Brookhaven Highway Department Brings Teen Driver Safety Program into Local Schools
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Farmingville, NY – Young drivers were able to experience what could happen while driving distracted or impaired—from the safety of their school gymnasium—during the Brookhaven Highway Department’s Teen Driver Safety Program held at Rocky Point High School yesterday and today.

Funded through a grant from the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC), the program takes students through a variety of exercises designed to replicate the impairment created by drinking or texting. In one course, students drove electric cars through an obstacle course while wearing Fatal Vision goggles that alter their vision to simulate driving with a blood alcohol content ranging from .06 to .30 (the legal limit is .08). In another course, they drove the electric cars while sending and receiving texts.

“Programs like this are crucial in showing new drivers the tremendous threats drunken or distracted driving can create,” said Brookhaven Town Highway Superintendent Daniel P. Losquadro. “We want to make sure students hear that message; when they’re behind the wheel of a car, it is entirely within their control to prevent a tragic accident caused by driving while distracted or impaired.” Student participants said they were surprised that they hit as many obstacles or veered off the course as often as they did. Senior Michelle Hernandez, president of SADD, said the program taught her “you can be impaired no matter what you’re doing—texting and driving or drinking and driving—and it affects other people on the road.”

In addition to the Rocky Point School District, several Long Island districts are bringing the Teen Driver Safety Program to their schools; any districts interested in scheduling dates for this spring should contact the Brookhaven Highway Department’s Traffic Safety division at 631-363-3770.

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