



# Jamie Kotula Memorial Ride

Just over three years ago, on Friday, January 14, 2011, my life was changed in an extreme way. I was sitting in my math class, while a junior at Scranton Preparatory School, when all of a sudden the phone rang. The call was for me to report to the Dean's office immediately. Once there, I saw my mother who was noticeably upset. It was at that moment I was informed my dear friend and relative, Jamie Kotula, had passed away in a car accident while on his way to school.

Jamie and I were only months apart in age; we grew up together, we lived near each other, and we even vacationed together. Losing Jamie has changed me in many ways, but most importantly it has inspired me to live everyday with his caring and compassionate spirit. Jamie has been with me everyday since 2011. Visually, I wear three bracelets every single day in his memory, each one with special significance. Physically, I have been apart of many events in Jamie's memory. I can recall setting up fencing in the parking lot of Kildare's in Scranton, Pennsylvania for the initial "Join Hands for Jamie" event and from there I have been apart of the annual "Jamie Kotula Kickoff Classic" each Labor Day, even if it means driving five hours through the night to be there.

What are all of these events for? Each event supports and raises funds for the "Jamie Kotula Foundation." As per [Jamiekotula.org](http://Jamiekotula.org): "The Jamie Kotula Foundation was created to support like-minded individuals and groups; those who enrich lives and communities through random acts of kindness." The foundation has given scholarships to students and even helped the victims of school violence at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

In the summer of 2013, I decided I wanted to do more for the Jamie Kotula Foundation. After already being an avid recreational cyclist I decided to bring my two worlds together. From this I developed the "Jamie Kotula Memorial Ride." This ride will go from Washington D.C. to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. for a total of 335 miles. My dear friends Jack Lawless, and Ric Fera will accompany me for the duration of the trip. Our trek will last six days and five nights and go from Wednesday, May 14, 2014 to Tuesday May 20, 2014. We will also be keeping in contact with all of our supporters in many ways. The trip will include an active Twitter, Instagram, Facebook page, Flickr, and blog. Each of these will allow us, as riders, to share with the community where we are and how our trip is going.

Why are we riding? Jamie's ultimate cause of death came down to a head injury sustained in the car accident. Just a month after Jamie's passing I was in a skiing accident while on a school trip to Vermont. This accident caused me to loose consciousness for a short time. Following my accident I received a multitude of testing related to concussions. It was determined, had I not been wearing a helmet at the time, I would have sustained a much more serious injury. Jamie and I both grew up wearing helmets, whether it was biking in the neighborhood or skiing in the mountains. My accident has caused me to vow to never participate in an action sport unless I am wearing a helmet. I believe that all children should be provided the safety and comfort of a helmet. The Jamie Kotula Memorial Ride was created to be proactive in this belief. ***Our goal is to raise enough money and awareness to provide bike helmets to children in Scranton and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.***

Why ride to Pittsburgh? I am currently in my Sophomore year at Duquesne University in the heart of Pittsburgh. I have fallen in love with this city mainly because it reminds me so much of my hometown Scranton. To my fortune The Great Allegheny Passage was completed in the summer of 2013 connecting Pittsburgh to D.C. along railways. Pittsburgh is more than just a city I live in now. It is a city that I have found also embodies Jamie's spirit. It's not uncommon for an individual to see my bracelets and ask what they are for. From that I explain to them not only Jamie but the foundation itself. I have also had the heart-warming experience of being asked by those from the Scranton area whom are now in Pittsburgh, "Are they Jamie Kotula bracelets?" I also had the great fortune of having some of my friends from Pittsburgh join me for the 2013 "Jamie Kotula Kick Off Classic" held in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, each of whom carry Jamie's spirit daily by wearing the event specific bracelet.

What can you do? This bike ride and helmet giveaway will not be a success without help from the community. Included you will find a pamphlet with various sponsorship opportunities. Each one offers special perks to donating. Your kindness is more than appreciated and I can promise you it will go a long way. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

~ Dorian Evans  
Jamie Kotula Memorial Ride Founder

BE SURE TO FOLLOW US TO STAY CONNECTED!

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