

## Community Outreach— Open Your Eyes: Distracted Driving



On **Wednesday, September 7** and **Thursday, September 8, 2016** Shelley Forney, Motivational Safety Speaker & Advocate for Cell Free Driving gave three separate presentations with 130 participants on the effects of Distracted Driving. Shelley is a nationally known speaker on Distracted Driving and has been featured on Oprah, Larry King Live and Tyra Banks. This event was hosted and coordinated by the NRASP Community Outreach Committee chaired by Chuck Ulrich, NRASP Vice-President and by the local Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) group represented by Rachael Pishtek.

In attendance at the event included representatives from Governor Hoeven's, Senator Heitkamp's, and Congressmen Kraemer's offices. Sponsors for the event included: NDSC, Cambria Hotel & Suites, Great

North Insurance Services, Sanford Health, Vaaler Insurance, Dawson Insurance, and Robert Gibb & Sons, Inc.



**Smart phones were introduced in 1993. Society has pushed people to have a need or want to be available all the time which creates the issue of distracted driving.**

Some key points Shelley shared with the audience included:

- The average time it takes to respond to a text is 3.8 seconds
- When driving 55 mph you will travel the length of a football field in 3.8 seconds
- People over 18 operating a hands free device while driving has a 2-4 times increased crash risk
- People over 18 texting while driving has an 8 times increased crash risk
- Crash risks double when it's someone under 18



In addition, did you know...

- Texting and Driving (T&D) has overtaken the car crash ratio in comparison to drunk driving
- A texting driver is more prone to a crash than a driver with a BAC of .08
- Distracted driving is the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 1 and 35
- An estimated 1 in 4 crashes involve cell phone use (which is a skewed number because we know not everyone tells the truth of what they were doing after a crash)



Shelley issued "A Call to Action" to audience members:

- Lead by example; don't call or text while driving
- Change your outgoing message on your phone saying your "driving and unavailable"
- Don't text/call others when you know they are driving
- Speak up if the driver in your car is distracted by their phone
- Spread the word about the dangers of distracted driving

Check out the You Tube video below. This video was created by Shelley Forney's daughters 5<sup>th</sup> grade class as a school project.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbkMarxRLVQ>

