

## National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

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I believe in the future of agriculture. A future with agriculturists who blaze a trail not only in industry leading advancements, but in safety as well. The OSHA 10-Hour course has taught not only me, but many people to be more safety oriented in their workplace, on their own farms, and in daily life. I know that OSHA has benefited my life and I try to change others' unsafe practices with what I have learned.

I have worked on a farm for a few years now. Before my OSHA wallet card credential, I did things I now recognize as dangerous around equipment and livestock, because I knew no other way. For instance, I would approach an animal from the hindquarters and just hope that I would not get kicked. But now I know that the best way to approach an animal is in its field of vision, not in the blind spot like I was doing. Also, one day at the farm, two people were transferring manure from a manure pile to a garden while riding on the same tractor. One person was seated on the seat while the other person was sitting on the fender of the tractor. Not only that, they were driving up a hill incorrectly with the nose of the tractor pointing up hill. They were driving very fast as well. From a safe distance, I signaled for them to stop. Once the driver stopped and shut down the engine, I approached them and told them that what they were doing was unsafe. I told them that the girl on the fender could fall off and hurt herself or even get run over. I also told them the speed they were going was unreasonable and when they go up a hill, the rear end should be pointing upwards to distribute the weight. I explained that if they did not go up the hill the proper way, they could get hurt and damage the tractor in a rollover situation. They thanked me and fixed their mistakes then went on with their work. OSHA has taught me that sort of thing is unsafe. Before my wallet credential, I never really considered that could be a dangerous situation. I was just caught up in getting the job done. But now, I know how to be safe and work smart. And even though it might take a little longer to be safe, it is worth it to make sure that at the end of the day, you're safe and not hurt.

I work at a restaurant as a hostess. My job entails helping waitresses clean off their tables which means I often have to be in the kitchen cleaning and sorting dirty dishes to be washed. Sometimes, it is tempting to leave a spill on the ground, especially when the restaurant is busy and I am already behind. OSHA has taught me to not just clean up spills, but the implications of what happens if I choose not to. Even though cleaning up globs of tartar sauce or mounds of coleslaw off the floor may not be exactly a great time, it is necessary to ensure the safety of all employees. All it takes is one careless person to leave a patch of syrup and could cause great injury for at least one person.

Even though I took the OSHA Agriculture course, it comes into my life even when I am not involved in agriculture. It helps me make better, safer, smarter choices in my personal life, my work life, and obviously in my farm life. Being safe has become my number one priority in the workforce and I want to help everyone I know be safe too. A safer workforce is a smarter workforce and a smarter workforce is a more productive workforce.