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AbilityFirst Partners with State Farm Insurance on Driver Safety

AbilityFirst College to Career program participants learned safety instructions and tips

PASADENA (Thursday, May 30, 2019) – Local State Farm Insurance Agents Amy Loh, Sam Lamb, Edgar Ortiz, Allan Cheng participated in a volunteer day with Marilyn Weinger, President of *Kids are 1st*, a nonprofit that protects children and educate families through an ID program, child passenger safety seat checks, and teen impairment/distracted driving tasks. The two organizations joined forces on Friday, May 25th at the AbilityFirst in Pasadena, to provide an enriching hands-on experience through simulated distracted driving. AbilityFirst College to Career students had to maneuver a play car with an adapted steering wheel. Each student ‘drove’ their car through a lay out of streets, reading the street signs and trying not to get distracted.

“We are excited to have State Farm Insurance Agents teach our College to Career participants the safety of driving and to avoid distractions such as text messaging and other unsafe driving habits.” said Adam Pilder, Director of Development for AbilityFirst.

Once the students experienced the ease of driving without distractions, goggles were provided, with technology that simulated distracted driving, including text messaging. When students wore the goggles, they proceeded with driving down the streets as they were before, except they were also texting. Students would take out their phones and browsed through them while still maneuvering their play car down the street. To students’ surprise, driving and texting felt like “the lights went out”. The goggles would darken creating a similar experience as when drivers are truly texting and driving; they cannot see anything else around them. Students shared it was a cool, scary experience – and that they’d, “never text and drive.”

The Safe Driving workshop created a space to discuss the responsibility of the driver not just for their own safety, but the safety of others.

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About AbilityFirst

AbilityFirst provides a variety of programs that have a common mission: to help people with disabilities realize their full potential throughout their lives. As we celebrate more than 92 years of service, we are focusing our efforts on programs that are proven to have the greatest impact on a person's success: basic life skills enhancement through our children's and adult programs; higher education and employment readiness; and, independent living and social and recreational programming. AbilityFirst looks beyond disabilities, focuses on the capabilities of each individual and breaks through any preconceived limitations, opening up a world of possibilities. Preparation, socialization, communication, education – all leading to helping people achieve their personal best. More at www.abilityfirst.org