Leniency state chapter.

"Denny donates a great deal of his time to work with victims. He is a tireless worker," said Lauderdale County District Attorney Chris Connolly.

Kimbrell downplays his role, but adds victims of crime need support.

"This is a great honor and I appreciate it, but I don't do this to be recognized," said Kimbrell, president of the Lauderdale VOCAL chapter. "I do this to help others and be a support to them.



Denny Kimbrell

"I accept this on behalf of all the volunteer workers who put in the time and effort to help others."

VOCAL was organized in 1982 to promote victim's rights. VOCAL officials say there are five charters statewide, with about 1,900 members.

Shelly Linderman, director of Angel House where victims and survivors stay if they are attending a parole hearing or trial, said the volunteer award is an important award that is presented annually.

"We get nominations from victims across the state and Mr. Kimbrell was nominated by a victim from his area," Linderman said.

She said all nominations are considered and ultimately reduced to three. The final selection is made by the VOCAL state board of directors.

"I'm retired and I'm able to do more than others," Kimbrell said. "For years, I spoke at various schools about the dangers of drugs and drinking and driving. If I'm asked to speak, I still go.

"It's my hope that I can help teens and adults make the right decisions and then be there to help others when they need us."

Connolly described Kimbrell as a "tireless advocate" for victims of violent crime.

"Not only does he come to support victims at trials, he also coordinates getting others to come and support victims who are going through trials," Connolly said. "Denny is very deserving of this award. I'm proud that his work is being recognized."

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