



2017 Graham McCulloch Memorial Bursary Winner

"What does road safety mean to you?"

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PING!- the little noise designed to subtly attract attention goes off in the passenger seat. Peering over to see what the notification could've been, you try your best to read it without picking it up, as if it would make a difference. Suddenly you sense something in the corner of your eye but before you can even think about stepping on the brakes the collision occurs. As you're rushed to the hospital while blurry figures and loud muffled noises surround you, all that's going through your mind is the irony of what you read: "Hi honey, love you, get home safe."

Accidents on the road happen every day and although the seriousness of them may vary, each of them can almost always be accredited to distracted driving. That can mean many things and it isn't only limited to checking your cell phone. Distracted driving could be trying to change the station on the radio and letting your gaze wander a little too long. It could also be having a conversation with another passenger and your focus starts to drift. A very common one is trying to multi-task with things like straws or makeup when conditions seem slow and predictable. The only way to really stay on task is to keep your priorities in check and remember what's at stake.

A staggering amount of families and friends have had to receive the devastating news that their loved one has been seriously injured or killed in an accident. No one really thinks it's going to happen to them until it does, and only then does it hit home how serious such a menial thing we do every day is. While on the road, try to remember this fact and think about how many people you are driving next to that have loved ones who would be crushed to find out they wouldn't be able to give their brother or mom a hug or hear their voice ever again. Then try to think about how many people you'd put into grieving if your life were to be ended. It's pretty sobering.

Hence forth, every time you hear that little *ba-ding* or *drip-drop* I hope you can find the self-control and maturity to take responsibility for the lives you hold in your hands. It's not just your own or even your fellow drivers that you are taking care of, it's the multitudes of people who couldn't bear to see a world where you don't exist.

