

Curb Your Distractions: High School Student from Chicago Wins Grand Prize in Toyota TeenDrive365 Video Challenge

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Silver Spring, Md. May 11, 2015 – When Chicago high school student Elijah Wilborn created his safe driving PSA, he left his phone, music and other distractions curbside – and picked up the grand prize in the [TeenDrive365 Video Challenge](#) from [Toyota](#) and [Discovery Education](#), the leading provider of digital content and professional development for K-12 classrooms.

Now in its fourth year, the challenge invites teens across the country to create short PSAs to inspire their friends to drive more safely and avoid risky behavior behind the wheel. Elijah's video, which was chosen by a panel of judges at Toyota and Discovery Education from more than 1,000 submissions, takes a creative, humorous spin on the distractions that teens face every day behind the wheel.

In the video, a teenager attempts to navigate his morning routine and drive to school while being beset by a range of all too common distractions – represented by other teens in t-shirts reading “phone,” “radio,” “ego” and more. As the distractions build to crescendo, the teen finally exclaims from behind the wheel, “everybody out!” and literally drops them off on the curb. You can view the video [here](#).

“We loved how Elijah's PSA addressed driving safety with creativity, humor and a clear-eyed view of the distractions that face drivers of all ages,” said Michael Rouse, President, Toyota USA Foundation. “We offer him our heartfelt congratulations and are proud to help share his vision for encouraging other teens to drive more safely.”

“The TeenDrive365 initiative addresses the need to keep students safe on the road by providing engaging digital resources and experiences that encourage smart choices behind the wheel,” said Bill Goodwyn, President and CEO, Discovery Education. “We are honored to stand alongside Toyota in congratulating Elijah and the rest of this year's winners for their creativity, innovative thinking, and dedication to positively influencing the behavior of their peers.”

“On behalf of the entire Mount Carmel community, I proudly congratulate Elijah on his production of an exceptional safe driving video,” said John Stimler, Principal, Mount Carmel High School. “We are impressed with his efforts to generate excitement among students nationwide about this topic. With his hard work and creativity he will empower his peers to have conversations about teen driver safety.”

Second place winner, Demi Straulino, a student at George School in Newtown, PA, will receive \$10,000, as well as a behind-the-scenes trip to a live show taping on the Velocity network. Third place winners, Jordan Bjorklund, Daniel Harte, Joseph Salazar and Karina Vazquez, students at Antioch Unified School District's Deer Valley High School in Antioch, CA, will receive \$7,500. The third place team from Antioch also won the People's Choice Award, which was determined by an online vote, and will therefore receive an additional \$5,000 cash prize as well as a behind-the-scenes trip to a taping of a Velocity network show. These videos, along with the other six finalists, can be viewed [here](#).

The Video Challenge, which was recently named a winner in the annual Communitas Awards, is one component of Toyota and Discovery Education's [TeenDrive365: In School](#) initiative, a comprehensive program offering a range of tools designed specifically for school educators and teens. Resources offered include tools to help teens prepare for the responsibility of driving, such as quizzes, parental discussion points and a financial calculator; classroom resources for educators, including standards-aligned lesson plans for grades 9-12; and Heads UP!, an interactive game which allows teens to virtually experience the real dangers of distracted driving.

The program is part of TeenDrive365, Toyota's comprehensive initiative to help parents model safer driving behaviors for their children. Building on the programs and resources Toyota has offered for more than a decade, the program offers a collection of online tools, events, expert advice and tips as well as social media elements. To learn more about the resources offered through Toyota TeenDrive365, go to www.TeenDrive365.com.