

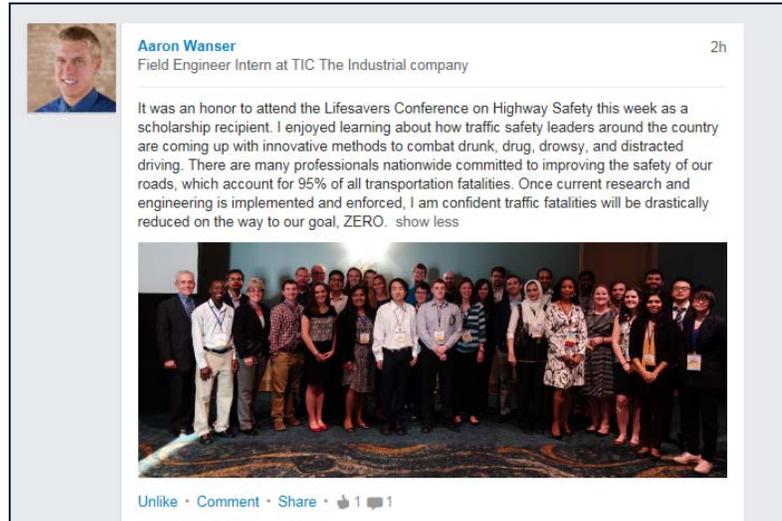
## 2016 Traffic Safety Scholar Posts

### Aaron Wanser (LinkedIn Post)

#### Field Engineer Intern at TIC The Industrial company

It was an honor to attend the Lifesavers Conference on Highway Safety this week as a scholarship recipient. I enjoyed learning about how traffic safety leaders around the country are coming up with innovative methods to combat drunk, drug, drowsy, and distracted driving. There are many professionals nationwide committed to improving the safety of our roads, which account for 95% of all transportation fatalities. Once current research and engineering is implemented and enforced, I am confident traffic fatalities will be drastically reduced on the way to our goal, ZERO.

[https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/activities/aaron-wanser+0\\_0w2nkLSC\\_JEiNNFYKzQ1WP?trk=nav\\_responsive\\_sub\\_nav\\_your\\_updates](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/activities/aaron-wanser+0_0w2nkLSC_JEiNNFYKzQ1WP?trk=nav_responsive_sub_nav_your_updates)



### Andrew Tatch (Facebook Post)

#### Mississippi State University

As part of my attendance at the 2016 Lifesavers Traffic Safety Conference in Long Beach, California, I was encouraged to write a little about my experiences. As a sociologist in training and a first time Lifesavers attendee, I was not sure what to expect in the company of the largest gathering of highway traffic safety professionals in the United States. Home in Mississippi after 4 days out West, I have been able to sit and reflect on the conference.

My participation in Lifesavers was due in large part to my involvement with research on impaired driving in the state of Mississippi through my position with the Mississippi Alcohol Safety Education Program at Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center. My recent interests include the relationship between mental health and hazardous alcohol consumption. This research, of course, has practical implications for traffic safety and is of interest to policymakers and individuals responsible for ensuring public safety on American roadways. My attendance and participation at Lifesavers was extremely beneficial for a variety of reasons.

First, I attended informative sessions with leaders in the field of traffic safety and from well-respected organizations such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. From these sessions, I learned about the newest research on impaired driving, including alcohol and drugs. Further, I was able to learn about the valuable role that DUI and drug courts serve in the process of reducing repeat offenders. Lastly, I sat in on a session with practical and innovative solutions to reducing impaired driving, which I



intend to share with my team here in North Mississippi. As a researcher, I also benefited from exposure to new assessment instruments and data sources that can be used to expand my current projects.

The most unique aspect of Lifesavers was the range of disciplines and professions involved in efforts to reduce traffic fatalities. From a research standpoint, I can certainly appreciate a multi-disciplinary approach to improving traffic safety. Each conversation with individuals from law enforcement, civil and mechanical engineering, health research, and medical professionals reaffirmed the importance of including other skills and perspectives in policy development and practical application. After interacting with such a hardworking group of diverse individuals I left with a much more optimistic outlook on the prospects of continued reduction in traffic fatalities and further confirmation of the necessity of including social scientists in the process of generating solutions.

I am very grateful to have attended Lifesavers 2016 in Long Beach. The conference was very well organized and the facilities were top notch. Long Beach was incredible, easily accessible, and the weather was in full cooperation as well,

providing us with plenty of much needed sunshine. Regardless of future locations, I would recommend Lifesavers to anyone with an interest in traffic safety, and I would encourage individuals to consider how their discipline or profession can play a role in keeping our roadways more safe.

<https://www.facebook.com/andrew.tatch/posts/10153617383046483>

**Hasan Merali (LinkedIn Blog Post)**  
**Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**



I was recently fortunate enough to be selected as a Traffic Safety Scholar and had the opportunity to attend the [2016 Lifesavers National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities](#). Learning from leaders in the field was an incredibly helpful experience for me as I do research on child helmet use in Cambodia

through the [Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit](#), and I am currently developing a community-based initiative to increase child bicycle helmet use in my neighborhood of East Baltimore.

When I moved to Baltimore this past summer to pursue my MPH at [Johns Hopkins](#), I was shocked to see the lack of bicycle helmet use in children in this community. As a pediatric emergency medicine physician, I was deeply concerned about this because not wearing a bicycle helmet is a significant risk factor for severe injury in motor vehicle collisions. I decided I wanted to do something about this situation and submitted my idea to build a public health-community partnership to [Medical Education Perspectives](#) (MEP). This is a non-profit organization founded at Johns Hopkins who are currently running a competition to address health needs in Baltimore. My idea was selected as one of the top five projects from over 50 submissions. We will now form a team, develop our ideas and compete against the other four teams next month to receive funding for the project.

At the Lifesavers conference, I was able to attend several sessions on how others have built successful community partnerships to improve a wide range of road safety initiatives such as seat belt use, pedestrian safety, and bicycle helmet use. I gained new perspectives on how I can partner with schools, law-enforcement and community groups as I work to build my bicycle helmet project here in Baltimore. Attending this conference and learning from everyone was an invaluable experience. I hope to return next year and present my work.

<https://hasanmerali.wordpress.com/2016/04/09/bicyclist-road-safety-and-the-2016-lifesavers-annual-conference/>

**Fatemeh Baratian Ghorghi (Facebook & Instagram Posts)**  
**Department of Civil Engineering, Auburn University**

*Traffic Safety Scholarship Award,  
2016 Lifesavers Conference, Long Beach, CA | Apr. 2016.*



I am truly honored and humbled to receive this scholarship from the Lifesavers Conference on Highway Safety Priorities, the largest gathering of highway safety professionals in the U.S. It was a great opportunity for me to learn more about the traffic safety by attending the workshops and presentations, and share my research results in “poster dash!” roundtable discussion workshop. Workshop speakers presented about a variety of Traffic Safety topics such as Distracted Driving, Impaired Driving, Motorcycle Safety, and Occupant Protection for Children, Older Drivers, Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety, etc. About 2,000 professionals, students, leaders and police officers attend this conference every year, all

working on traffic safety-related projects to prevent crashes and injuries, making roadways safe environment for road users and ultimately save lives. [More info.](#)

<http://fatemehbrt.wix.com/baratian#!awards/recuk>  
<https://www.instagram.com/transportation.engineer/>

### **Antoine Petit (LinkedIn Post)**

**Research Assistant, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

#### **2016 Lifesavers Conference**

Apr 11, 2016

One week ago, I attended the 2016 [Lifesavers conference](#) in Long Beach, CA. This conference is the largest in the U.S to gather highway safety professionals to discuss various topics such as distracted driving, vehicle technology, and pedestrian and bicycle safety. Their objective is to reduce the cost of fatalities and injuries down to zero casualty on the U.S. highways in the near future. To reach this goal, each year, Lifesavers provides a forum for the presentation of proven countermeasures and initiatives that address today's critical highway safety problems.

I recently received a Scholarship from Lifesavers, in order for me to attend the conference.

Because part of my research focuses on Traffic Safety, it was a great honor for me to accept this award, and to attend this conference. It was a tremendous experience for me; I was exposed to new topics and I got the chance to meet people with very different backgrounds. This conference was probably one of the best that I attended as a PhD student. The organization was perfect (e.g.

Conference app available), people were extremely welcoming, and the surroundings were amazing. Again, I would like to thank the Lifesavers Board and Planning Committee for awarding me this Scholarship. I really enjoyed this conference and I hope to attend again next year.

If you are interested in the challenges faced by Traffic Safety, I highly recommend you to attend the next Lifesavers Conference.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/2016-lifesavers-conference-antoine-petit>





**Ashleigh Tran (Facebook Post)**  
**University of Kansas**

I got the amazing opportunity to participate in the Traffic Safety Scholars program to attend the 2016 Lifesavers Conference in Long Beach recently. Not only did I get to present my research, but I also got to learn so much about highway safety from various disciplines. I also got the chance to meet and interact with some amazing individuals who will be a part of the next influential generation of safety researchers and great people who work to raise awareness to prevent distracted driving. These individuals were the victims of distracted driving and have worked to share their story so no one else has to deal with a loss that could have been prevented. Thank you to [Jeri Dye Lynch](#), [Alex Melgosa](#), and the Connor Lynch

Foundation for giving my research a renewed sense of purpose and inspiring me to continue this meaningful work. Also thank you to the Lifesavers Conference for allowing me this opportunity to learn more about the field and be inspired to continue. Can't wait for next year!  
[#Lifesavers2016](#) [#ConnorLynchFoundation](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/ashleigh.tran/posts/10206286898792039>

**Julio Mendez (Facebook Post)**  
**UCLA**

Last weekend, I had the amazing opportunity to attend the Lifesavers National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities as a Traffic Safety Scholar, Speaker, and Exhibitor on behalf of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions). Surprisingly, I was the only local scholar from California as well as one of the youngest, since the majority of the scholars were Graduate and Doctoral students. It was very interesting and intriguing to learn about the different types of research that my fellow scholars were working on. What I loved most about the Traffic Safety Scholarship program was the opportunity to learn and network with several other students that all had similar values and goals to improve traffic and highway safety conditions in the U.S. In addition, the emphasis on joining the traffic safety workforce after our studies was mind-opening because there are so many opportunities and jobs in traffic safety that one can go in to.



The conference itself was one of the best conferences I have ever attended. The valuable information given at the workshops and the opportunity to network and connect with not only students, but professionals in the traffic safety world was amazing. I gained so much knowledge about highway safety from all types of perspectives including the media, government, nonprofits, law, etc. I was able to meet tons wonderful traffic safety professionals and experts from various organizations, such as Rhonda Craft, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety, among others that motivated and inspired me to continue the work I've done.

Additionally, I had the opportunity to speak to a crowd of 100+ individuals on the Distracted Driving panel that I was on, presenting the project I organized and coordinated in my high school. Most of all, this conference was so much fun! Making new friends, connecting with accomplished individuals, and most importantly, learning so much about traffic safety. At the end of the day, this entire learning experience reminded me of our ultimate goal in highway safety- that is to save lives. Our work revolves around saving lives and making the right choices to live a healthy life.

I am extremely honored to have attended this conference. A huge thank you to the Lifesavers Planning Committee and Traffic Safety Scholars program staff. Thank you to SADD National for providing me with this opportunity as a member of the National Student Leadership Council. Thank you.

<https://www.facebook.com/julio.mendez.313?pnref=story>

**Kwaku F. Boakye**  
**Civil and Environmental Engineering**  
**University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**CEE Graduate Student Wins Lifesavers Essay Contest and Receives Traffic Safety Scholarship**  
*April 14, 2016 Research, Scholarships and Fellowships, Students*



CEE graduate student Kwaku Boakye recently participated in the Lifesavers Conference, which is the premier U.S. highway safety meeting dedicated to reducing the tragic toll of deaths and injuries on our nation's roadways.

As part of the conference, participants competed in an essay

competition. Boakye was chosen as one of the 30 winners of the Traffic Safety Scholarships from participants across Universities in the U.S. and Canada to receive a \$1,000 award.

The essay topic addressed how his field of study could be used to address the problem of deaths and injuries in motor vehicle crashes. As a transportation engineering student, his answer included discussion of design of safer infrastructure and incorporating road safety features into land-use, as well as transport planning, improvement in vehicle safety features, improvement of post-crash care for injured victims and public awareness and road safety education.

“Getting the opportunity to participate in this year’s lifesavers conference was an exciting and learning experience for me,” he said. “Not only did I get the chance to meet professionals in the transportation industry but the conference also provided me the avenue to learn about innovative research ideas, best practices, and a common goal of saving lives.”

Boakye said that the technical sessions were especially engaging and educational, and he enjoyed the discussions about how road safety education programs together with the media, enforcement agencies, the community and employers all have a big role to play. He is already looking forward to Lifesavers 2017 in North Carolina.

**<http://cee.utk.edu/cee-graduate-student-wins-lifesavers-essay-contest-and-receives-traffic-safety-scholarship/>**

**Laura Farrell (Facebook Post)  
Virginia Tech**

I am so thankful I was able to present at & be a part of the Lifesavers Conference in Long Beach, California this April through the Traffic Safety Scholar program. It went by so fast, but during my short time there I met some amazing people who were truly passionate about improving highway safety. Those I had the opportunity to meet had phenomenal ideas that are going to advance this field in amazing ways. Through all of the workshops I attended, events I was a part of, & friendships I formed, I had a wonderful experience. While there were a wide variety of different disciplines that were in attendance, this fostered a unique experience to discuss issues from multiple angles and learn about all the different ways traffic safety effects our lives. Not only was this a fantastic learning opportunity, but everyone I met was so



supportive and encouraging. A special thank you to Jeri Dye Lynch & the Conor Lynch Foundation, who helped me understand the importance of this work and motivate me to work towards improving an area that so greatly deserves attention. Thank you to Mary Lofgren for answering all of my emails and the entire Lifesavers Conference committee for this awesome opportunity! Last but most certainly not least, thank you to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute & all the wonderful people there for your support & guidance throughout this entire adventure. This was such a great way to learn more about this field and help foster new research towards greater highway safety!

**<https://www.facebook.com/natalie.hughes.3388/posts/10154896403097818>**

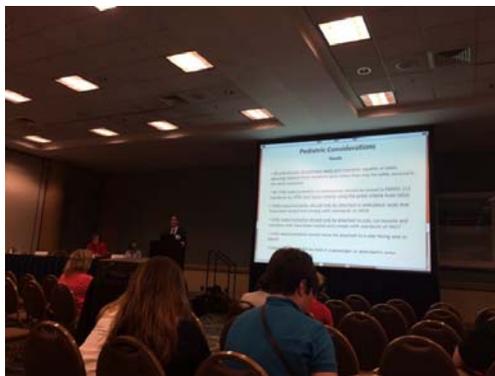
**Andrea Schultz (Word Press Blog)**  
**John Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health**



### **Lifesavers 2016: A One-Stop-Shop for all Your Traffic Safety Needs**

Long Beach, California was the site for this year's Lifesavers Conference, the yearly gathering of traffic safety professionals who come together to share research updates, demonstrate innovative products and participate in various networking events. This year, I was fortunate enough to attend the conference as a part of the inaugural cohort of Lifesavers Scholars, meaning that a conference that would normally be cost-prohibitive was now a possibility for myself and other students across the country. Because I am finishing my Master of Public Health degree this Spring, I was eligible to apply, and was luckily chosen to represent both Johns Hopkins and the Brown County Health Department.

My career, for those of you who aren't aware, has been heavily focused on injury prevention with a particular emphasis on child passenger safety, although safe sleep for infants has also been a high priority in recent years. As a child passenger safety technician and instructor, access to a conference like Lifesavers gives me invaluable opportunities to participate in continuing education, meet like-minded professionals, and hear about cutting edge developments in child passenger safety. Nearly all of the car



seat manufacturers were at Lifesavers this year. The hands-on experience with their products and information-sharing workshops keeps me in the loop when I am training new car seat technicians each year and helps when working with families with children in Brown County.

Key sessions I attended addressed issues such as the safe transport of children in ambulances, technical updates from car seat manufacturers, recycling programs to reduce the environmental impact of using safe car seats, cutting edge research in child passenger safety, and more.

One example of relevant work being done in child passenger safety is from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. This agency shared their new LATCH ratings that examine the various vehicles on the market and ease of use of the lower anchors and tether system that parents can use when installing car seats. Check out the new ratings system [here](#).

Overall, the sunny city of Long Beach provided a great opportunity to connect with other child passenger safety professionals, meet individuals involved in other aspects of highway safety that I don't directly tackle (impaired driving, teen driving, etc.) and get all of the latest updates in my field. I would encourage anyone with an interest in road traffic safety to consider attending, and to take advantage of great opportunities like the Lifesavers Scholarship program.



<https://wordpress.com/read/feeds/44873798/posts/994615585>

**Katherine Saed (Blog Post)**  
**University of Miami**

**Lifesavers Conference in Long Beach, CA**

I was honored to receive an invitation to the Life Saver’s Conference as a scholarship recipient. While doing research with Ryder’s Trauma Center under Dr. Byers guidance, it was my hope that we would find ways to make the public aware of the importance of our research. This conference allowed our research team to promulgate what we have learned to colleagues in similar fields.

This was my first experience attending such a conference, and I did not know what to expect. I was thrilled to meet students and researchers from a variety of countries and backgrounds – such as Iran, China and Dubai. Through my interaction with these colleagues I learned of so many interesting studies and other important fields of research. There are so many aspects of our lives that we take for granted and do not realize the amount of effort it takes to design things like car seats, seat belts and helmets.

The conference was also attended by local government officials and elected representatives who have the power to legislate safety guidelines, and it was satisfying to see that they were keenly interested in the latest developments. Everyone there seemed to be working toward the same goal: Safe Roads!

The most touching part of the conference was hearing first-hand from a mother who had lost her son to a drunk driver. It is truly heartbreaking to know that people still drive drunk putting their lives and the lives of others at risk. I hope that with the effort of MADD and all others involved in traffic safety we can one day eliminate drunk driving altogether.

**Amirfarrokh Iranitalab (Word Press Blog)**  
**Nebraska Transportation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

I was fortunate to receive a scholarship to attend the Lifesavers National Conference on Highway Safety Planning held in Long Beach, California. The conference, which was held from April 3-5 had many fascinating exhibits, hands on learning experiences and myriad lectures. One of the greatest aspects of the conference was the facilitation and encouragement of networking. I met many students from universities spanning the United States and learned about their studies and research. I really enjoyed learning about what projects other students were working on. The group ranged from those working on their bachelor degrees to fellow doctoral students. The very friendly, knowledgeable and welcoming facilitators introduced themselves and gave brief histories of their education and career paths.



One of the most interesting lectures featured speakers from Oregon, Washington, Colorado and Wyoming. The focus of information was the use of marijuana and how the drug can be managed as a substance that is dangerous to drivers. Though legal in some states, it remains unlawful to drive while using or experiencing alteration of the drug. While immediate testing can be used to detect alcohol intoxication, testing an individual for THC, the component in marijuana that causes the high, cannot serve as a reliable measure because the

substance can be present in the body for as long as several months. Moreover, alcohol use can be visually determined based on physical signs such as staggering, slurred speech and loss of motor coordination while marijuana causes no obvious signs. As legalization and use of marijuana grows, research into accurate and inexpensive testing as well as the complications it brings to drivers will continue to expand as well.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to attend Lifesavers, it is a very diverse, illuminating and fun few days. I look forward to attending future Lifesavers conferences, keeping up with the people I met and implementing things I learned into my own research.

<https://transposite.wordpress.com/2016/04/19/my-experience-at-2016-lifsavers-conference/>

**Deepika Kandasamy (Facebook Post)**

**University of Michigan, Division of General Pediatrics, Child Health Evaluation and Research Unit**

<https://www.facebook.com/deepika.kandasamy/posts/10206425288412090>

**Deepika Kandasamy** added 3 new photos.  
April 19 at 11:24am · 🌐

I'd like to thank the Lifesavers Committee for having me at the 2016 Lifesavers Conference! There, I was able to meet some of the friendliest, most passionate Traffic Safety experts from all over the country, learn more about Traffic Safety issues outside my field, and explore the balmy Long Beach, CA. 😊 Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity!

Share

**Elinore Kaufman (Blogspot)**  
**Master of Science in Health Policy Program, Univ. of Pennsylvania**

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

## Lifesavers Conferencee 2016



April 18, 2016

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to attend the **Lifesavers** Traffic Safety Conference as a Traffic Safety Scholar. Along with students from fields ranging from sociology to engineering to public health, the conference brought together researchers; public safety and public health practitioners; law enforcement; and industry.

It was an amazingly diverse gathering. It was inspiring to see experts from these varied disciplines bring their different experiences and perspectives to bear on a shared problem.

For me, as a physician, traffic safety is a health problem. I am responsible for trying to help heal patients injured as pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and passengers. My primary goals are to mitigate the effects of these crash injuries: getting patients back to their lives as quickly and completely as possible, and preventing them from becoming traffic deaths.

One of the downsides of my job is that most of the damage has already been done. While my colleagues and I strive to optimize the care we deliver, I am continually humbled by how little we can do. For so many of our patients, the future is determined before they even get to the hospital, if they make it there at all.

Each patient is a reminder that their injuries could most likely have been prevented. This is why I have chosen to make injury prevention a focus of my research efforts. Like most physicians, I'm hoping to put myself out of a job. At Lifesavers, I was honored to talk about my research on preventing drunk driving with ignition interlock requirements. And I was inspired to meet manufacturers and administrators putting lifesaving strategies like this into practice.

This is a challenging problem, and an important one, and it will take all of us to solve. I am grateful to know how many people from such diverse fields have my patients' backs.

<http://lifesavers2016.blogspot.com/>

**Zhaoxiang He (Mr. Albert's Adventures Blog)**  
**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

At the beginning of this month (April), I attended the Lifesavers Conference in Long Beach, California. I was very fortunate to have received funding from the conference organizers to attend this well-planned event. Before the conference began, there was an exciting electric vehicle racing event that took place right next to the convention centre where the conference was taking place. Included in the registration package was a complimentary ticket to the race. After setting up my poster in the exhibit hall, I went to check it out with some of my fellow poster presenters. It was unusual to see these vehicles moving at such great speeds while hardly making a sound.



After watching the racing for a while, the others and I went back to the convention centre for the Road Traffic Safety Scholars Orientation. Here, we received our \$1000 scholarships and were treated to a tasty meal. Several significant individuals from NHTSA and other organizations were present, including Mike Brown, the direction of the Office of Impaired Driving and Occupant Protection at NHTSA. It was great to have an opportunity to interface with some of these distinguished individuals who have built their career toward saving the lives of motorists. It was also great getting to meet the other traffic safety scholars at the event.

The following three days were filled with interesting presentations and workshops put together by researchers, professionals, and law enforcement from across the United States. It was touching to hear the stories of individuals who had been personally impacted by traffic safety issues. I also learned a great deal through my attendance and participation at these events. I got to meet Dr. Stephen Higgins when he gave a talk about drowsy driving. Particularly relevant to my research interests, was the discussion about how to talk to teens about distracted driving, with Dr. Charlie Klauer in attendance. Overall, my experience at the Lifesavers Conference was deeply enriching and inspired me to keep motivated through my studies to protect the lives of young people on the road.

<http://mralbertsadventures.blogspot.ca/2016/04/lifesavers-conference.html>

**Neal Stepp (Blog on SADD Website)**  
**Indiana Wesleyan University**

While interning with NHTSA, I had the privilege of meeting and working with many of the people who help plan the Lifesavers conference and work at NHTSA. I was talking with my internship supervisor, Katie Ballard, and she asked me if I had ever heard of or been to Lifesavers and I told her I didn't know anything about it. She showed me the program from the 2014 conference and my jaw about dropped to the floor. What I pictured in my head was an adult version of the SADD National Conference. After



being at a few SADD Conferences before, I knew I had to get to the Lifesavers. So I promised Katie that I would see her at the 2015 Lifesavers Conference and sure enough I was. The journey to my attendance at the Lifesavers Conference started my sophomore year of high school, when I was given the task to start the first ever SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter at Sheridan High School. From there, my involvement in traffic safety and many other teen-related issues skyrocketed and I ended up landing as the 2013-2014 SADD National Student of the Year. After being involved with SADD at the state level for a few years, then being involved in the SADD National Student Leadership Council for a year, I achieved a goal that I never thought I would get: being the face and the voice of SADD students all across the nation was such an awesome experience! I had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of young leaders who produced outstanding traffic safety programming and planned one of the best national conferences SADD Nation has ever seen. But from a young college student perspective, the internship with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and spending the summer in Washington, DC had to be the best part of the job.

While interning with NHTSA, I had the privilege of meeting and working with many of the people who help plan the Lifesavers conference and work at NHTSA. I was talking with my internship supervisor, Katie Ballard, and she asked me if I had ever heard of or been to Lifesavers and I told her I didn't know anything about it. She showed me the program from the 2014 conference and my jaw about dropped to



the floor. What I pictured in my head was an adult version of the SADD National Conference. After being at a few SADD Conferences before, I knew I had to get to the Lifesavers. So I promised Katie that I would see her at the 2015 Lifesavers Conference and sure enough I was there! Unfortunately, Katie could not attend, but I made sure to send her pictures and tell her how much I was learning.

The 2015 Lifesavers Conference in Chicago was my first time attending and I absolutely loved it. I had spent so much time planning SADD National Conferences in the past that I often did not have

enough time to sit down and educate myself. In Chicago, I was able to learn from some of the world's leading traffic safety advocates and networked with organizations from all across the United States. When I saw that the 2016 Lifesavers Conference was going to be in Long Beach, I made sure to put it in my calendar a year in advance. I knew there was so much for me to learn and so many people to meet that I had to come back, and I am so thankful for being selected as a Scholar, which allowed me to do just that.

Due to my background with SADD, I focused my attention on mostly teen traffic safety workshops while at Lifesavers. I had the opportunity to hear some of my peers share their stories of how they got involved in teen traffic safety, and they did an amazing job. I also got to hear from four 18-20-year-old students who are currently in the LA county court system for traffic-related issues. That was one of the most interesting workshops I had ever attended. The students came from a completely different walk of life than me and I was so intrigued to hear what

they had to say about traffic safety. The honesty that each person showed was so real and it made me realize that our work as traffic safety advocates is not going unheard, despite car crashes still being the number one killer of teens. We had a great Q&A time with the panelists and I was so glad I made the decision to go to that workshop. I made sure to attend every single workshop that a student was a part

of the panel because I believe that adults can gain a lot of knowledge from students. Another awesome workshop that went really well was a mock court room case of a distracted driver being charged for hitting a pedestrian while crossing the street.

All the presenters were actors/actresses in the mock trial and did a great job with presenting the information while making the workshop fun and engaging. I enjoyed how the presenters mixed it up and it wasn't like a normal workshop.

Some other workshops I attended concerned optimizing vehicle safety for teen drivers and innovated school policies that support teen driver safety. Vehicle safety intrigues me because I was the youngest child who got the hand-me-down vehicle or the car that was bought off the side of the road for less than \$1000. So when I see all the new car technology that car manufacturers are coming out with, I get excited for what I will be able to drive in the future! And I also learned what kind of car my children will and will not be allowed to drive. The school policies workshop gave me information to use when I finally become an adult and I get into the schools and become an adult advisor for a high school SADD chapter. I'll look at later school start times and interacting with the school resource officers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Lifesavers Scholar committee and anyone else who had an impact on making the Scholar program happen. I think this program will give so many people who are interested in traffic safety an opportunity to get their foot in the door to meet with very important people in the traffic safety world. This program also allows for students who, like myself, have a heart for traffic safety to continue to learn, be involved and network with people who will be able to help them later on down the road. I look forward to see where my involvement will be next year at the Lifesavers Conference.

<http://www.sadd.org/lifesavers-traffic-safety-scholars-blog/patrick-neal-stepp/>

**Madeline Seel**  
**University of Pittsburgh**

## **Maddie Seel Lifesavers Traffic Safety Scholars Blog**

April 18, 2016

When I found out I was selected for the Lifesavers Conference Traffic Safety Scholarship, I was ecstatic! Sunny California in the middle of dreary, Pittsburgh April was a dream come true. For four years now, I have been working in the world of traffic safety. I got involved in 2012 when my brother's best friend



was killed in a motorcycle crash; the crash was the result of carelessness and alleged distraction. From that moment forward, I knew that I needed to get involved. I did that by hosting a day-long conference called Y.I.E.L.D. (Youth Involved Education of Legal Drivers) in Pittsburgh, PA for high school students and advisors to learn about the dangers of distracted driving. Through this original program, I came upon SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions.) A year later I was honored to accept a

position on the [SADD National Student Leadership Council](#) and then the following year, the 2014-2015 [SADD National Student of the Year](#). Traffic safety has become my passion and potentially, a part of my career.

The opportunity to attend Lifesavers meant that I could continue my involvement in traffic safety efforts even into my college education. Lifesavers proved to be a learning opportunity, a place to connect with professionals from a variety of domains, and a chance to celebrate the work that traffic safety advocates are doing all across the country. It was just what I was looking for. I attended daily workshops, general sessions, and celebratory events during my three days at Lifesavers.

Workshops spanned many topics, which meant attendees could experience all sides of traffic safety. For example, I attended a workshop called, “Welcome to the Party! Designer Drugs, Stash Compartments, Logos, Drug Clothing & More” about how EDM (Electronic Dance Music) culture is often intertwined with drug use and subsequently, how drug use at these events translates into issues such as drugged driving or transportation of illegal substances. I typically think that I am a fairly well informed person, but this workshop was my favorite of all those I attended as I had never heard the things presented!



Other workshops included topics such as the effective program, “Towards Zero Deaths” in Minnesota, advances in car technology that allow for safer driving, and even a mock trial to show how distracted driving cases are handled in a courtroom. Each workshop gave its own unique perspective on how various efforts are making strides in traffic safety and gave me wonderful ideas of how to continue to advocate for traffic safety in my community.

Lastly, I had the chance to present my own workshop about school policies that are working to promote safer driving among young people. I talked about Y.I.E.L.D., my

recent internship in the Impaired Drivers Division at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and working with SADD to create programs that are geared towards high school students to promote safer decisions and all around healthier students. It was an amazing opportunity to present at a national conference alongside researchers and other experts. I was honored to represent SADD and all youth to give young people a voice in traffic safety. Again and again, it was stressed at Lifesavers, along with at NHTSA, that traffic safety is a growing field that more young people should be involved in. At Lifesavers, I felt that I had the opportunity to learn more about what traffic safety really means. As I continue to define what my career will be, traffic safety will remain an important part of who I am. Thank you to the Lifesavers Committee for granting me this scholarship and the opportunity to keep learning and growing just as all those involved in traffic safety continue to learn and grow from each other!

<http://www.sadd.org/lifesavers-traffic-safety-scholars-blog/maddie-seel/>

Meghan Kirk  
Drexel University



**Meghan Kirk**  
April 18 at 8:42pm · Philadelphia, PA · 🌐

I had an absolutely amazing time at the 2016 Lifesavers Conference! Not only did it give me the chance to explore the beautiful city of Long Beach, California, but I also got to meet these amazing young minds and the future of traffic safety research, and attend workshops on the most important traffic safety issues we face today. Thank you, Lifesavers Committee for this amazing opportunity!



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 **Bhavika Patel** YOU WERE IN LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA?!  
- 👍 1 · April 19 at 6:28am

 **Meghan Kirk** Yes I was and it was BEAUTIFUL! As a New Yorker, it was hard for me to admit but I LOVE California!  
- April 19 at 3:34pm

 **Bhavika Patel** LONG BEACH IS MY HOME  
- 👍 1 · April 19 at 7:26pm

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10153051744342395&set=a.403408327394.194294.560542394&type=3&theater>

Natalie Hughes  
University of Minnesota-Morris



**Natalie Hughes** added 7 new photos — with Duan Liu and Dasha Yuryevna Pokutnaya.

April 18 at 2:27pm · 🌐

So on April 2-6 I was lucky enough to get to participate and be a part of the Lifesavers Highway Safety Conference in Long Beach California. The topics ranged from how to build better cars to prevent crashes all the way to what steps need to be taken to streamline what has to be done after an accident has happened. Through the Truckers and Turnover program at UMM, I got to present a poster talking about the medical costs associated with truck drivers who have OSA and how our research will hopefully encourage trucking firms to create better regulations, testing, and treatment for drivers who have this. One of the talks that I went to while here was on drowsy driving, which was really interesting to listen to given my background with the T&T program. Overall the information was really interesting to learn about, and I am happy that I got to contribute to such an important conference.



<https://www.facebook.com/natalie.hughes.3388>

**Sean Haight**  
George Mason University



Sean Haight

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2016 Lifesavers Conference - Long Beach, CA

I wanted to share my experience at the 2016 Lifesavers Conference with all of you. I was selected as a Traffic Safety Scholar which allowed me to attend the conference and connect with traffic safety leaders from around the world.

First of all, the conference was very well organized. There were many great sessions that highlighted multiple challenges in the traffic safety community. I was especially interested in the study of real world crashes from the point of view of the police officer and prosecutors.

Additionally, I was very impressed with the size and quality of the attendees. Multiple different areas of traffic safety were represented and I was able to network with many of them. I especially enjoyed the Traffic Safety Scholar reception, where I got to meet other students that are just as interested in traffic safety as I am.

Overall, I had a great time in Long Beach and I was able to come home with information that I would have not received anywhere else. I am thankful for the Traffic Safety Scholars program and I would like to attend next year's Lifesavers Conference!

Sean



<https://plus.google.com/+SeanHaightPhD/posts/SszuFVbiB3i>

**Md Asif Raihan (not posted)**

**Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Florida International University**

**My experience of attending the 2016 Lifesavers Conference, Long Beach, CA**

I had a wonderful learning experience at the 2016 Lifesavers Conference. My enriching experience started with the “Traffic Safety Scholars Orientation”, where I got the opportunity to meet my fellow researchers who are working on several different highway safety aspects. The interaction session at the orientation helped me think about safety in a multi-dimensional way, and from different perspectives. I met researchers from civil engineering, mechanical engineering, bio-medical, sociology, psychology, and administration backgrounds; and all of them were engaged in improving the traffic safety scenario of the country. I made some very good friends as well.

The 2016 Lifesaver Conference was really a different type of conference where I got the opportunity to interact with traffic safety professionals apart from academia. For the first time at this conference, I learned about the practical highway safety endeavors. The sessions on pedestrian/bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, distracted driving, and law enforcement were very interesting and helpful. The “Anatomy of a Fatal Collision” session is one of the most interesting experiences as I learnt about how a traffic case is dealt at the police and the law enforcement departments. The exhibit hall was very well organized and the latest policies, tools, techniques on safety were presented.

At the “Public Service Awards Luncheon” Lifesavers Awards were presented to some very deserving members of the traffic safety community. It was inspiring to learn about their noteworthy achievements, professional journey, and the years of dedicated service to the profession. I also enjoyed the scenic beauty of the Long Beach. I also had the opportunity to visit the “Queen Mary” ship. I attended the “FIA Formula E Electric Auto Racing”, and was thrilled by the experience.

I would like to thank the conference committee for organizing such an event in a very professional way, and for giving me the platform to learn about traffic safety from a different perspective. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to attend the conference and want to thank the 2016 Lifesavers Conference Committee for the scholarship. If given the opportunity, I would like to attend the 2017 Lifesavers Conference again. Thank you.

**Cheyenne Trujillo (Facebook Post)**  
**Birmingham Southern College**



About two weeks ago, I attended the Lifesavers Conference held in Long Beach, California. Lifesavers is the largest traffic safety conference held in America. The conference has been educating and collaborating on traffic safety for the past thirty-four years; I was able to attend their thirty-fourth conference by being one of their grant recipients. Unfortunately, I was not able to stay for the entire length of the conference and, yet I still gained a tremendous amount of knowledge from Lifesavers. While attending the conference, I participated in workshops lead by professionals, students, and law officers. During the exhibit hall conference attendees could share ideas and try some of the newest developments in traffic safety technology. Lifesavers is also a great opportunity to connect with professionals and businesses from across the country. Compared to other conferences that I have attended, Lifesavers really stands out because of its professionalism, engagement with law enforcement, and mission statement. Lifesavers and its many associates plan to Drive To 0—meaning one day we will not lose a life to car crashes. I believe that if Lifesavers continues to meet and share the advancement of traffic safety, the hope to end car crash fatalities will become a reality.

<https://www.facebook.com/cheyenne.trujillo.92>