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HCAM TEAM WINS TWO AWARDS IN 2013 DISTRACTED DRIVING VIDEO CONTEST

HICKORY -- The Hickory Career & Arts Magnet high school took home two awards totaling \$800 in this year's Distracted Driving Video Contest. The team was selected by a committee of judges as the First Prize winner, receiving \$500 for their school, plus a limousine ride and lunch at Olive Garden for team members.

The team also received the Viewers' Choice Award, based on votes cast at the contest's Red Carpet Event on March 18. This award came with \$300 for their school. The title of the team's video was "Eyes on the Road, Nothing Else." Team members were Shaquille Smith, Jordan Lockhart, Simon Kinder and Brandy Yount. Their sponsor was drama teacher Jackie Finley.

A team from Bandys High School received the Facebook Share Award, based on the number of likes the video received on the contest's Facebook page. Their school received a prize of \$100. The team's video was titled "Check Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself." The video was produced by students Jackie McCoy, Dylan Sain, Morgan Thomas, and Jack Yost. Their faculty sponsor was Hollie Sherrill, theatre arts director. Students Kayla Rivers and Caleb Warren also appeared in the video. This video and the runner up in this category (produced by another team from Bandys), reached more than 16,000 Facebook members.

The awards ceremony was attended by the superintendents of all three public school systems in the county, as well as the directors of Catawba County United Way, Catawba County Public Health and Social Services. Also attending were Sheriff Coy Reid, representatives from the District Attorney's Office, several State Troopers and municipal and county law enforcement officers. District Court Judge Robert Mullinax Jr. addressed the students about the importance of the video contest. He said he has seen too many teenage lives lost due to dangerous and distracted driving.

This is the third year of the Distracted Driving Video Contest. Twenty-six videos were submitted by nine public and private high schools in the county. This year's sponsors included Action Limousine, Catawba County, Catawba County Community Child Protection and Fatality Prevention Team, Catawba County Youth Council, Catawba Valley Medical Center, Drum and Willis-Reynolds Funeral Home, Frye Regional Medical Center, Olive Garden, N.C. Cooperative Extension Service, and State Farm agent Sig Holcomb. Holcomb presented the Distracted Driving Committee with a check for \$1,500 in support of next year's contest.

For more information about the contest, and to watch the videos, go to <http://www.facebook.com/DistractedDrivingVideoContest> and then navigate to the videos section. Information about the contest is also available at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/childsafety/DistractedDriving.asp>.



The Hickory Arts and Career Magnet High School Team. Front (left to right): Shaquille Smith and Jordan Lockhart. Back (left to right) are principal David Coyne, Simon Kinder, Brandy Yount, Maia Hoover, Amber Smith, drama teacher Jackie Finley and graduation coach Alice Averitt.