

From a young age, the adults in my life have told me about the dangers of drunk driving. I know how devastating drunk driving related accidents can be for the victims and their families. I am fortunate enough to say that myself and my family have not been personally affected by drunk driving. However, I have met individuals who have been impacted by drunk driving. Their perseverance after going through such an intense tragedy has been absolutely inspiring for me. They have taught me to overcome obstacles, motivated me to be the safest driver that I can be and encourage others to do the same. They have also allowed me to devise solutions on how to educate the youth and the general public on the dangers of drunk driving, as well as how to provide alternative transportation solutions to those who are under the influence.

In the summer of 2019, I was fortunate enough to perform with my band at a charity event meant to advocate against drunk driving and to spread awareness of its dangers. I was delighted to finally be able to use my music to help others and to give back to my community. However, I never imagined how impactful this event would be for me. It was at this event where I met the director of the charity and was able to hear about how drunk driving has affected her life. She told me that she had lost her son after he was killed in a drunk driving accident. Her son and his friend were driving home and were hit by a drunk driver. Her son was only in high school. To hear her talk about her experience was heartbreaking and I cannot imagine the devastation she felt after her son's passing. Despite these challenges, she was able to direct her sadness and grief towards creating her own charity where she is able to raise awareness about and work to prevent drunk driving. Her perseverance is extremely admirable and it inspires me to overcome the obstacles in my life.

Her story has also motivated me to become an even safer driver. I never plan to drink and drive, but now I know that I must also be aware of those around me on the road. Knowing what a drunk driver looks like on the road will allow me to protect myself, as well as those around me because I will be able to contact law enforcement so that they can get any

intoxicated drivers off of the road. I have also sought to encourage those around me to be safe drivers as well.

After performing at the charity event, I became even more aware of how educating the youth against drunk driving can help to prevent it. This has led me to consider additional methods of how our communities can educate the youth and the general public about the dangers of drunk driving. Events in schools, such as guest speakers and presentations, can give students another, more personal, perspective on drunk driving and how devastating it can be. Public service announcements on television and radio stations can be beneficial in bringing awareness to the general public, since adults are less likely to attend a presentation or seminar.

Preventing drunk driving also involves providing the community with resources so that they do not feel the need to drive under the influence. This includes providing taxi services for those drinking at bars and restaurants, as well as encouraging the use of ride share services. If bar patrons are aware that there is an easy way for them to find a ride home, they will not feel inclined to drive home under the influence.

Drunk driving can have devastating consequences for everyone involved in a drunk driving accident. Both the intoxicated driver and the victims of the accident can have their lives changed drastically or even lose their life altogether. The individuals I have met who have been impacted by drunk driving and have directed their grief toward making a positive impact have inspired me to overcome the obstacles that I encounter in my own life. They have also motivated me to be the safest driver that I can possibly be. It is important to teach the youth, and drivers in general, the dangers of drunk driving so that we can work to prevent drunk driving-related incidents and save lives. It is also vital that communities provide transportation services, such as taxis and ride share services, to the public so that no one feels inclined to drive while intoxicated. If we work towards making these changes and educating the public, we can create a better and safer environment for the future.

