



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### GCM Senior Wins Scholarship for Rap Song

Of course Goose Creek Memorial High School senior Johnny Turner knew texting and driving don't mix. But it wasn't until he researched the topic for a scholarship application that he realized the sobering statistics of deaths among teens due to texting behind the wheel that he fully understood the dangers. Once he did, he put his thoughts into music, writing and recording a song that earned him a \$2,000 scholarship.

Turner has recorded several rap songs, so when he stumbled across a scholarship opportunity through Impact Teen drivers, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating teens on the dangers of reckless and distracted driving, it seemed like a perfect fit. Students were challenged to create a message about distractions while driving in the form of artwork, writing, video, American Sign Language or music.

"I knew I wanted to rap, but at first I didn't know where to start. So I looked up the statistics and then started reading stories," Turner said. "Once I learned more, I picked a beat that sounded nice and wrote new lyrics in about 30 minutes. It just came to me."

His goal was to make the statistics more of a story, focusing on the sadness that happens following a senseless death due to a distracted driver and what families go through as a result. Turner's final song, "Words Do Hurt," earned the top votes in the music category, which netted him \$500, and he also received the \$1,500 judge's vote. He's the first student in Texas to win the award.

Turner developed an interest in rap several years ago when he received an MP3 player with preloaded music. He and a friend started off with humorous freestyle and gradually became better. To date he's recorded seven songs, and he's written more, including an R&B song for a friend to perform.

"The foundation of rap is to speak your mind. It's always going to be controversial because people rap about controversial topics," said Turner. "I'm not like most of the rap community. Many rappers had a poor upbringing or a troubled story, but I've been very fortunate. I want to rap about me looking in from the outside of the rap community and hopefully make a change."



Johnny Turner and his mother, Deborah, a teacher at Goose Creek Memorial High School, celebrate the scholarship he won with his rap song.

View Johnny Turner rap his Commencement Senior Class President Speech [here](#).

In the fall, Turner will attend Prairie View A&M, where he plans to pursue a degree in engineering and a minor in music.

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