

My Meetings in Washington D.C. – An Advocate's Story

My name is Dionne Mack. I live in Huntsville, Alabama. In 2010, my son Tyrell Spencer, an 18 year old high school senior, collapsed and died from a cardiac arrest while playing basketball. Tyrell had an undiagnosed cardiac arrhythmia and that ultimately took his life. Up to 23,000 young people like Tyrell suffer a cardiac arrest each year in this country, only 10% of people survive this tragic event.





Dionne Mack, November 2024 Hearts On The Hill

Since Tyrell's passing, I've been working to keep other parents from experiencing the kind of loss that I've suffered. In November, I joined a small group of advocates with the American Heart Association to meet with our elected officials in Washington D.C. to ask them to join my cause and help prevent more young people from dying due to a cardiac arrest. I met with the staff of both Alabama Senators Tommy Tuberville and Katie Britt. I was also able to meet with Congressman Dale Strong and Congressman Robert Aderholt. We asked these elected officials and their staff to support a piece of legislation that would help save the lives of kids who suffer a cardiac arrest. This bill, the HEARTS Act will help schools afford and maintain automated external defibrillators (AEDs), train school staff and volunteers on how to perform CPR, and help schools plan for a cardiac emergency.

Below are a few photos from the November 2024 Hearts On The Hill Fly-In to Washington, D.C.

Nancy Brown, CEO, American Heart Association shares a special thank you message to our advocates that have helped us advance the HEARTS Act legislation: https://youtube.com/shorts/LjEe5T_GX2I

Today, we celebrate the HEARTS Act passing through Congress unanimously! The HEARTS Act will help schools purchase and maintain AEDs, train staff and volunteers on CPR, and help schools plan for cardiac emergencies. Next, this life saving legislation will be heading to the President's desk to be signed into law!

