

It's simple. For my family, it's more about celebrating my mom's life rather than remembering her traumatic death. We came together as family at the Legs Against Arms 5k Run/Walk to honor her memory. We wanted to do what my mom did best, and that was to have fun. We gathered around a white fold out table, and my Uncle Mart distributed white shirts, with blue victims of violence ribbons, and "Team Trish" written on the lapel.

Violent deaths make a person feel so helpless, in that there is nothing you can do to change the finality of the situation. Participating in this event, offered a happy and healthy venue to feel as if you were doing something. In essence, making a difference, even if just a small one.

Every year, May 17th rolls around and every year I dread it. May 17th is the anniversary of the murder of my mom, Patricia McDermott, better known as Trish. Each year, my family attempts to honor her memory in different ways without alienating the grieving members of my family. We visit her grave, leave rose petals at the sight of her murder, and participate in functions dedicated to her honor. These all compel us to remember my mom, but none of these activities quite capture her true spirit and essence.

Last year, we came across the Legs Against Arms 5k Run/Walk. The Physicians for Social Responsibility created this event to bring awareness of unacceptability of violence in Philadelphia. It focuses on the prevention of youth violence. My family felt like we found an event geared toward us. My mom, a novice runner, enjoyed 5ks and loved kids. She had always volunteered at my brother and mine's schools when we were young. We thought, "What could be better than running and benefits for the youth?" We immediately went into action. I set up a team, "Team Trish" on the website, www.legsagainstarms.org. My Aunt Marge sent out an e-mail to our family members and friends encouraging them to join us in celebrating the memory of my mom by participating in the 5k Run/Walk.

My Uncle Mart had t-shirts with the blue victims of violence ribbons and "Team Trish" made for our family. On the day of the race, my family and friends gathered together with the other participants of Legs Against Arms. We had the chance to see others band together for a cause that they believed in and something we hoped would help prevent losses like the one of my mom.

My immediate and extended family lacked a place to truly celebrate the life of my mom. We found ourselves acknowledging her death at typical family gatherings and on holidays. We did not have a time that solely focused on the good of her life without feeling the pain of our loss. The Legs Against Arms Run/Walk provided my family with the opportunity to participate in an event that she would have thoroughly enjoyed. We have the chance to remember all the traits we love about my mom with the people she loved most.

~Angela Amarhanov, Daughter of Trish McDermott