

## TOP STORIES

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### Save a Life in Carbondale

CARBONDALE--Students at Carbondale Community High School are getting an experience educators hope they'll never repeat.

Students are learning what it's like to be behind the wheel drunk, it's part of a drunk driving simulation.

"It's difficult. The steering wheel starts to move a lot like a drunk drive would do and it's hard to control the car," said Courtney Bertsch.

The simulation is part of a program called "Save a Life." This interactive, in your face campaign travels from school to school around the country.

"This is a problem in America. He make the fines higher, we put them in jail longer. People still think they can do this and it's scary," said Brian Beldyga with Save a Life.

About a thousand students in grades nine through 12 watched the program. Many of them got to take a spin.

"It gives the students an opportunity to find out what the consequences are and maybe make them think before they make that choice," said student activities director Gwen Poore.

Something sophomore Courtney Bertsch knows too well. She's lost a friend in a drunk driving crash.

"I've had a lot of friends that that has happened to too. So that's why I'll never do it. I don't want my friends to do that too, because I don't want to have to lose another friend."

Senior Jordan Hamilton said, "I think some teenagers make bad decisions, but this today, should change a lot of minds."

Organizers hope the program also encourages everyone to take the keys from a



friend who has had too much to drink.

"If you want to hurt yourself, which I don't condone, but if you get behind the wheel of a car you're a 2,000 pound bullet. You're making the decision for someone to live or die in a single night. That's not your right. Nobody has that right," said Beldyga.

The cost of the program was about \$3,000 dollars. A grant from SIH and the LifeSaver Foundation helped pay for it.

by Kevin Hunsperger