

# Safe Holidays with YOVASO

Volume 1, Issue 2

December 2009

## Dates to Remember:

BUDS Campaign: February 1 - February 19

Spring Campaign/ National Youth Traffic Safety Month: May 3 - 24

YOVASO Summer Leadership Retreat at Bridgewater College: July 20 - 23



## Inside this issue:

Student Spotlight	2
Youth Advisory Council (YAC)	2
Act Out Loud 2010 Campaign	2
Spotlight on SRO	3
Winter Driving Tips	3
YOVASO Summer Leadership Retreat Dates!	3
YOVASO Trainings	4

## Buckle Up, Drive Sober Campaign

The “Buckle Up, Drive Sober!” Campaign will kick off **Monday, February 1, and conclude on Friday, February 19, 2010**. The theme of this campaign is “**Have a Heart, Drive Smart.**” The campaign promotes safe driving habits, particularly seat belt use and sober driving, among the Commonwealth’s teenagers. The goal is to increase educational and awareness efforts about seat belts, Virginia’s Zero Tolerance Law, and to help students form life-long safe driving habits.

*This is the first time we will have schools competing in a bracket based on school enrollment. To be eligible for prizes, schools must complete the three*

necessary components of the campaign: a creative project (the key component of the campaign), signed pledge cards and various educational activities.

The grand prize winner (announced on March 1) will receive a free, interactive awareness game show for the entire school called “ThinkFast.”

### Dates to remember:

**January 18** - Entry Form & Material Order Form due.



### **BUCKLE UP, DRIVE SOBER**

**February 8** - Weekly School Activity Report for Week 1 due.

**February 15** - Weekly School Activity Report for Week 2 due.

**February 24** - Creative Project Report Form & Week 3/Final School Activity Report due.

## Save Your TAIL-Gate Campaign Winners!

Congrats to all 38 schools for participating in the 2009 SYT Campaign. You all did a wonderful job encouraging others to buckle up and drive safely!

Special recognition goes

to the following schools:

**1st place - Franklin County High School**

**2nd place - Staunton River High School**

**3rd place - Rockbridge County High School**

We would also like to recognize two new schools to YOVASO for being top finalists in the campaign:

**Turner Ashby High School and Green Run High School**

Keep up the great work!

## Student Spotlight - Elizabeth Torrence, YOVASO President, Franklin County High School, Rocky Mount

Elizabeth Torrence is no ordinary student at Franklin County High school. Not only is she the President of the YOVASO Club, she is also the co-captain of the varsity cheer squad, Secretary of the FBLA club, and a member of the National Honor Society. She became involved with YOVASO two years ago and has not lost motivation yet. Elizabeth said, "I love to work with YOVASO! My favorite activity thus far has been the 2009 Summer Retreat. I love when students across Virginia can come together and fight for one common purpose!"



YOVASO Sponsor Brian McClung said, "All of my past Presidents have had an impact on me, but Elizabeth is special. She has motivated me to do better. When I felt overwhelmed, she reminded me why the Club is so important and what we were doing was going to save lives. I worked harder during this campaign than any other, and that was largely due to Elizabeth's motivation. I personally think that our Club continues to excel because of our dedicated President."

Elizabeth may graduate this year, but she doesn't plan on slowing down anytime soon. She is hoping to at-

tend Virginia Tech next fall and major in Pre-dentistry. She also hopes to have a double minor in Sociology and Leadership. Her hopes are not to stop working with YOVASO either. She said that she would love to continue to work with students and stress the importance of buckling up!

"Elizabeth's most redeeming quality as a leader is that she is an awesome motivator, she leads by example," emphasized Brian McClung. When students say they don't have time to help with activities or attend meetings, she explains that if your heart is really in it, you will find time."

## 2009-2010 Youth Advisory Council (YAC) Members

Brittany Burkett - Tazewell High

Chance Cavendish - Staunton River

Justin Collins - Lord Botetourt High

Megan Dillion - Tunstall High

Hayley Divers - Staunton River High

Keisha Dove - Auburn High

Alex Gallagher - Tazewell High

Amanda Gibson - Tunstall High

Caitlin Gillespie - Tazewell High

Chelsea Hodges - Franklin County High

Jessie Kincaid - EC Glass High

Annalesha Kuhrt - Green Run High

Nic Love - Staunton River High

Amanda Mills - Liberty High

Chad Melton - Heritage High

Ashley Miller - Altavista High

Ashley Rayburn - Altavista High

Megan Register - Altavista High

Holly Saul - Auburn High

Kristen Snyder - Auburn High

Brittany Stone - Franklin County High

Elizabeth Torrence - Franklin County High

## Act Out Loud 2010

*It's time to raise your voice against distracted driving in your community!*

Join the 2010 Act Out Loud contest! Create an Act Out Loud team at your school and a great traffic safety project to give your team the opportunity to win a cool video cam-

era and up to \$10,000 sponsored by The Allstate Foundation! The deadline to enter is March 1, 2010.

Get involved now and work together with YOVASO and NOYS to make National Youth Traffic Safety Month in May 2010 a success! Go to [www.actoutloud.org](http://www.actoutloud.org).



## SRO Spotlight - Officer Robyn Watson, Green Run High School, Virginia Beach

Master Officer Robyn Watson has been in law enforcement for approximately 6 1/2 years. Her decision to become an SRO was partially based on the tragic loss of her friend who happened to be a fellow officer. She wanted to honor his memory and continue with his passion for the students and staff of Green Run High School.

With Virginia Beach being a high risk area for teen traffic fatalities, Officer Watson strives to make a huge impact in the lives of area youth. Last year, there were sixteen fatalities in the area due to car crashes. The main causative factors for these tragedies were speed and no seat belts. Three of these stu-

dents attended Green Run High School.

Officer Watson became involved in the YOVASO program through the encouragement of Mary Ann Rayment with the Virginia Highway Safety Office. The students were already involved in the "Get It Together" Campaign, a seat belt initiative in Tidewater, so the motivation factor was already in place.

The school's initial experience with YOVASO was the 2009 Summer Leadership Retreat at Bridgewater College. Officer Watson brought 11 students with her. She said this experience helped them become further involved in the program and be

a part of the bigger picture.

The Green Run YOVASO Club placed 5th in the SYT Campaign. This is a great achievement for a new school! The students did a number of traffic related activities including using the DUI goggles, Vince and Larry costumes and a relay race at a Pep Rally. We salute Officer Watson and her students for speaking out and saving lives!



## Winter Driving Tips!

- \* Slow down for wet, snowy, and icy conditions.
- \* Avoid quick braking or acceleration.
- \* Find out about driving conditions before you go.
- \* Every time you go - buckle up!
- \* Take time to clear ice and snow from turn signals, brake lights, and windows.
- \* You should never use cruise control in winter weather conditions.

For more information on Winter Driving, please visit the YOVASO website at [www.yovaso.net](http://www.yovaso.net).

*Ice & Snow ... Take it Slow*  
 Drive Carefully & Wear Your  
 Safety Belt!



## Mark Your Calendars: 2010 Summer Leadership Retreat!

When: July 20-23

Where: Bridgewater College

Are you ready to experience a FREE YOVASO Summer Retreat! Prepare yourself for the following activities:

The Amazing Race

The Annual Dodgeball Game and

Glow Stick Game

TjohnE "Think Fast" Program

Any many more fun and education activities!

Stay tuned for more information about the 2010 Summer Leadership Retreat by visiting [www.yovaso.net](http://www.yovaso.net) or YOVASO's Facebook page!



You don't want to miss any of the fun!

## YOUTH OF VIRGINIA SPEAK OUT (YOVASO) ABOUT TRAFFIC SAFETY

303 Norfolk Avenue, SW  
Roanoke, VA 24016

Phone: 540-345-0003  
Fax: 540-345-0025  
Web: [www.yovaso.net](http://www.yovaso.net)



*Speaking Out & Saving Lives*

**Check us out on Facebook!**



Youth of Virginia Speak Out (YOVASO) is a statewide youth leadership program that enables teenagers to work towards preventing their number one killer – motor vehicle crashes. Through YOVASO, teens work together in school-based clubs to advocate for safer driving among their peers and to develop positive prevention strategies for their schools and communities.

The YOVASO Program works closely with students and school administrators to help set up a YOVASO Club or to expand an existing club to include safe driving initiatives. Yearly club trainings, support materials, safety campaigns, and leadership conferences are all free to member schools.

As a service learning program, YOVASO encourages its student members to be active in the community and to develop projects that will impact elementary and middle school students as well as the community at large. Our student members may also become involved in statewide leadership opportunities by serving on our Youth Advisory Council and becoming youth leaders for local, state, and national events.

Through YOVASO, our teens have a voice. With our support, they can speak out and make a difference in the prevention of motor vehicle fatalities among young drivers.

**From High School to Full Time:** Morgan Dillon became involved with YOVASO during her junior year at Franklin County High School. Upon graduation, she began working at YOVASO Headquarter as a Regional Trainer. The fall of 2007, Morgan started working part-time as Program Support Staff. She graduated with honors from Ferrum College this December with a B.S. in Criminal Justice. Starting January 1, Morgan will be working fulltime in the YOVASO Office as the Program Development Coordinator. We are so happy to have her full time on our team!!!

# YOVASO 101 Trainings

One important aspect of YOVASO's mission is to educate teens about youth traffic safety, and the YOVASO 101 sessions fulfill that mission.

Our goal is for every teen to possess the necessary skills to encourage and promote traffic safety.

Our training presentations are fun but also educational. They promote creativity, leadership skills, and team building. It's also a great way to meet new faces and make new friendships!

We encourage teens to come up with an action plan for their school. Yes, indeed, you can speak out and make a difference!

YOVASO 101 trainings typically last 2 hours; however, we are flexible to meet the specific needs of your school. We offer trainings after school and even on Saturdays. In addition, we can divide the training into several sessions and help them during your club days.

If you have suggestions or ideas, please don't hesitate to contact us. You are why we are here!

For more information or to schedule a training, contact Elizabeth Ferguson, Marketing and Training Coordinator at 540-345-0003 or email at [elizabethferguson@yovaso.net](mailto:elizabethferguson@yovaso.net).



Students at Auburn High School enjoy a Distracted Driving activity.