

National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

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At the beginning of my junior year, I was introduced to the OSHA 10-Hour training course through my school's robotics team. The team was preparing to compete in the First Tech Challenge 2017-2018 Relic Recovery Game that requires all of its contestants to have some sort of safety training to participate, preferably the training received from the OSHA 10-Hour course. Without the OSHA credential, I would not be able to attend the game or even work on the robot itself. Originally, I started the OSHA training with low expectations. I assumed that the course would be redundant, boring, and filled with information I already knew. However, throughout the course of the program I started to realize the importance of the 10-Hour course and the strong correlation it had to the First Tech Challenge competition.

I have become aware of all the possible hazards in my environment thanks to the training course. Additionally, I also learned many interesting facts about incidents that occur in the workplace that simply left me shocked. For example, in 2016, one in five deaths in the workplace took place in construction. Out of 4,693 deaths, 991 (21.2%) of those deaths took place in the construction field. Out of those 991 deaths, 384 (38.6%) of them were caused by falling. These facts both concern and terrify me because my own father works within the construction field as a mason. I am now very attentive to my own surroundings, especially in my own work place.

I am currently employed at a local fast food restaurant and because of this I was able to witness first hand an incident that could have easily been prevented with proper safety training and awareness. One of my coworkers was not paying attention to where she was going and ended up slipping on some oil on the ground while she was speed walking to the other side of the kitchen. Now that I have completed my OSHA training, I am able to reflect back on the situation and pinpoint certain conditions and aspects that occurred and how they could have been prevented. The incident could have been avoided if my coworker wore her slip resistant shoes that our company requires all the employees to wear. This emphasizes the importance of wearing your PPE (personal protective equipment) and how it can prevent incidents such as the one my coworker went through.

I believe this safety training will remain significant to me in the near future. The fact that I am a female in the male-dominated field of engineering means that I am at a disadvantage. However, I am now able to remain competitive through my certification in the OSHA training course. Employers are rapidly gaining interest for employees who are training in safety and thanks to my OSHA credential, I now have an upper hand. The OSHA training course certification has not only given me a better chance in being employed but has also become something that I am proud of.