

National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

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I completed the CareerSafe OSHA 10-hour General Industry Healthcare course which has helped me recognize hazards and keep myself safe from dangerous situations. The course exposed me to the many possible hazards that I may encounter in a workplace and even in my daily life. It taught me the correct procedures of what is supposed to be done in certain hazards and situations and I have applied them to my everyday life, my job shadow site, and at my workplace.

In my everyday life, learning all of these new things has benefited me and changed my perspective of personal safety. I was educated on physical and chemical hazards and how to properly lift a heavy object. From learning about physical hazards, I can identify if an environment with water and electricity is a safe place to be in. I also grasped the idea about reading chemical labels beforehand to ensure proper safety and handling for that specific chemical. For example, if I was cleaning a certain area with a cleaning material with chemicals, I would read the chemical label on the container to see if there were any safety precautions needed. Furthermore, learning how to properly lift a heavy object by bending your knees has helped me during my everyday life such as helping someone move from their house. It was beneficial to be educated about this technique because it has decreased the risk of injuring and putting a lot of strain on my back. Overall, acquiring knowledge about physical and chemical hazards and lifting a heavy object has benefited my everyday life.

I used to job shadow site at a senior care facility and being OSHA certified has benefited me. I learned about using the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) against bloodborne pathogens (BBP) and obeying the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) which has helped me in my tasks at the senior care facility. Learning HIPAA has helped put trust in myself in order to maintain patient confidentiality. Also, because I am a high school student, it is quite difficult to gain trust when working or job shadowing, thus having an OSHA card has made it easier to work alongside other professionals. With this card, it portrayed me as an individual with knowledge of being able to protect myself in a workplace. Moreover, using the proper PPE, such as gloves, is a necessity when working with senior citizens because of the substantial amount of exposure to bodily fluids. After I learned about BBP in the OSHA training course, I have applied the "Universal Precautions" rule to everyone that I may encounter, which means that I would treat every body fluid to be in suspicion of containing bloodborne pathogens. Therefore, in using PPE during my job shadow experience, it helped reduce the risk of contracting illnesses by a significant amount.

In addition to being OSHA certified, it also helped me during my job outside of school. I worked as a receptionist and sitting down for several hours has affected my posture. From OSHA's lesson on ergonomics in the training course, it educated me on how to work efficiently by knowing when to stretch to prevent any injuries relating to my muscles. It also gave me knowledge of how to adapt to my work environment to promote work efficiency and reduction of self-injury in the workplace. In addition, I learned about what to do in emergency situations. For instance, I was advised to properly look over a workplace's emergency plan if a certain situation were to happen. I also was educated about the significance of knowing where all the exit signs are in case of needing an emergency route. Overall, the OSHA training course has encouraged me in learning how to adapt to my work environment and how to be safe if an emergency were to happen.

Everything that I have learned in this OSHA training, it will definitely benefit my future. Applying my knowledge of physical and chemical hazards and properly lifting a heavy object will help prevent any injuries that may occur in my everyday life and future workplace. As well as learning about HIPAA, PPE, and BBP, it will encourage me in my ability to know how to work professionally and carefully. Also, learning about ergonomics and emergency plans will help set me up for success and be able to work in a safe, comfortable environment in the future. In conclusion, I hope to learn more things along my journey, and I am so grateful that I was given the opportunity to learn about OSHA and personal safety.