

## **Chaffin Luhana Foundation Announces Winner of 2021 Anti-Distracted Driving Scholarship Contest**

*The Chaffin Luhana Foundation has awarded a \$2,500 scholarship to Anna Sedlak, a freshman at the University of Pittsburgh, for her effort to increase awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.*

PITTSBURGH ([PRWEB](#)) September 30, 2021 -- The Chaffin Luhana Foundation, a non-profit organization that encourages the development of human potential and supports community empowerment, is pleased to announce the winner of their annual [Anti-Distracted Driving Scholarship](#). This award honors one student helping in the fight against distracted driving with a \$2,500 scholarship to be applied toward further education.

Distracted driving claimed over 3,100 lives in 2019, according to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) (NHTSA). And, unfortunately, it appears these numbers are increasing – the NHTSA 2019 statistics were a 10% increase from the previous year.

Young adult and teen drivers are particularly at risk, as driver-distraction is responsible for more than 58% of teen crashes [according to AAA](#). A 2019 study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine reported that teen drivers are up to seven times more likely to be involved in a crash if they're distracted by smartphones or other items. For every second the drivers' eyes were off the road, the risk of a crash increased by 28 percent.

Unfortunately, many teens don't clearly understand the danger. In a survey by the NHTSA, one-fifth of drivers age 18-20 said texting didn't affect their driving. [The Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) monitors health-risk behaviors among high school students and found in 2019 that 39 percent of students who drove in the past 30 days reported sending a text or email while driving.

Recognizing the danger, and being committed to doing something about it, each year the Chaffin Luhana Foundation invites students to submit an inspiring essay about the effects of distracted driving. These essays can be about a personal experience, a proposed awareness campaign, or technology and its impact on distracted driving in the U.S.

“With our annual scholarship, our aim is to raise awareness of distracted driving by giving students the opportunity to share their own experiences in a creative outlet,” said Eric Chaffin, Managing Partner of Chaffin Luhana LLP – a Pittsburgh plaintiffs-only law firm. “And the response has been tremendous - each year we receive so many essays, most of which share first-hand experiences with distracted driving, along with lessons learned. It’s very inspiring to say the least.”

[In her essay](#), this year’s scholarship winner, Anna Sedlak, shares her own personal experience as a passenger in a 2019 automobile crash. Using her love for writing as a method of coming to terms with the experience, Sedlak found within herself a new outlook on how to cope with negative events in her life.

“I want to dedicate my career to offering comfort to those finding themselves in similar, scarring situations,” says Sedlak, who is currently pursuing a Clinical Psychology degree at the University of Pittsburgh. “Ultimately, I want to remind my patients that speaking on the unexplainable is our key to healing. We express ourselves through words, but we understand the meaning behind them when we analyze the events that lead us

to the conversation.”

This is the Chaffin Luhana Foundation's fifth annual Anti-Distracted Driving Scholarship contest, with last year's winner being Eva Hanselman, who's winning essay also detailed her own experiences with distracted driving and the impact they made on her life.

“We’re going to continue to drive the message home,” says Roopal Luhana, Founding Partner at Chaffin Luhana, “as there will, unfortunately, always be a continued need for education around the subject. But there is a bright spot to be seen, as Miss Sedlak’s essay demonstrates how her experience with distracted driving is helping to shape her future career goals. We look forward to seeing how she will go on to assist others in the future.”

The NHTSA defines distracted driving as "any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system—anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving."

Like the Chaffin Luhana Foundation, the NHTSA encourages teens to speak up when they see a friend driving while distracted, and to encourage their peers to pledge to never drive distracted. They also suggest young people become involved in their local Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) chapter—an organization that focuses on peer-to-peer education encouraging young people to make positive life decisions.

About The Chaffin Luhana Foundation:

Law partners Eric Chaffin and Roopal Luhana, along with their families, established The Chaffin Luhana Foundation in 2010 to honor their humble roots and build upon the values of integrity and resilience instilled in them by their hardworking parents.

A not-for-profit organization, the Foundation encourages the development of human potential and supports community empowerment through the endowment of funds to deserving recipients, the creation of community-based enrichment projects, and the support of important scientific research that meaningfully impacts the underprivileged and sick in society.

With the goal of fostering acceptance, understanding, and an inclusive and healthy environment for everyone, the Foundation seeks to highlight individuals who are displaying outstanding characteristics in their lives, and bring all walks of life together in ways that invite positive interaction, while rewarding those resilient people willing to face difficult challenges, get back up, and surge forth once again. For more information, please visit [ChaffinLuhanaFoundation.org](http://ChaffinLuhanaFoundation.org).



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