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Josie Deeter of Saegertown Junior Senior High School Wins PNA Foundation, AT&T It Can Wait Editorial Contest

HARRISBURG, Pa., March 10, 2020 – Josie Deeter, a sophomore at Saegertown Junior Senior High School is the 2020 winner of the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association Foundation’s “It Can Wait” editorial contest.

Deeter receives a \$500 cash prize to be awarded on April 8, in conjunction with the PNA Foundation’s Student Keystone Media Awards luncheon at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey, in Harrisburg, Pa.

Since 2015, the PNA Foundation, along with PNA and PNA member newspapers, has partnered with AT&T to host an “It Can Wait” editorial contest to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving. High school students are asked to write a column or editorial that best answers the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to drive distraction free?”

Beginning last fall, PNA members hosted local contests and encouraged high school students to help to make our roadways safer for Pennsylvanians. A winner was recognized in each community and entered in the statewide contest, which drew more than 165 entries from across the state.

In selecting Deeter as the Pennsylvania winner, judges commented, “Josie’s writing stood out for her succinct use of words to convey a dramatic message. Her poetic work is worthy of recognition for making a simple – yet powerful – point of how one act, one second, one text can change everything.”

Additional students were recognized with second and third place awards. Erin Bossler, a senior at Mount Carmel Area Junior Senior High, receives second place honors, while Xavier Koser, a Newport High School senior, places third. Bossler was also recognized by The News-Item, Shamokin. Bossler, Koser and their parents are invited to the Student Keystone Media Awards luncheon where they will receive cash prizes and certificates.

Distracted driving is involved in hundreds of thousands of vehicle crashes each year, often involving injuries and death. Despite knowing the risks, nearly nine out of ten people admit to using their smartphones while driving and four in ten drivers call distracted driving a habit.

“It Can Wait” is a national movement urging drivers to visit www.ItCanWait.com, where they can pledge to keep their eyes on the road, not on their phone, and share their pledges via Twitter (#ItCanWait) and Facebook. Since its launch in 2010, the campaign has helped increase awareness of the dangers of texting while driving to about 90 percent for all audiences surveyed and inspired more than 39 million pledges not to text and drive.

About PNA Foundation:

The PNA Foundation is an independent, non-profit corporation organized as a public foundation. Its mission is to provide training and resources to PNA members, to develop the next generation of readers and journalists, and to educate the public on the importance of the First Amendment and the role of a free press.

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About PNA: The PNA, founded in 1925, is the nonprofit trade association for print and digital news media in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Its mission is to advance the business interests of Pennsylvania news media organizations and to promote a free and independent press. It has more than 300 newspaper and media-related members, including daily, weekly, and college newspapers and online publications.

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