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Memorable News Video Inspires Young Safety Contest Winner

 'Look both ways' before crossing the street, her drawing advises

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 17, 2005) Taliah Rayford can't forget that television news show. "The videotape on the news showed a lady getting hit by a bus," said the 12-year-old Inglewood eighth grader.

"I remember thinking that the accident could've been prevented if the lady had looked both ways before going into the street," Taliah said.



Sisters Najah Rayford, left, and Taliah Rayford enjoy the prizes they won in a Metro safety contest. Sheriff's Deputy Scott Maus helped recognize the students.

When a Metro Division Ambassador Council member later gave a transportation safety presentation at her church, Taliah paid attention and then entered the transit safety contest in which students are asked to write or draw how they can stay safe around buses and trains.

"My drawing showed a busy street with buses coming and going, and two kids waiting on the sidewalk before crossing," said Taliah, whose mother is Carson Division 18 Bus Operator Richelle Rayford. "The words I wrote on the bottom of the drawing are 'Look Both Ways'."

Safety contest winners

On Friday, Taliah and her 10-year old sister, Najah, were recognized as contest winners by the Metro South Bay Sector Council. Since its start about eight months ago, the council has honored 50 South Bay students for participating in the safety program.

"My drawing tells children to stay close to their parents when walking across the street," said fifth-grader Najah.

Lorrie, the older sister of Taliah and Najah, was present at the awards presentation. A college sophomore at Texas Christian University, Lorrie says she has to adjust for safety whenever she comes home.

"There's hardly any traffic in Fort Worth and there are more and bigger buses in Los Angeles," the college student said.

"This is great that students take time to focus on safety," said

Sheriff's Deputy Scott Maus, who helped recognize the students at the monthly council meeting.

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