



## Graham McCulloch Memorial Bursary Winner

*"What does road safety mean to you?"*

Title: Road Safety

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Road safety is a concern that many people take into account. Although, numerous amounts of people truly do not understand the actual dangers of the roadway. I was among that majority until I was hit by a van at the young age of thirteen. Now my caution is much broader.

In November 2011, I was struck by a van while using a crosswalk. Though the collision was not my fault, I regard myself as partly responsible due to an apparent lack of attention. As I was crossing the road astride my skateboard the truck that had stopped for me to proceed into the crosswalk was signaling to turn left. It was when I was coming to the opposite end of the crosswalk that I looked to my right and saw the headlights of a van in the bike lane making a pass around the stopped truck. What seemed like a split second later I awoke in the hospital with a shattered leg, broken elbow, several body abrasions, and a hemorrhaged brain. That split second was in all actuality three days.

It has been four years since that day and my concern for the safety of myself and others on the road has only become greater. I now have my driver's license which has opened my eyes even more to the dangers of the road. Since I have been driving, I now realize how treacherous the streets can truly be. There are pedestrians everywhere, as well as cars, buses, and motorcyclists to add to the risk. A heightened sense of caution is a necessity in order to safely use the roads. Even now, when driving by the crosswalk where I was hit the memories come flooding back to me.

I have often wondered what I can do to prevent situations like these. It later dawned on me that the crosswalk that I was struck in is not lit by streetlights, it is also crossing a main road and is a direct route used by hundreds of kids that walk that way to and from two schools less than a football fields length away. Furthermore, since my accident at the corner of Charles and First Avenue two other students from Chilliwack Middle and Chilliwack Secondary School have been hit by cars in that crosswalk. Clearly this crosswalk is a hazard, and I plan to propose to the City of Chilliwack to install at the very least a pedestrian controlled traffic light at that intersection. I feel it my duty being a victim of that crossing to make a difference.

Road safety is paramount in my life and I would like to pay it forward by warning and teaching others about road safety. It is a serious topic and unfortunately I had to get hit by a van to realize it

