



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

'Shattered Dreams' program brings awareness to teenage drinking, driving

To illustrate the consequences of underage drinking and driving, Robert E. Lee High School students got a lesson about living and dying they hopefully will never forget.

After many months of planning, the high school presented its "Shattered Dreams" alcohol awareness program on March 10 and March 11.

Powerful in its impact, "Shattered Dreams" is an experience that reminds students that too many young lives have already been lost and countless others severely impaired because of the consequences of underage drinking and drinking combined with driving.

This is an important lesson because teen automobile crash deaths in Texas are among the highest in the country.

Held early enough to hopefully impact spring break, the prom season, and graduation — times when many students traditionally drink — Shattered Dreams aims to save lives of young people and others.

Shattered Dreams came to Lee High School via a \$1,000 grant awarded to teachers Sheila Gruver and Roxolyn Anson last year from the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation.

From there, the school enlisted the help of local professionals from many fields including law enforcement, EMS, fire, and others who donated time to work on the many individual events and to make Shattered Dreams a success.

"I would like to recognize and give a huge thanks to the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation. Their grant program allows teachers and students to do amazing things, not just in their classrooms but on their campuses as well," said Gruver.

Gruver said she and all of Lee High School also want to thank all the community members — from ExxonMobil BTEC East (REL's Partner in Education) to the many policeman, firefighters, EMTs, and many others — who helped the Shattered Dreams project come to fruition.

"This great community has really made this project a priority," Gruver said.

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The two-day program involved several activities that educate youth by dramatizing the problems associated with drinking and driving.

Although students can read about the dangers of underage drinking and driving in their classrooms or hear about the effects from a multitude of media outlets, many believe the graphic nature of the Shattered Dreams program — such as seeing their classmates trapped in a car, covered in blood and even being taken away in a body bag — will leave a lasting impression that touches closer to home.

It all starts in the morning with a "Grim Reaper" taking students out of class. This occurs every 15 minutes illustrating the statistic that someone is killed in an alcohol-related crash every 15 minutes.

These students return to class with a white mask. The "living dead" cannot speak for the rest of the day.

Then comes the mock car crash. Actual crashed vehicles are used and graphic makeup is applied to the student actors.

It was as real as you can get.

A 911-call broadcast over the intercom notified teachers to dismiss their classes to proceed to the crash site on Carnegie Street.

The students then see with their own eyes the aftermath and tragedy of a DWI wreck, hear the sirens of the emergency vehicles coming to the scene, witness the first responders as they provide medical care to the victims, view an extrication by firefighters, and watch as law enforcement work the scene just as any accident would be worked.

Did you know?

Statistics show that drunk driving claims a number of lives each year:

- In 2008, 11,773 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third (32%) of all traffic-related deaths in the United States.
- Of the 1,347 traffic fatalities among children ages 0 to 14 years in 2008, about one out of every six (16%) involved an alcohol-impaired driver.
- Of the 216 child passengers ages 14 and younger who died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes in 2008, about half (99) were riding in the vehicle with the alcohol-impaired driver. In 2008, over 1.4 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. That's less than one percent of the 159 million self-reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S. adults each year.
- Drugs other than alcohol (e.g., marijuana and cocaine) are involved in about 18% of motor vehicle driver deaths. These other drugs are often used in combination with alcohol.

– Information gathered from [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](#)

They also see the "drunk driver" booked into jail.

The scene was complete with actual officers, paramedics, and a helicopter to rush students to the hospital. One victim was transported by hearse.

The event showcased a variety of backgrounds, from varsity sports players to members of the student council, in hopes that members of the audience would be able to relate to at least one of the participants.

The crash scene drama is played out before the student body during a school day.

Later that night, participants attended a leadership retreat where the police have arranged many drinking and driving awareness activities.

A mock memorial for the "fatalities" of the staged wreck the following morning included the student created film, detailing the events before and after the mock wreck.

The wrap-up assembly also featured those who played roles in the previous day's drama, including the "crash" victims, the drunk driver, their parents, and participating law enforcement and medical personnel.

"The presentation is a realistic approach that helps deliver the message that driving under the influence has incredibly negative consequences," said Dr. Toby York, Goose Creek CISD superintendent.

"This program is a tool for teens to use as positive peer pressure to help counteract the negative peer pressure from those who would take drunk driving lightly," York said. "It helps educate teens and shows them how these choices could have devastating, life-long effects on themselves, their friends, and their families."

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