

National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

Savannah Vanegas

Roberto Clemente IB World School

The OSHA 10-Hour wallet card I earned has significantly shifted my perspective on general safety and precautions that could have been taken so as the hazards never occurred. After receiving my tangible card, I thought to myself, "This card can save people's lives as well as my own!" That's sort of weird how a tiny piece of paper could so heavily prevent disastrous events to occur, but it's the truth. I can recall an event in which my father told me what happened the following day at his job (he does welding and fabrication for a plumbing contracting business). A fellow employee had to be rushed into the Emergency Room because while he was attempting to grasp a piece of steel that was inserted in a machine, the steel was too long for the machine to be able to cut it. The machine acted as if it was malfunctioning and the piece of steel was shaking rapidly with its sharp edges flailing in every direction. The steel severely cut several deep gashes in his arm. Sadly, the doctors were not able to save his arm!

As he finished telling me of this ghastly ordeal, I thought of OSHA protocol on employee safety and implementing that something like this should never occur. Why may you ask? Because the employer/founder of the company should have explicitly stated that if hypothetically something like this should occur, DO NOT put yourself at risk. Your safety is a trillion times more important than trying to garner the company a few more dollar signs. My dad revealed that something similar like this happened to him. It happened when he was a rookie at the company and did the exact thing the other worker had done – put an amount of steel in the machine that it could not handle. My dad was standing close to the machine and said it could have easily broken his neck in an instant! Instead he went and unplugged the machine causing the violent tremors of the steel to stop. My father had completed the OSHA 10-Hour General Industry and more specific training as well and said that it very much helped him to start safe and stay safe.

My OSHA 10-Hour wallet card will benefit my future in the way that I am able to prevent (and foresee) any hazards and precautions that can be taken before a disastrous misfortune could occur. For the summer, I will be participating in a six week internship at a local hospital and will be on patient floors for practicum – which means I will be exposed to frequent hazards seen in the medical field including bodily fluids and other sources of infection. If it were not for CareerSafe Online, studying the course, passing my final exam and receiving my OSHA card, I honestly believe I would have not been chosen for the summer internship. A 15 year old that so happens to be OSHA certified? Get out of here! I must admit that the modules were very difficult at times, and I fell asleep once or twice while watching them (oops). Luckily, I had Mr. Murillo to propel me to complete it and help with guidance and now all that time and effort I put in has finally paid off in more ways than one!