



Stz'uminus Community School student Clarence Thomas and 11 other students earned an honourable mention for their 2018 safety video. Here, Thomas demonstrates a saw mishap waiting to happen.

Youth speak out about health and safety for video contest

By Sarah Ripplinger

Lights. Camera. Action. Safety. That's the name of the game for contestants in the 13th annual WorkSafeBC Student Safety Video Contest.

This year, a record 30 schools from across British Columbia submitted two-minute videos about safety in the workplace for a chance to win two first-place awards each in the grades 8–10 and 11–12 categories.

"It has been awesome working with WorkSafeBC on this project over the past five to six years," comments Ryan Radford, a Grade 11–12 teacher at Walnut Grove Secondary School in Langley, B.C., who teaches video production, visual effects, and graphic design. "The creativity and varying approaches students take never cease to amaze me."

Radford sponsored the video project of Grade 12 student Ethan Eigenfeldt. His video won a \$2,500 prize, with \$1,000 going to Eigenfeldt and \$1,500 going to Walnut Grove Secondary. Ethan also won the Actsafe Aspiring Filmmaker Award — offered for the first time this year — which includes lunch with a prominent Canadian filmmaker, a behind-the-scenes tour of a

local production, and the screening of Ethan's video at a 2018 Directors Guild of Canada event.

Eigenfeldt won a grand prize last year, as well, but the soon-to-be SFU film studies student says he approached his most recent undertaking with more humour. His 2018 entry features a maladroit office worker who mistakes the "listen to your gut" lesson imparted during a safety presentation with "listen to your butt." Hilarity ensues as he haphazardly navigates the workplace listening to his "butt" instincts.

Despite the humour in the video, Eigenfeldt is serious about the safety message. "Many students don't understand their right to refuse unsafe work," remarks Eigenfeldt. "Videos can be memorable for young people, and can help them recall the safety messages conveyed."

"Video is the world youth live in. It's an effective way to get the message across."

—Robin Schooley, industry specialist, Industry and Labour Services, WorkSafeBC

This year's theme was "Listen to your gut," and it pops up throughout the winning entries and honourable mentions. Other top videos brought viewers to a Roman army before battle, starred a talking stomach puppet, and featured a human incarnation of a safety-smart gut.

All videos live in perpetuity on YouTube where they have the opportunity to reach audiences outside of peer groups and the youth demographic — Eigenfeldt's has over 1,000 views already.

"We've shown Ethan's video to junior students and adults, and they all reacted enthusiastically to the film," notes Radford. "He has created a concept that reaches all ages and types of viewers."

More diversity of views for safer youth across the province

The message of safety continues to be urgently needed, says Robin Schooley, an industry specialist for young and new workers with Industry and Labour Services at WorkSafeBC. She notes that the number of workplace injuries among the youth demographic, particularly male youth ages 15–24, remains far too high.

"Young workers are less experienced and also less likely to speak up about workplace safety, which puts them at greater risk of injury," notes Schooley.

She's encouraged by the fact that 30 percent more schools from across B.C. were involved in this year's safety video contest. "There's a growing excitement for the contest; and advances in technology have made it easier than ever to participate. Video is the world youth live in. It's an effective way to get the message across."

Stz'uminus Community School in Ladysmith, B.C., is a first-time contestant this year. Grade 10 student Clarence Thomas and 11 other students created a superhero-themed video that won them an honourable mention.

"Even though we made it funny and kind of cheesy, it was all about things that can really hurt you if you aren't safe," says Thomas. "Kids will remember the idea of a superhero running around telling people to listen to their gut."

Their sponsor teacher and school vice-principal, Cameron Park, says that one of the focuses of Stz'uminus is to prepare students for their lives post-graduation. "After reading, writing, and arithmetic,

safety is one of the most important skills high school can teach students."

The Student Safety Video Contest is sponsored by Actsafe, London Drugs, Seaspan, Technical Safety BC, and WorkSafeBC.

Watch the winning videos and honourable mentions by searching for the Student Safety Video Contest at worksafebc.com. Stay tuned for 2019 contest details coming soon. ☺



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