

**NEWS  
RELEASE**

May 21, 2013

CITY OF PADUCAH, KY



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**New Episode of *Your City at Work* on Government Channel 11  
Ghost Out Program at Paducah Tilghman High School**

PADUCAH, KY—"Statistically, one in three people will be affected by a drunk driving collision during their lifetime. That's a staggering fact to think about how often that affects us," says Paducah Police Captain Don Hodgson. To help educate the public, especially teenagers, about the dangers and consequences of impaired driving, the Paducah Police Department and the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety with the help of the Paducah Fire Department coordinated a "Ghost Out" program for the students at Paducah Tilghman High School. On this episode of *Your City at Work*, viewers will learn about the Ghost Out program plus hear a plea from a young woman who survived a car crash after being hit by a drunk driver.

Paducah-McCracken County had seven alcohol-related traffic fatalities in 2012. Captain Hodgson says, "The Paducah Police Department decided we had too many traffic crashes and too many fatalities in the City of Paducah. So we have made an effort to reduce those through education, engineering, and enforcement." Citizens may have noticed the Traffic Unit conducting patrols in areas such as Hinkleville Road near the Kentucky Oaks Mall; however, the unit also is looking at statistics such as crash locations, frequencies, time of day, road geometry, and site distance.

Tony Houser, Drive Smart Coordinator with the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety, says, "Statistics show that every 30 minutes someone loses their life to an impaired driver." To help students visualize that statistic, the Ghost Out program involves a police officer and someone dressed as the Grim Reaper escorting a student out of class every 30 minutes. Those students are told that they were killed in a car crash with a drunk driver. They then write their own obituary. Paducah Tilghman Senior McKenzi Belt says, "We don't have control over other people's decisions, but we can, like with this event, try to teach them not to make those decisions that can alter and end lives."

To bring the entire Ghost Out experience together for the students, an all-school assembly was held in which a pastor read the obituaries written by the students selected by the Grim Reaper. Students also heard Kelly Samples' story. Samples and her brother were



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hit by a drunk driver in 2004. The woman riding in the car with the drunk driver died as a result of that crash. Samples had the opportunity to talk to the man who caused the crash and is serving a sentence for manslaughter and assault. He promised to never drink and drive again and even promised to never drink again. Samples asks students to make a similar promise. Samples says, "I challenge the students to make a pinkie promise that they will never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and I hope they hold themselves and their friends and family accountable."

*Your City at Work* can be seen on Government 11, the governmental access channel of the City of Paducah. The episode can be viewed on Government 11 starting Wednesday, May 22 at 8 a.m. It also airs Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 9:30 a.m. View daily program information by watching the informational slides airing on the Channel 11 bulletin board. The episode also is online at [www.paducahky.gov](http://www.paducahky.gov) and the various social media outlets for the City of Paducah including Youtube and Facebook. Check the website for program information, videos, news releases, and broadcast schedules.

*Your City at Work* is hosted and produced by Pam Spencer, Public Information Officer for the City of Paducah through the television production facilities at West Kentucky Community and Technical College. For more information about *Your City at Work* or other Government 11 programming, call Tom Butler, WKCTC Television Production Coordinator, at 534-3208 or Pam Spencer at 444-8669.

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