



# 2019

**ANNUAL REPORT**



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Georgia Department of Transportation employees pose during a #RedOutForRailSafety event.

# Our Mission

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) is a nonprofit organization and a nationally recognized leader of rail safety education. With a nationwide network of passionate state coordinators and equally 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. Together, we promote the three E's – Education, Enforcement and Engineering – to keep people safe around trains, tracks and railway crossings.

## A Message from Our Executive Director



**Rachel Maleh**  
Executive Director

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) is a mission-driven organization made up of passionate individuals, who daily support the work of the mission. As you review our 2019 Annual Report, you'll see the passion, commitment, creativity and dedication of OLI's board, state programs, volunteers, partners and staff.

Our results illustrate the organization's impact, through increases in education outreach and website visits as well as media impressions during Rail Safety Week (RSW) compared to 2018. While you are here, check out our mobile-friendly, redesigned website - [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org).

In 2019, OLI's staff created several new educational resources and public service awareness campaigns. All are available free to the general public and widely used around the country. One of the most exciting programs that we launched in 2019 is the Railroad Investigation and Safety Course (RISC). This course is specifically tailored to law enforcement representatives and first responders and teaches them how to be safe on and around railroad tracks while responding to or investigating an incident.

OLI's increasing visibility and prominence was also apparent through invitations the national staff received to speak at 11 conferences during the year, including two international events.

The organization's growth and success during 2019 is evident throughout this Annual Report. This success, however, would not be possible without the support and active involvement of our partners and funders.

I hope our work and people come alive to you as you read this annual report. To join us in getting the rail safety message out, please get in touch. To those of you already engaged with us – thank you!



# Educational Outreach & Statistics

In 2019, **2.5 million people** were reached in over **21,000 presentations**, training classes and events across the United States, showing a **56% increase** from the **1.6M people** reached in 2018. The total number of presentations, training classes and events increased 5% from 2018.

**19,542**

Safety Presentations to 575,225 students, school bus drivers, professional drivers, law enforcement officers, firefighters, and snowmobile operators

**159**

Training Classes for a total of 1,641 new volunteers, law enforcement officers and first responders

**1,437**

Special Events including state and county fairs, community safety events, model railroad shows, farm shows, and other events, reaching 1,969,023 people

**503**

New volunteers completed the volunteer application process, up 22.4% from 2018.



Louisiana Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAVs) PB Rivera and Bobby Baker at an event in Lafayette, LA spread the word about staying safe near tracks and trains.



# Event Highlights

In 2019, Operation Lifesaver, Inc. hosted or participated in a number of training and rail safety events to further our lifesaving mission.

## State Coordinator Summit

More than 40 State Operation Lifesaver program leaders met in Salt Lake City, Utah, in January 2019 to hear updates from the OLI National Office, learn from experts in board management and fundraising, and share best practices.



State Coordinators from across the U.S. gather for a group photo.

"The 2019 State Coordinator Summit was a chance for Operation Lifesaver program leaders to gather, celebrate successes, and rededicate themselves to the core mission: making their communities safer."

—

Jo Strang,  
Chair, OLI Board Of Directors



Pictured are Claude Maher, Louisiana Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator, Jessica Feder, Indiana Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator and National Advisory Council Co-Chair, and Janice Cowen, South Carolina Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator. Tim Hull, Missouri Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator, is seen in the background.



## National Advisory Council Meeting



OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh (left of banner) and OLI Board members Shayne Gill (far left) and Larry Wenko (next to Maleh) met with representatives from Houston Metro during a National Advisory Council Meeting.

## International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) Conference

OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh and Vice President Wende Corcoran spoke on June 6 at the 11th Annual ILCAD Conference in Amersfoort, Netherlands, which drew 180 guests from 25 countries. More than 40 countries around the world recognize ILCAD each year, including the U.S.



OLI Vice President Wende Corcoran and Executive Director Rachel Maleh participated in a railway technical tour during the ILCAD conference.



Wende Corcoran (left of banner) and Rachel Maleh (right of banner) pose for a photo with Federal Railroad Administration official Barbara Barr (far left) and OLI Board of Directors member/AAR official Andy Elkins (far right) during the Conference.



## New State Coordinator Training

State Coordinators lead their Operation Lifesaver programs in states across the U.S. Each year, OLI holds orientation training for new state coordinators to review their responsibilities and provide tools for outreach and success. Five new state coordinators completed their training and orientation in 2019.



### Washington, DC, August 2019

Bottom row, L to R: Renee Salmon, VA OL; Aaron Mays, KS OL; Phil Merens, NY OL. Second row, L to R: Carol Daley, NE OL, Orientation co-facilitator; Mark Sexton, OK OL. Back row: Janice Cowen, SC OL, Orientation co-facilitator; Robert Stapleton, FL OL.

## Coach Training Class

Coaches play an important role in preparing Operation Lifesaver volunteers to make free rail safety presentations across the nation. Two Coach training classes were held in 2019.



### Philadelphia, PA, October 2019

L to R: Brock Kerchner, PA OL State Coordinator; Barbara Foran, NJ OLAV; Jean Dummer, MN OLAV; Ed Abel, Jr., SEPTA, PA OL Board Chair & PA OLAV; Phil Merens, NY OL State Coordinator; Jennifer Kreszwick, SEPTA and PA OLAV.

## Second Coach Training Class



### Dallas, TX, November 2019

Standing, L to R: Mike Johnson, UT OLAV; Scott Allbritton, FL OLAV; Mark Sexton, OK OL State Coordinator; Ryan Rosa, TX OLAV. Seated: Debbie Callahan, TX OLAV; Stephanie Paiz, NM OLAV.

# Rail Safety Week

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) partnered with Operation Lifesaver Canada, state OL programs, and many other groups to mark the observance of Rail Safety Week (RSW) in North America during the last week of September.

The goal of RSW is to raise awareness about the importance of rail safety and empower the general public to keep themselves safe near railroad crossings and along railroad rights-of-way.

## Rail Safety Week 2019 Highlighted Crossing Safety and Trespass Prevention

From proclamation signings in 19 states and sidewalk stencils, to wearing red for “Red Out for Rail Safety” day, OL state programs and partners brought Rail Safety Week to communities nationwide.



SafeKids representatives in California show their support by wearing red on “Red Out for Rail Safety” day.



Alabama Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator Nancy Hudson (fourth from left) watches as Alabama Governor Kay Ivey signs a proclamation declaring September 22-28 Rail Safety Week in the state.



# Law Enforcement Across the Nation Supported Rail Safety Week with Operation Clear Track

**Operation Clear Track** – a national rail safety law enforcement initiative with Amtrak, law enforcement agencies nationwide, and state Operation Lifesaver programs – is conducted each year as part of Rail Safety Week.

During Operation Clear Track, more than 600 local, state, federal and railroad police organizations are stationed at railroad crossings and other locations across the country to distribute safety materials to motorists and pedestrians and reinforce the importance of crossing and trespass laws.

**645**

Police departments, sheriff's offices, and other agencies participated across 48 states

**1,680**

High-incident railroad crossings and other locations had public rail safety enforcement events take place.

**70,000**

Railroad safety cards were distributed.

**614**

News stories about Operation Clear Track events aired on TV and radio stations across the U.S.



A police officer hands out a rail safety tips card to a motorist on September 24 during "Operation Clear Track," when law enforcement agencies across the U.S. mobilized to reinforce state grade crossing and trespassing laws.

## Two New Stop Track Tragedies PSAs Were Released During Rail Safety Week

The public service announcements, focused on crossing safety and photography on and around railroad tracks, were released in the U.S. and Canada on social media and in digital ad campaigns.



ASHLEY IGO

The "Ashley's Story" video shows the importance for professional truck drivers and others to obey crossing signs and signals to avoid tragedy.

<https://youtu.be/g2y3KB3Koel>



CHRISTINE DEREGGI

John-John's Story" reveals the heartbreak for families when teens underestimate the dangers of illegal track trespassing.

<https://youtu.be/55Xe2mPMH5c>

## Rail Safety Week Results

The chart below summarizing Rail Safety Week 2019 results shows the event's growth from 2018, thanks to coordinated efforts and partnerships.



RSW Results as of 10/4	2018	2019	% Change
TV and Radio Stories 9/1 - 10/4	399	696	↑ 74%
Online, Print, Newswire Stories 9/1 - 10/4	990	1,050	↑ 6%
Local Broadcast Viewership 9/1 - 10/4	4.7M	8.5M	↑ 81%
Social Media Engagement (Week or RSW Only)	17,700	74,406	↑ 320%
Website Pageviews 9/1 - 10/4	115,565	138,580	↑ 20%

## Supporters Wore Red on #RedOutForRailSafety Day



American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association employees, including OLI Board Chair Jo Strang (far left), wear red on #RedOutForRailSafety day.



Mississippi Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator Kim Sloan talks to community college students about safety near tracks.



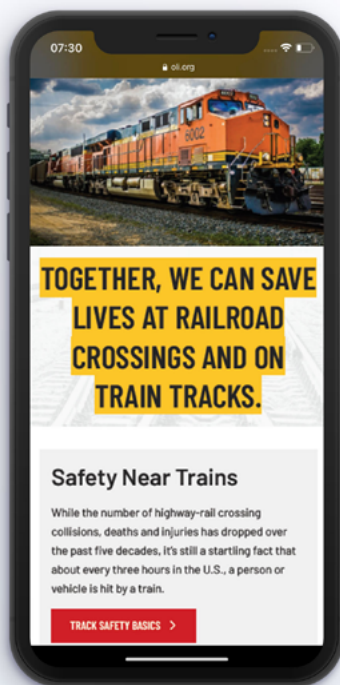
# Grant Projects

Many of Operation Lifesaver, Inc.'s projects and activities are carried out through grants from our federal and private partners, including the Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh.

OLI completed six major projects with funding from grant partners.

## Website Redesign

The Operation Lifesaver, Inc. website was completely redesigned to be mobile-friendly while improving the content and navigation, resulting in increased visitors and page views.



- **Simplified navigation through four main categories and drop-down menus** lets visitors quickly locate resources and safety tips.
  - **A new "Safety Near Trains" section** links to track safety basics, background on public awareness campaigns and other rail safety information.
  - **A new "Track Statistics" section** provides information on railroad crossing collisions and pedestrian trespassing from the Federal Railroad Administration as well as quick facts on rail safety.
  - **A new Materials Library** accessible at the bottom of each page offers a central location to find free, downloadable rail safety resources sorted by media type, material type, audience and topic.
- Major funding for the redesign was provided by grants from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

"The new website makes an immediate impression on first-time visitors while improving navigation for our existing audiences."

-

Rachel Maleh,  
Operation Lifesaver Inc., Executive Director

## Two National PSAs Created and Distributed

Operation Lifesaver developed a Public Service Advertising (PSA) campaign to highlight the prevalence of near-miss incidents where pedestrians using earbuds or headphones are nearly hit by trains. A YouTube campaign resulted in more than 500K views.

OLI also produced a 3 1/2 -minute video for professional drivers, including cement, dump and garbage truck drivers and their employers to prevent devastating collisions between these vehicles and trains at railroad crossings across the U.S.



Near Miss Headphones PSA:

<https://youtu.be/pmvW9-IJ6Ds>



Video for Professional Drivers PSA:

[https://youtu.be/PI0bIB6\\_Apk](https://youtu.be/PI0bIB6_Apk)

## Three News Media Resources Created and Distributed

With funding provided by a grant from the Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh, OLI worked with subject matter experts to create and distribute:

- A resource for reporters providing safe and effective messaging when writing about suicide-related rail incidents.
- A safety tip sheet for news media, and
- A short video on how to safely report a news story near railroad tracks.



**Effective Suicide Messaging:**  
<https://cutt.ly/MhmjzZl>

**Safety Tips for News Media:**  
<https://cutt.ly/EhmjWyh>

**News Reporting around tracks:**  
<https://cutt.ly/ohmjPx8>



Operation Lifesaver also provided a total of **\$397K in competitive grants** for rail safety education projects and campaigns to state Operation Lifesaver programs and transit agencies in 2019.

## OLI Awarded \$175K in Competitive Transit Public Awareness Grants

OLI awarded **\$175K** in competitive grant funding from the **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)** to **10 rail transit agencies in eight states** to increase rail transit safety public awareness and implement safety education projects and campaigns. Rail transit agencies receiving FTA grants included:

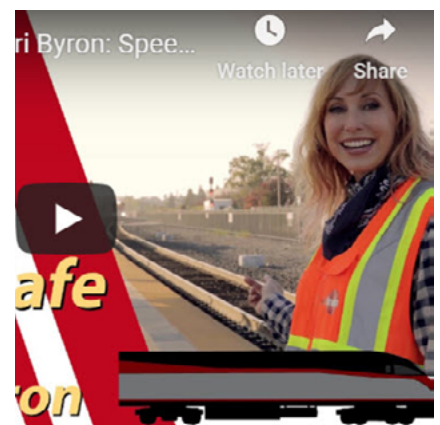
- **Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)**, Charlotte, N.C.
- **Hampton Roads Transit**, Hampton, Va.
- **Metro Transit**, Minneapolis, Minn.
- **Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO)**, Houston, Texas
- **MTA Metro-North Railroad**, New York, N.Y.
- **Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain)**, San Carlos, Calif.
- **Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)**, Philadelphia, Pa.
- **Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink)**, Los Angeles, Calif.
- **SunRail**, Sanford, Fla.
- **Trinity Metro**, Fort Worth, Texas



A train wrap safety message for Hampton Roads Transit.



Sunrail created a mobile safety studio.



Screenshot from a Caltrain video with Mythbusters' Kari Byron.

## OLI Awarded \$222K in Competitive Rail Safety Public Awareness Grants

OLI awarded **\$200K** in competitive grant funding from the **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** to **13 state Operation Lifesaver programs** for a variety of rail crossing safety and trespass prevention public education projects in **Alabama, California, Georgia, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington**. The grant awards funded innovative community outreach and education projects in the states, many in conjunction with Rail Safety Week.

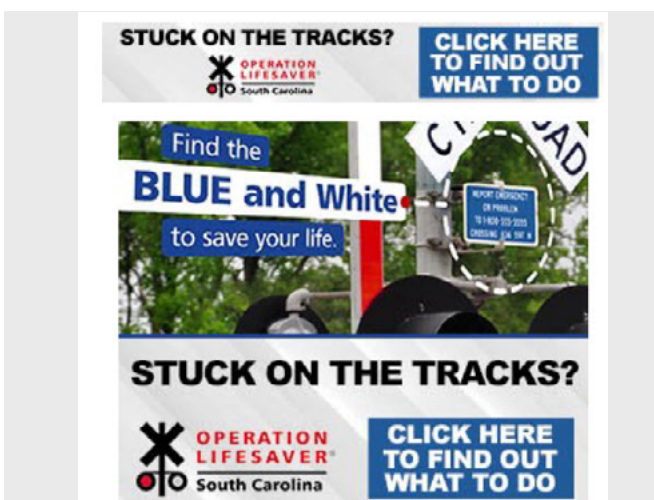
Additional competitive grant proposals for public awareness projects in **5 states - Colorado, Mississippi, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota** - were funded through **\$22K** in grants from the **Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh**.



California Operation Lifesaver digital trespass prevention campaign.



Texas Operation Lifesaver digital campaign educating professional drivers.



South Carolina Operation Lifesaver digital banner ad with safety message for truck drivers.



Geofencing campaign ad from Ohio Operation Lifesaver.



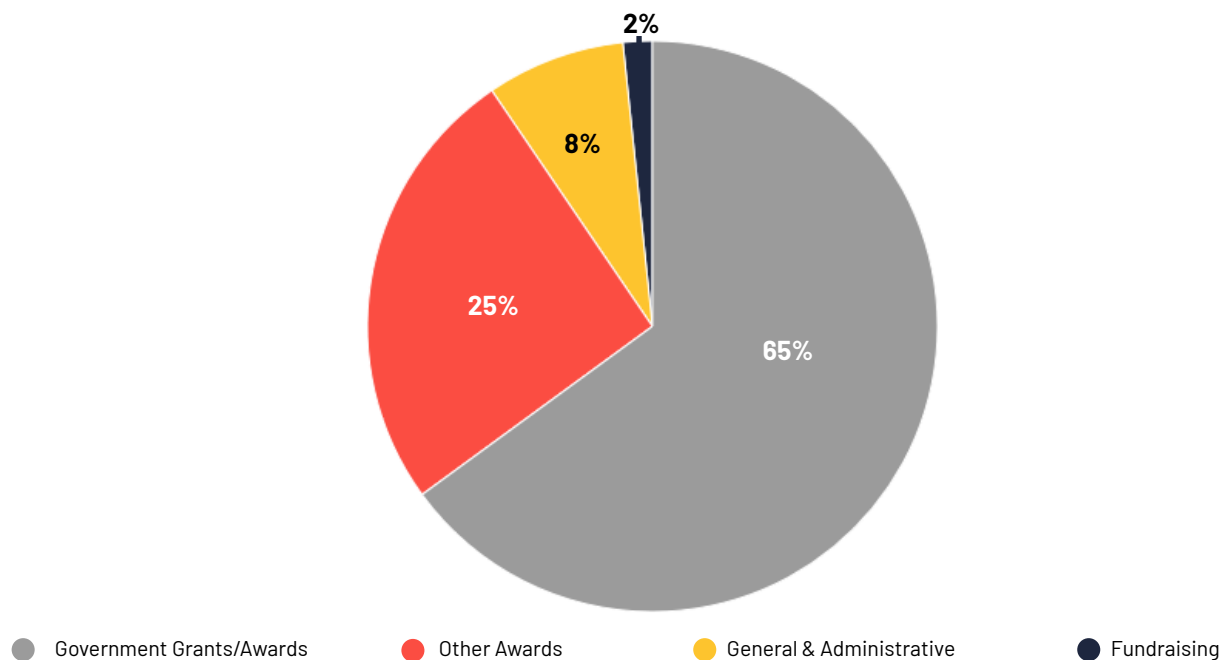
# Financial Overview

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. 2019 Audited Financial Statement

## OLI Statement of Activities

Year Ended December 31, 2019

### Expenses



Revenue and Support	USD	Expenses	USD
Contributions	745,726	Government Grants/Awards	1,313,514
Government Grants/Awards	1,310,508	Other Programs	515,736
Foundation Grants	125,000	<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>1,829,250</b>
Interest	5,481	General and Administrative	159,053
		Fundraising	33,516
		<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>192,569</b>
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>2,186,715</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,021,819</b>
Change in Net Assets			164,896
Net Assets at Beginning of Year			620,332
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>			<b>785,228</b>

# Stories of Accomplishments

## New First Responders Course

The Railroad Investigation and Safety Course (RISC), formerly known as GCCI (Grade Crossing Collision Investigation Course), was developed for the North American law enforcement and first responder community by the nation's railroad police and Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

Training for RISC Instructor Trainers began late in 2019. This new course launched in 2020 to keep first responders and law enforcement officers safe when responding to or investigating a rail-related incident.

Thank you to the funders who made the new Rail Investigation and Safety Course (RISC) possible: BNSF Railway, CN, CP Railway, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern Corporation, and Union Pacific Railroad.

OLI also greatly appreciates the efforts of the RISC Working Group for their tireless dedication to creating this comprehensive, authoritative new rail safety course for first responders.

Special thanks to Bob Rohauer for providing much of the photographs used in the course.



The first group of OLI RISC Instructor Trainers completed a pilot training class November 15, 2019 in Denver, CO. L to R: Mike Grizkewitsch, Tim Hull, Jon Bondra, Mark Sexton, Tim Espey, Charlie Mathewson, Ken Gilsdorf, Jeffery Longman, Rick Campbell, Denise Gauthier, Jessica Feder, Bob Rohauer. Cover slide from the new Railroad Investigation and Safety Course (RISC) presentation.

## Focus on Suicide Prevention in Messaging and Materials

In 2019, working with subject matter experts,

OLI:

- Adapted the news media resource for safe messaging and reporting on rail-related suicide incidents for use by state coordinators and others
- Discontinued the use of materials with images and messaging that might inadvertently appeal to people contemplating suicide

*Right: Image from the new Resource Materials for writing about suicide-related rail incidents.*





# Board of Directors & National Advisory Council

The OLI Board of Directors is the governing body of the organization, responsible for determining OLI's overall mission, priorities and direction. The board ensures that OLI has adequate resources and that it is managed with appropriate financial controls.

## Board of Directors

### **Jo Strang, Chair**

Senior Vice President, Safety & Regulatory Policy,  
American Short Line and Regional Railroad  
Association

### **Mark A. Schulze, Vice-Chair**

Vice President, Safety, Training and Operations  
Support, BNSF Railway Company

### **John Walsh, Treasurer**

Assistant Vice President Safety & Security,  
Genesee & Wyoming

### **Nancy Hudson, Secretary, State Coordinator on the Board**

Executive Director, Alabama Operation Lifesaver

### **Rachel Maleh, Ex-Officio, Non-Voting**

Executive Director, Operation Lifesaver, Inc

### **Nicole Brewin**

Vice President, Government Affairs, Railway  
Supply Institute

### **Katie Chimelewski**

Director, Safety & Certification, American Road &  
Transportation Builders Association

### **Kelly Clough**

Deputy Chief - U.S. Operations, CP Police Service

### **Martin Conway**

Deputy Chief, Amtrak Police Department

### **Stephen Covey**

Chief of Police and Chief Security Officer, CN

### **Sean Douris**

Chief of Police, Public Safety, & Infrastructure  
Protection, CSX

### **Kenneth "Andy" Elkins**

Manager of Hazmat Compliance, Association of  
American Railroads

### **Jessica Feder, National Advisory Council Chair**

Executive Director, Indiana Operation Lifesaver

### **Shayne Gill**

Program Director for Multimodal Transportation,  
American Association of State Highway and  
Transportation Officials

### **Polly Hanson, Transit Representative**

Director, Security, Risk, and Emergency  
Management, American Public Transportation  
Association

### **Jason M. Morris**

Assistant Vice President Safety and  
Environmental, Norfolk Southern Corporation

### **Barry E. Morton**

Assistant Vice President Health & Safety, Kansas  
City Southern

### **Suzanne M. Rohde**

Senior Vice President, Government Affairs and  
Policy, American Bus Association

### **Lawrence K. Wenko**

Public Safety, Union Pacific Railroad

# National Advisory Council

The National Advisory Council (NAC) is an advisory body that assists the Operation Lifesaver national office in creating the programs and materials used to deliver safety messages to the public. The NAC also helps the national office establish priorities for developing new educational materials and programs.

NAC members include people with expertise in the three E's of traffic safety – Education, Enforcement and Engineering – as well as representatives of major railroads, federal agencies, and others knowledgeable about highway-rail grade crossing safety and railroad trespass prevention. Operation Lifesaver state coordinators and representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration's eight geographic regions also serve on the council. Outside experts may supplement NAC project teams when additional knowledge is required.

**Jessica Feder**, *Co-Chair, State Coordinator Region 4 Representative*  
Executive Director, Indiana Operation Lifesaver

**Stephen Covey**, *Co-Chair*  
Chief of Police and Chief Security Officer, CN

**Tasha Bartholomew**  
Communications Manager, Caltrain

**Tracy Bergerson**  
Special Agent, Canadian Pacific Police

**Jason Bishop**  
Manager Community Affairs and Safety, CSX

**Jon Bondra**  
Police Inspector, CN

**Kevin Burns**, *State Coordinator Region 1 Representative*  
State Coordinator, Connecticut Operation Lifesaver

**Rick Campbell**  
Consultant, Alfred Benesch & Company

**Margaret Cannell**  
Executive Director, North Carolina Operation Lifesaver

**Janice Cowen**,  
*State Coordinator Region 3 Representative*  
State Coordinator, South Carolina Operation Lifesaver

**Carol Daley**, *State Coordinator Region 6 Representative*  
State Coordinator, Nebraska Operation Lifesaver

**Jessica Devorsky**, *State Coordinator Region 5 Representative*  
Executive Director, Texas Operation Lifesaver

**Denise Gauthier**  
BNSF Railway

**Doug Farler**, *State Coordinator Region 7 Representative*  
State Coordinator, Arizona Operation Lifesaver

**Andrew Feder**  
Tech Support Specialist, Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad

**Danny Lites**  
Public Safety Director, Kansas City Southern

**Jeff Longman**  
BNSF Railway Police

**Sarah Mayes**  
National Director, Operation Lifesaver Canada

**Will Miller**  
Public Safety Director, Norfolk Southern Corporation

**Quinn Norman**  
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

**James Payne**  
Staff Director, Grade Crossing and Trespassing Office of Safety, Federal Railroad Administration

**Barbara Petito**  
Lead Communication Specialist, Amtrak Police

**Darrell Real**, *State Coordinator Region 8 Representative*  
State Coordinator, Wyoming Operation Lifesaver

**Buck Russel**  
Senior Supervisor of Public Safety, Union Pacific Railroad

**Kim Sloan**  
Executive Director, Mississippi Operation Lifesaver

**Alan Stouder**  
State Coordinator, Ohio Operation Lifesaver

## NAC Materials Review Committee

Operation Lifesaver, Inc.'s Materials Review Committee, part of the National Advisory Council, is tasked with assisting Operation Lifesaver, Inc. in creating and updating rail safety education materials.

Chair: **Jessica Feder**,  
Indiana Operation Lifesaver

**Jon Bondra**, CN

**Rick Campbell**,  
Alfred Benesch & Company

**Margaret Cannell**,  
North Carolina Operation Lifesaver

**Janice Cowen**,  
South Carolina Operation Lifesaver

**Danny Lites**, Kansas City Southern

**Quinn Norman**,  
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

**John Robinson**,  
New Hampshire Operation Lifesaver

**Kim Sloan**,  
Mississippi Operation Lifesaver

**Alan Stouder**,  
Ohio Operation Lifesaver



# Partnerships

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. is grateful to the partners who make our efforts possible.

## Board Representatives



## Funding Partners



## Safety & In-Kind Partners



# Share Our Rail Safety Message

A team of committed rail safety partners and supporters across the country carries out OLI's mission to save lives through rail safety education. Our Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAVs) spread the rail safety message. Without their efforts, our work would not be possible.



People share the "See Tracks? Think Train!" message at an Indiana Rail Road safety blitz.



Louisiana volunteers show their enthusiasm for rail safety education.

**Apply to be a Volunteer: [oli.org/volunteer](https://oli.org/volunteer)**

## Operation Lifesaver, Inc. Staff



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