

Children's Health Update

Helping Curb Teen Drunk Driving

(NAPSA)—A firsthand account can drive a lesson home. That's the idea behind a campaign that's sending a young man across the country to talk to students about drunk driving.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2005, 16,885 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes—an average of one almost every half hour. A disproportionately high number of victims killed each year are teens.

Brandon Silveria was almost one of them. When he was 17, he endured a three-week coma after being involved in a drunk-driving accident. Since his rehabilitation, Silveria has devoted himself to speaking at high schools about his experience and encouraging people under the legal drinking age to make the right decisions about alcohol. Although his speech has been permanently impaired, Silveria's presentation delivers a resounding message on the dangers of underage drinking and drunk driving.

He tells his story under the auspices of The Century Council, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking. Silveria's mission is supported by Diageo, the world's leading spirits, wine and beer company.

Silveria and his father, Tony, tour America's high schools to educate students—over 2 million to date—about the dangers and consequences of underage drinking. Three video messages focusing on back to school, spring break and prom/graduation are available to keep his story alive throughout the



High school students are getting a firsthand account on the dangers of drunk driving.

school year. The videos have won the education field's prestigious Chris award and a FREDDIE first-place in the American Medical Association's International Health & Medical Film Competition.

"Brandon has a very powerful story to share with young people. Our hope is that his story will help save lives," said Guy Smith, Diageo executive vice president. "We do not want the business of anyone under the legal drinking age. Period."

Diageo is a founding member and major supporter of The Century Council, an organization funded by the country's leading distillers committed to developing programs to combat drunk driving and underage drinking. These programs include Ask, Listen, Learn; Cops in Shops; Alcohol 101 Plus; The Blood Alcohol Educator; Ready or Not; and the Prom/Graduation preparation kit.

For more information, visit www.centurycouncil.org/underage/brandon.html.