

National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

Rebeka Arapi

Taft High School

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was introduced to me through a CPS funded program, Chicago Police and Firefighter Training Academy. As a police and firefighter, working conditions can be very dangerous. OSHA was the fitting program to help us recognize dangers and how to react against them. After completing OSHA 10-hour training, I have gained more knowledge on hazards at the workplace and I will use that knowledge in the future to help me and my coworkers.

By completing OSHA, I have learned to recognize hazards by knowledge given to me through the training, and by always being observant of my surroundings. A lot of young adults my age are careless and do not think of the possible dangers that are around us. As I was going through the 10 hour training, I learned how something that seems harmless, can cost me my life if I don't handle it carefully. Currently, I work at a retail store, and I have to handle many hazardous materials and duties. I always wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) while doing my job. OSHA taught me to always be prepared. Moreover, I learned how to recognize and be careful with dangerous chemicals, machines and objects. For example, one way to recognize dangerous chemicals is by looking for the symbol in the bottle that tells the level of the hazard. If I am not sure, I can always look it up on the OSHA SDS (Safety Data Sheet). OSHA helped me recognize and solve dangers and hazards that I never thought of before and it has helped me be more cautious everywhere I go.

The OSHA training can save my life in the future. More and more, employers are asking their employees to complete training for safety in the workplace. That puts me in an advantage, because I have already done it. Thus it increases my chances of getting hired. Furthermore, as a police officer, I will be around hazards daily. Whether it is chemicals, machines, pathogens, or fire, I now know how to recognize those dangers and react to it in order to save lives. Having the OSHA card in my wallet is a privilege and a great accomplishment of mine.