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MARYLAND TEEN WINS FIRST DRIVE SAFE D.C. CONTEST

Winning idea to be made into a 30-second TV PSA that will air on 150 TV stations nationwide;

Distracted driving ad to be shown for first time at Washington Auto Show

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25, 2018 -- Makiya Mason, a 16-year old sophomore at Suitland (MD) High School, has been named winner of the first Drive Safe D.C. public service announcement (PSA) Contest. The contest, sponsored by The National Road Safety Foundation and the Washington Auto Show, invites teens from D.C., Virginia and Maryland to submit their ideas for a public service message about the dangers of distracted driving.

Mason will receive a \$2,000 prize. As part of her prize, The National Road Safety Foundation sent an Emmy Award-winning producer to her school to work with her and other students to turn her idea into a 30-second public service announcement that will debut at the Washington Auto Show before airing on more than 150 TV stations nationwide.

Mason's idea has a driver reaching for his cellphone when it rings. As he goes to grab the phone from the cup-holder, a voice comes through the radio saying "Hey man, are you trying to kill both of us? Are you aware there are, on average, ten texting and driving deaths every day?" As the driver pulls his hand back from the phone, the voice on the radio reminds him, "The text can wait. Your life is far more valuable than a text message."

Winning the Drive Safe D.C. contest is a dream come true for Mason, who learned of the contest from her mass media teacher John Richardson. She said she's had an interest in film since she was in grade school and plans to attend film school after she graduates high school.

“Makiya’s PSA emphasizes the important message that you can’t use your cellphone and drive safely at the same time,” said Michelle Anderson of The National Road Safety Foundation, a non-profit organization that produces free safe driving material.

“More than 3,300 people are killed by distracted drivers every year and we hope Makiya’s PSA will cause drivers to think about the possible consequences of texting and driving,” said Washington Auto Show Chairman John Ourisman.

Kimberly Sanchez, from Surrattsville H.S. in Maryland, was the runner-up and will receive a \$1,000 prize.

The winning PSA will debut during Press Day, January 25 at the Washington Auto Show at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. The show opens to the public on Jan. 26 and closes on Feb. 4. The National Road Safety Foundation will exhibit at the show, where they will give out prizes and free information on safe driving behavior.

The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc. (NRSF) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that for nearly 55 years has been dedicated to reducing crashes, deaths and injuries on our nation’s highways by promoting safe driving habits through greater public awareness.

NRSF produces documentaries, educational programs and public service campaigns for broadcast and for use in safety, educational and enforcement programs by police, teachers, traffic safety agencies, healthcare professionals, youth advocacy groups and other grass-roots related agencies, as well as federal, state and local government agencies. NRSF programs, which are free, deal with distracted driving, speed and aggression, impaired driving, drowsy driving, driver proficiency and pedestrian safety. The Foundation also works with youth advocacy groups and sponsors contests to engage teens in promoting safe driving to their peers and in their communities. To download free programs, visit www.nrsf.org or www.teenlane.org.

ABOUT THE WASHINGTON AUTO SHOW

The 2018 Washington Auto Show takes place from January 26 to February 4, 2018. It is one of the five top auto shows in the United States and is the largest indoor consumer event in the District of Columbia. It is preceded by two show-sponsored industry events, Public Policy Days and the MobilityTalks International Conference, with both taking place January 23 -25, 2018. During these three days industry leaders, global public policy makers and members of Congress will discuss proposed and existing rules and laws governing the automotive industry. The show takes place in the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, where more than 35 automakers will display over 600 vehicles.

For more information on The Washington Auto Show visit: www.washingtonautoshow.com