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Among Metro-North Victims, a Wall Street Muni-Bond Expert.

Six people died when a Metro-North commuter train struck a sports-utility vehicle at a rail crossing in Westchester County Tuesday. One of the victims, Eric Vandercar, had built a long career on Wall Street, and was well-known in the municipal-bond market as a leader in financing muni investors' trades.

Mr. Vandercar, 53 years old, had most recently served as head of municipal funding at Mesirow Financial. But he had only joined the Chicago-based financial firm in March, after spending 27 years at Morgan Stanley .

Former colleagues remembered the drive and attention to detail he brought work, along with a deep passion for his family and music.

After a successful stint as a fixed-income analyst, where he won accolades for his research, Mr. Vandercar switched roles at Morgan Stanley. He would go on to help build the firm's profitable business funding money managers' investments in muni bonds and other securities.

Andrew Garvey, Mr. Vandercar's boss at Morgan Stanley from 1999 to 2007, remembered his former colleague as a perfectionist.

Mr. Vandercar's portfolio of financings held up even during the financial crisis, people familiar with the matter said. Even as other corners of the firm's fixed-income business struggled in 2008, none of Mr. Vandercar's deals lost money, the people said, a testament to his attention to detail and risk. He was aiming to build a similar business at Mesirow, the people said.

"He was proud of his profession," Mr. Garvey said. "But he was driven at work so he could go home and have a good time with his family and his kids.

"It was about him working hard for his family."

Mr. Garvey said Mr. Vandercar was a huge music fan, with an "unmatched Grateful Dead bootleg" collection. He would regularly attend annual jazz festivals in New Orleans with his wife, Jill. Mr. Garvey, now chief executive of Orix Municipal Finance, said he kept in touch with Mr. Vandercar after their careers took them on different paths. He said he last saw Mr. Vandercar last month in New York. "He made sure I knew he had landed at Mesirow, and was ready to talk," Mr. Garvey said.

Stratford Shields, who also worked at Morgan Stanley, said Mr. Vandercar was a well-known and respected figure in the municipal-finance business. "He was a guy known for his integrity," Mr. Shields said.

William O'Keefe, another former Morgan Stanley colleague, recalled telling Mr. Vandercar about a Grateful Dead show he'd attended in college, in the late 1970s. The next day, Mr. O'Keefe said, Mr.

Vandercar came in with a bootleg tape from the very show. "It wasn't just all work and Wall Street for him," Mr. O'Keefe said.

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By JUSTIN BAER

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