



UPDATE

Hunter Brooks Watson Memorial Fund
FALL 2019

Hunter's Fund

P.O. Box 326, McLean, VA 22101
(703) 448-0436

This publication paid for with a gift from the Watson family

OUR VISION

YOU MAKE THE POWER OF YOUNG IDEAS POSSIBLE



Hunter Watson

Where will the next great ideas come from? Who will provide the insight, inspiration and hard work to create a better tomorrow? Hunter's Fund believes young people hold the answers to these questions. Young people are using their talents and passions to find ways to improve the world. Their dreams are of things yet to be seen. While we don't know what tomorrow will bring, we do know that today's youth and their ideas will be propelling the changes to come.

Hunter's Fund invests in young people who have demonstrated talent, experience and passion. The grants you make possible reward innovation and reflect the talents and passions that Hunter Watson brought to his life. They honor his legacy, and provide support for young people who also approach life with powerful ideas. We hope these grants will carry on what Hunter inspired.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

We are deeply honored that you have placed your trust in Hunter's Fund's work. We work hard to make the most of every dollar you donate by using volunteers and keeping overhead costs low. When you give to the Fund, you can give with confidence, knowing that nearly 100% of your gift will propel young people's dreams and help end distracted driving.

You Made Five New Grants Possible

The Committee's multi-stage evaluation and ranking resulted in the following five grants being awarded in the most recent grant cycle:



Carroll Kern
Lives in:

New York, New York

Area of Interest:

Launching a philanthropic fashion brand, "Conservation Rocks!"

A 2015 graduate of the Columbus College of Art and Design, Carroll has a passion to combine her education as a fashion designer with work that will benefit the world. She is pursuing a dream to sell nature-themed commercial products — beginning with a product line of unisex socks featuring different animal species.

"I have secured interest from stores in carrying the brand and my goods and from wildlife centers so that they may sell them at retail to support their efforts, and online."

Carroll will use the HBW Grant to fund an initial inventory of merchandise, using the proceeds to reinvest in subsequent purchases. "My proposal is for an entrepreneurial and philanthropic fashion brand called Conservation Rocks to offer nature-themed commercial products that give back a portion of all proceeds to wildlife conservation groups."



Harry Charles Neild Collis
Lives in:

Falmouth, Cornwall (UK)

Area of Interest:

Creating original music and offering others on-the-spot recording capacity.

Harry has been producing his own music since age 17. He and his friend Louis dream of traveling and performing with ease in on-the-road locations.

Their goal is to create a portable outdoor studio by converting a long wheelbase van to a specially outfitted mobile music studio. They dream of providing other performers with the opportunity to record music on location at festivals (or whenever and wherever) they perform, then post the recordings online so musicians who have no recordings of their music can build up a following online.

The HBW grant will be able to expand so that multiple players can 'plug in' experience that was until now only available in a studio. This concept is capable of being done anywhere in the world.

"Everyone makes music slightly differently, and every time I play with new people, we'll all make something that none of us could make by ourselves."



Kenichia Abigail Charles
Lives in:

Kingstown, St. Andrews (St. Vincent and the Grenadines)

Area of Interest:

Advanced biomedical engineering, and 3D-printed medical devices.

As a recent graduate of the University of the West Indies in biomedical technology, Kenichia is passionate about taking her education to the next level so as to improve the quality of life for people in her home country.

She was awarded an important internship at the University of Vermont last year, but she couldn't afford the travel and living expenses and had to defer the opportunity. "I grew up less fortunate, with an alcoholic mother and an absentee father. I realized that education was my passport out ..."

Kenichia had hoped to advance her skill set to develop, manufacture, and repair medical devices, especially developing a 3D printing business where parts of medical devices could be produced locally. With the HBW Grant, Kenichia was able to accept an internship in Vermont.

Continued on page 2

HUNTER'S FUND UPDATE

FALL 2019

OUR VISION

To live in a world where our youth may follow their hearts.

OUR MISSION

Hunter's Fund seeks out young people who dream of something they are deeply curious and passionate about and gives them the resources to explore that passion. We also work to reduce deaths and injuries from distracted driving accidents by sponsoring programs to change the behavior of our young people.

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Kathy Ward, CFRE

Tell us what you think about what we are doing. Send your comments and suggestions to: Editor, Hunter's Fund Update, P.O. Box 326, McLean, VA 22101 or email to editor@hunterwatson.org. All letters are assumed to be intended for publication unless otherwise noted.

You Made Five New Grants Possible

(Continued from page 1)



Marquise Janea Scott

Lives in:

Chicago, Illinois

Area of Interest:

Modeling, acting, photography.

When high school senior Marquise Scott was given the opportunity to model for a line of hair products, she recalls, "I feel like I came alive in front of the camera, and behind ... with editing, selecting angles, and visuals ..." Marquise's high school doesn't offer much in the way of visual or performing arts, and extra funding for classes in these areas "just isn't in the budget for my mom." Marquise is passion-

ate about pursuing the advice of the photographers, models, and actors she has met; they've advised her to enhance her portfolio and take classes to improve her skills. With the HBW Grant, Marquise can enroll in acting, modeling, and photography classes.



Praise Adimabua Buba

Lives in:

Ruther Glen, Virginia

Area of Interest:

Create a local, student-led music concert benefiting the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

As a high school senior, Praise Buba is involved in close to a dozen extracurricular clubs and activities. Recognized for his vocal talents, spirit of philanthropy and entrepreneurship, teachers and fellow students are inspired by his achievements thus far. Praise created a student-led group of "Warriors" who worked to raise funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society — an endeavor that fueled his dream to do even more. Inspired by the story of Ben Carson, he hopes to one day become a physician in order to "take my knowledge back to my home country of Nigeria, which needs it the most ... I hope to create a business that will push to establish a centralized health care system for people there ... " Praise is using the HBW Grant to underwrite costs for the 2020 Warrior Benefit Concert, which will feature local young soloists, bands, and show choirs from across the Richmond area.

Help Us Find Innovated Young People

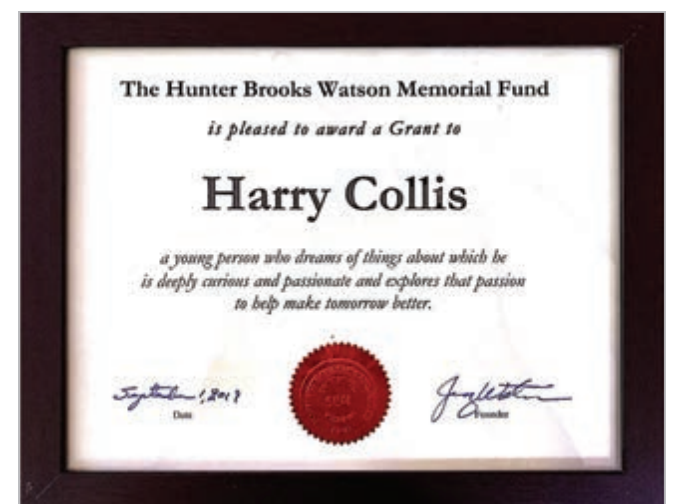
If you know someone between the ages of 16 and 26 who has enthusiasm and passion for an innovative idea or project, or are such a person yourself, a new source of financial support is now available.

Hunter's Fund offers grants to young people who have demonstrated a passion and enthusiasm for developing new ideas, especially in fields such as music, the performing arts, computer technology or entrepreneurship.

These grants are not scholarships for academic studies, but rather direct financial support to assist innovative young people in bringing their ideas and projects to fruition. There is no cost or ob-

ligation to apply.

In its most recent grant cycle the Fund has helped finance a mobile recording studio, launch an online business benefitting the environment, and biomedical training for an area in need and music and performance projects. Grant applicants do not have to be enrolled in school, nor a scholar or student leader but simply have to explain through the grant application why funding is needed to move their project forward.



Recognition certificates are presented to each grant winner.

To encourage ideas as they emerge, Hunter's Fund accepts applications twice a year on June 15th and November 15th.

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS LAUNCH A UNIQUE AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

BY WILL SNAPE



Ashkay Ramaswamy

can give them confidence and change their lives forever.

When we received Ashkay Ramaswamy's application he had arrived at Stanford not knowing anyone or what to do to meet people. He participated in the schools orientation programs but felt there were still things students like him needed to know and he wanted to meet more students like himself.

Ashkay's vision was to design an application that would help answer these questions and allow students to connect with one another.

He would need help with writing the code for such an application and requested funds for this in his application.

I remember when the grants committee was reviewing Ashkay's application they began talking about how much his idea could have helped them when they began college and when the votes were counted his application was approved unanimously.

I agreed to be Ashkay's Mentor and made sure he received the funds as needed. Press releases went out describing why Ashkay had been selected and his vision.

Then during one of our regular video conference calls I reported Ashkay had just learned that a private equity company had heard of our grant and offered him an additional \$25,000 in funding. We were encouraged to learn that others saw promise in his idea. Later, when we learned he had received a total of one million dollars in funding we were thrilled!

Ashkay founded "AlmaCampus", an online network platform where Stanford students could connect with each other to share college experiences, collaborate on group work in classes they shared, and expand their alumni network after graduation.

Ashkay recently graduated from Stanford University and Alma's founding team remains in San Francisco working for the company full-time expanding the core product and rolling out Alma to different colleges and universities.

Our congratulations to Ashkay and his team!

Although the effort to complete a Hunter's Fund grant application is not easy, and the review process extensive, those selected to be awarded a grant are a special type of young person with the passion to achieve their dreams.

We are not expecting every dream to come true, but giving young people the chance to explore their dreams

Making our World Better: 2019 Hunter Watson Entrepreneurship Awards

These unique Awards recognize young people working on innovative ideas that can make your life better. Awards of \$2,500 each, were presented to four winners selected from over forty teams. Teams came throughout the New York Area and presented their ideas in a "Shark Tank" like setting on the campus of Syracuse University.

The winners were selected by members of the Hunter's Fund to recognize students like Hunter whose work demonstrated a strong gift for entrepreneurship.

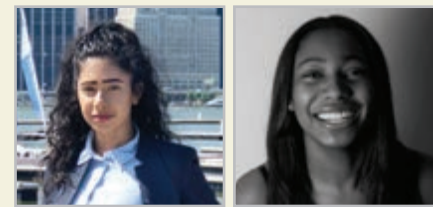
User Friendly IV Systems - Alec Prescott Gillinder and Quinn King



Alec Gillinder

These young men are creating an innovative solution for inpatient, at home, and mobile care. Called L-IV (Liberating Intravenous), this is a shoulder mounted and portable IV system that allows people in hospitals or disaster areas to receive IV treatment comfortably and efficiently without being tethered to an IV Pole. The idea came from watching Quinn's mother snuggle with an IV pole during cancer treatments.

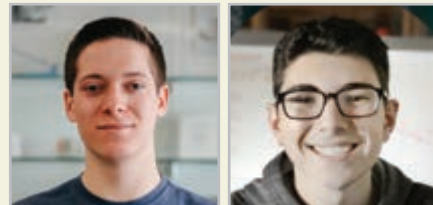
Simplified Water Purification - Nikita Chatterjee and Brianna Howard



Nikita Chatterjee Brianna Howard

These young ladies are working on a socially sustainable solution for the water crisis in Mumbai, India; an area where 163 million people lack access to clean water. They are developing a personal filter that will allow families to easily purify their water without replacing traditional behavioral habits that exist in their communities.

Virtual Reality - Matt Shumer and Sam Hollander



Matt Shumer Sam Hollander

These young men are developing a next-generation Virtual Reality headset that strives to make the emerging technology of Virtual Realty affordable for business everywhere.

Drone Noise Research - Tyler Vartabedian



Tyler Vartabedian

To be ready for future government noise regulations, Tyler is developing a noise reduction system for drones using optimized carbon fiber propellers and noise cancellation technology found in today's headphones.

Most projects supported by Hunter's Fund are for novel and life-enhancing start-up ideas. These Spirit of Entrepreneurship Awards are to recognize ideas in early development and to give encouragement to those with ideas that can change the world.

Hunter Watson Scholar Completes Inaugural Year at Syracuse



Kayla Simon

Kayla Simon '19, a recent aerospace engineering graduate from Syracuse University, was named the school's first **Hunter Watson Scholar** for the 2018-19 academic year.

The annual scholarship, funded through a gift to Syracuse University from the Watson family, honors the life, passion, and entrepreneurial spirit of Hunter Brooks Watson. In 2016, Watson was a rising junior

at the school when his life was tragically cut short as a passenger in a distracted driving accident. The new scholarship is modeled after Syracuse's Remembrance Scholar program, which commemorates the lives of 35 students lost in the 1988 Pam Am Flight 103 disaster. Selected annually by a university panel, each Hunter Watson Scholar commits to keeping Hunter's memory alive by articulating and sharing his spirit, passions and accomplishments.

Kayla is an aspiring inventor who, along with fellow engineering student Elizabeth Tarangelo, developed the patent-pending In-Spire wearable inhaler bracelet for asthma patients. During her years at Syracuse, she was awarded numerous commendations for her leadership and entrepreneurial spirit.

Her application for the Hunter Watson Scholar designation revealed experiences and an outlook that mirrored Hunter's own life. "Growing up," Kayla wrote, "I never knew what I wanted to be ... I liked far too

many things to just pick one ... from this passion to discover, [I've been] led to a desire to choose a wide array of projects that aid in diversifying my perspective on the world around me ... imagining the impact I can make in the world."

One of the responsibilities of each year's Hunter Watson Scholar is to promote and help select the Hunter Watson Entrepreneurship Awards. These monetary grants, funded by Hunter's Fund, are awarded to outstanding applicants in the university's yearly LaunchPad competition. They recognize and assist talented students who, like Hunter did, are passionately pursuing their dream, proposed venture or ideas.

For Kayla, the inspiration to apply to be a Hunter Watson Scholar stemmed as much from an experience parallel to the Watson family's loss as to her entrepreneurial prowess. "In 2012, two of my close friends died in a car accident on their way to a marching band competition," Kayla wrote. "They were two immensely positive, bright, and courageous girls who brought their all to everything they did."

"To be selected as the Hunter Watson Scholar is a magnificent opportunity to continue Hunter's passions and accomplishments, demonstrating to Syracuse University that innovation is innate in all of us," she continued. "I look forward to paying forward all the knowledge I've gained while learning more about Hunter and the values he brought to Syracuse."

Future Scholars will assist with building and maintaining an archival collection of Hunter Watson memorabilia to be housed in the Syracuse libraries.

Following her 2019 graduation, Kayla Simon was selected by Virgin Orbit to work as a Propulsion Test Engineer at their rocket test site in Mojave, CA. For more information about Syracuse University's LaunchPad competition, the Hunter Watson Entrepreneurship Awards, or the Hunter Watson Scholar program, please contact <http://launchpad.syr.edu/watson-scholar>.

Make A Lasting Difference

You can help provide for the future of the Hunter's Fund Grants Program by leaving a gift in your will to the Fund. We recommend that you consult with your attorney when drafting a new will, or when changing an existing will or creating a living revocable trust, if you wish to include a gift for the Hunter's Fund Grants Program and Safe Driving Program.

Hunter's Fund official name: **The Hunter Brooks Watson Memorial Fund**

Hunter's Fund mailing address: **P.O. Box 326, McLean, VA 22101**

Hunter's Fund telephone number: **(703) 448-0436**

Hunter's Fund identification: **A not-for-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code**

Hunter's Fund tax-exempt number: **EIN 83-0574041**

Sample Language

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Hunter Watson Memorial Fund for its general purposes [state fraction or percentage of the rest, residue and remainder] or [the sum of \$ _____] in my estate, both, real or personal"

For additional information, please contact:

Kathy Ward, Volunteer Development Director, Hunter's Fund,
P.O. Box 326, McLean, VA 22101, Phone: 1-703-448-0436

Hunter's Fund (The Hunter Watson Memorial Fund) is a tax exempt Section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which was formed to award grants and scholarships to promising students and promotes programs to improve of the safety of our young people.

Make a Special Gift

GRANTS PROGRAM

- I am enclosing my tax-deductible gift to help the Hunter's Fund continue to seek out young people who dream of things about which they are deeply curious and passionate and provide them the resources to explore that passion.

DISTRACTED DRIVING CAMPAIGN

- YES, I want to help expand "Hunter's Pledge" to End Distracted Driving to reach more high schools and colleges.

PLEASE PRINT

- I am enclosing my special gift in the amount of \$ _____
In memory of _____
In honor of _____

Your Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Email _____

- I want to charge my gift.

Credit Card # _____

EXP Date _____/_____/_____

Signature _____



Mail This Form To: **HUNTER'S FUND**

P.O. BO 326 • MCLEAN, VA 22101

Please make check payable to Hunter's Fund.
Contributions are tax deductible.

Donate online: www.hunterwatson.org

"Hunter's Pledge" To End Distracted Driving

In Search of a New Philanthropy Event, Cornell's New York Alpha Chooses Hunter's Pledge

Phi Kappa Psi boasts a distinguished history at Cornell University, and the school's current 90+ members are living up to the exemplary tradition of their forerunners. Brother Joshua Levine, who organized the chapter's inaugural Safe Driving Campaign this spring, is one of them.

"I saw an ad for this event on Instagram. It looked like a well-structured program with a meaningful cause. We were looking for a new philanthropic event to take on; this was a great option."

As philanthropy Chair, Brother Levine worked closely with Jerry Watson, founder of the sponsoring charity, Hunter's Fund. "Jerry helped every step of the way. The biggest challenge was rallying fellow chapter members to help staff the event. But once they were there, everybody had a great time helping out."

The brothers garnered about 700 signatures. Josh recalls one student who had his family with him. "Not only did these parents appreciate the powerful social change that we were looking to create on their child's future campus, but they loved that this was an event that impacted everyone. Their whole



family signed: Mom, Dad, the incoming student, and even the pre-teen sibling who looks forward to driving in a few years."

Others' enthusiasm has inspired the brothers to plan to add more tables and manpower next year. "We learned that making a difference is feasible. We were able to engage students and faculty, and it felt great to be able to see people happy to sign a pledge to end distracted driving."

"I drive with my 'I Pledged' wristband on. It's a constant reminder to be a safe driver. Additionally, it has made me become a more vigilant passenger. This campaign has given me the courage to speak up for safe driving."

-Joshua Levine, Chairman, Safe Driving Campaign, Cornell University

Hunter's Pledge Spreads To Gulf Coast High Schools

According to the National Safety Council, half of all teens will be involved in a car crash before graduating from high school and the fatal crash rate per mile driven is nearly twice as high for teens ages 16-17 compared with those who are 18 or 19.

So when Dan Armstrong first heard about the **Hunter's Pledge to End Distracted Driving Campaign** started by his fellow fraternity brother Jerry Watson, he knew it was something he wanted to be involved with. "I have tremendous respect for what Jerry has done in memory of his son. I can't imagine losing a child like that," Dan shares. But while the campaign is spreading across college campuses through active brothers at Phi Kappa Psi chapters, Armstrong's instinct is that "we really need to be doing this in our high schools, too."

So he approached the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay, which he serves as president, about funding **Hunter's Pledge** in two Gulf Coast high schools this spring. The group agreed.

"The principals at Elberta and Foley High Schools were very receptive," Dan says. "We held the one-day events in the school cafeteria over lunch hour. We staffed tables with volunteers from our Club and from the schools' Junior Optimist Club. A lot of the kids who came by told us they don't use their phones while driving. Many signed the pledge. And we think we can get even better participation next year by setting up in a more visible location and when the students aren't rushed to get back to class."

Members of Foley's video newspaper club created a tandem

video that students viewed earlier in the day. "They did a great job interviewing local officials and a sheriff about what can happen with distracted driving," Dan notes. "They showed an accident re-enactment, and also featured parents whose daughter died in a distracted driving accident a decade ago while a student at Foley."

Armstrong isn't stopping at just these schools. He plans to approach Optimist Club

International and similar organizations to bring the **Safe Driving Campaign** to high schools across the county, and beyond.

The Hunter's Fund extends its heartfelt gratitude to Dan Armstrong and the Optimist Club of Perdido Bay for its generous sponsorship of Hunter's Pledge.



Dan Armstrong

Meet Hunter's Team

Most of the members of Hunter's Team were close friends of Hunter Watson. In just 3 years the Team has reviewed and graded dozens of applications and identified more than 30 promising young people who could not have explored their dreams without financial assistance. Our grant winners are also being "mentored" by one of the Team listed below.



Luigi Ambrosi
(New York, NY):
2017 graduate of Georgetown University in Business Management and Anthropology now Marketing Manager for Ambrosi Food USA in Brooklyn, NY.



Abigail Breslin
(Hollywood, CA):
Oscar Nominated Actress and singer/song writer living in Hollywood, CA.



Madeleine Bunbury
(United Kingdom):
An emerging young equestrian artist, based in Gillingham Dorset, UK, Madeleine is the our Fund-raising Chairman and manages the Fund's program to mentor grant winners from St. Vincent.



Liam Catto
(Denver, CO):
Recent graduate of the University of Colorado studying Business and Advertising.



Forrest Crane
(Alexandria, VA):
Student at the University of Kentucky studying Political Science living in Lexington, KY.



Chris Dale
(Washington, DC):
2017 graduate of the University of Virginia with a degree in History. Chris is now working with Marcus and Millchap in Washington, D.C.



Yannick Della Shavia
(Los Angeles, CA):
2017 graduate of Georgetown University with a degree in Operations and Information Management and now working in management with Anheuser-Busch InBev in Los Angeles, California.



Ilana Dunn
(Armonk, NY):
2016 Syracuse University graduate now working for Hinge, a start up in NYC.



Zack Green
(New York, NY):
2017 graduate of the University of Michigan where he studied for political science, now living and working in London.



Hanna Horvath
(New York City):
2018 graduate of Syracuse University in news and online journalism and now working with Policygenius as a content marketer in New York City.



Matt Kimm
(Austin, TX):
2018 graduate of the University of Texas with a degree in Advertising and a minor in Business. Matt is now working in the digital advertising industry in Austin Texas. Matt is Marketing Chairman of the HBW Fund.



Hannah Kliot
(New York, NY):
HBO Production Associate in New York City and 2017 graduate of Northwestern University, where she studied broadcast journalism. Hannah is an Editor of the HBW Newsletter.



Matthieu Menand
(Tracy, CA):
2018 graduate of Syracuse University and now an Area Manager with Amazon in California. Matthieu is the Grants Chairman of the HBW Fund.



Jordan Parent
(Great Falls, VA):
2019 graduate of Virginia Tech studying Computer Science and Cyber Security. Jordan is the Director of the HBW Fund.



Mark Ramsey
(Great Falls, VA):
Attended the University of Virginia and now working in private capital markets at Stifel Financial Corp in Great Falls, VA.



Jason Reif
(New York, NY):
2018 graduate of Syracuse University with degrees in Finance, Accounting and Information Management & Technology now working with Disney in New York City. Jason is Treasurer of the HBW Fund.



Matt Salutillo
(McLean, VA):
2017 graduate of the Penn State University now working as a Meeting Planner at Lansdowne Resort & Spa in Leesburg, VA. Matt is the Admin Chairman of the HBW Fund.



Will Snape
(New York, NY):
2018 Graduate of Trinity College majoring. Now working with Darktrace a cyber security firm in New York City. Will is an Editor of the HBW Newsletter.



Connor Sweeney
(Great Falls, VA):
2017 graduate of Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania majoring in Economics and minoring in Business. Now working as a Mobile Application Consultant at GoCanvas in Reston, VA.



Teddy Watson
(New York, NY):
2019 Graduate of New York University Stern School of Business with a MBA degree in Technology now living in New York, NY and working for Dots, a game design studio.

Distracted Driving - Changing Behavior is the Answer

Hunter's Fund's efforts to change the behavior of young people with respect to distracted driving arose from the untimely death in 2016 of Hunter Watson, a passenger in a distracted driving crash. Hunter's Fund found that its campus events where students were asked to sign a pledge not to drive while distracted were working! In fact, *studies have shown that signing a written pledge can change behavior 47% more than any other incentive!*

The recognition that more needs to be done to change behaviors and attitudes towards distracted driving has grown since 2016; driving while distracted is getting noticed as the growing problem that it is. Distracted drivers are striking kids exiting school buses, pedestrians in crosswalks, cyclists sharing the road, and police officers at road stops. Hunter's Fund welcomes the efforts of other organizations who are focusing on the problem of distracted driving. Here's a sample:

The findings in the January 2019 report released by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) includes results from a 2018 survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. David Kidd, co-author of the IIHS study said: "The latest data suggest that drivers are using their phones in riskier ways...studies consistently link manipulating a cellphone while driving to increased crash risk." In fact, fatal crash risk is 66% higher when controlling a phone.

In an April 6, 2019 press release, AAA announced its new campaign to reduce distracted driving. Called 'Don't Drive Intoxicated,' the campaign compares drinking and driving to texting and driving. "Distracted driving is such a widespread, dangerous and potentially deadly behavior that AAA must be innovative in its efforts to raise awareness and effect change," said Shawn Steward, spokesperson for AAA Kansas.

According to the Harvard Gazette, July 2, 2019, nearly 38,000 people lost their lives in traffic crashes last year, up 12 percent since 2014, and 4.5 million people were seriously injured. Distracted driving has been identified as a key factor in the recent rise. The Harvard T.H. Chan School's Center for Health Communication is developing a campaign aimed at raising awareness of the need for drivers to remain focused. According to Jay Winsten, the School's associate dean for communication, "Progress will come from a combination of tougher laws, stricter enforcement, technological innovation, community mobilization, and public campaigns."

Public campaigns are exactly what many student groups, working with the HBW Fund, are organizing on campuses. The results speak for themselves. This past school year, over 600 volunteers on 17 campuses convinced more than ten thousand students across the country to signed "Hunter's Pledge" to end Distracted Driving— and are saving lives. To learn more visit www.hunterwatson.org.



Distracted Driving Pledge Form



"Hunter's Pledge" to End Distracted Driving
Events Held at 17 High Schools and Colleges

University of Alabama
UC Berkeley
Univ. of California Davis
Cal State Northridge
Cornell University
Elberta High School

Drexel University
Edinboro University
Foley High School
Univ. of Georgia
Univ. of Minnesota Duluth
Univ. of Minnesota Twin Cities

Penn State University
University of Pennsylvania
Syracuse University
University of Texas

Keeping the Memory of that Beautiful Boy Alive



William, Liam, and Kristina Catto

“If you invited one boy over to the house, you would always end up with five or six. That’s how tight this group of boys was. They were always together, and we loved them all.”

That’s how Will Catto recalls his son Liam’s friendship with Hunter Watson and the other boys known as the Band of Brothers. During the boys’ junior year, Will took the whole group on a ski trip. He recalls, “I sat next to Hunter for the flight. I had the most wonderful time with that young man. We talked about music and the arts. It was really a treat for me to talk with him for a whole three hours.”

During an interview for this story, a tearful Kristina Catto recalled



Hunter and Friends at Ski Trip

how Hunter’s death shattered their entire family. “We tried to talk about it as a family but the conversations felt sort of empty. You couldn’t say, ‘everything is going to be alright.’ You couldn’t say, ‘sometimes things just happen.’ Even as an adult, there was a nonsensical aspect to what had happened. In the end, being present for our kids and for Jerry and Judy was mostly what we could do.”

Like many who knew and loved Hunter Watson, being part of Hunter’s Fund has been healing for the Catto family. “We are so grateful to Jerry and Judy for keeping the memory of that beautiful boy alive and for helping all his friends. Jerry recognized how hard Hunter’s death would be for the boys and he took on the mantle of seeing them through this. Hunter’s Fund really has been a lifeline for the boys and for all of us.”

As artists themselves, Will and Kristina are deeply inspired by the mission of Hunter’s Fund. Kristina shared, “We’ve been fortunate to find work that we love. That’s what really interests us in these grants. They are trying to tap into young people’s passion and that is what gets you through life.”

Will and Kristina Catto began supporting Hunter’s Fund as part of their family’s healing. But they plan to continue supporting Hunter’s Fund because they believe in the power of creativity. They say investing in young people’s creativity gives them hope, especially in these challenging times.

William and Kristina Catto are very generous supporters of the Hunter’s Fund and the proud parents of four children. They live in Bethesda, MD.

Making Something Good from Tragedy By Liam Catto, the Band of Brothers

I remember the last time I saw Hunter. Our whole group of ‘brothers’ went to the Bonnoroo Music Festival in Tennessee. During the trip, I remember Hunter telling us that we were his best friends and that he loved us. Little did we know it would be the last time we would ever talk to him.

Losing Hunter was really devastating. But being involved in the Hunter Watson Fund has given all of us a way to make something positive. From the seed of that tragedy, a lot of good has grown.



Hunter remembered in New York Central Park, a favorite of him and his friends.

A Central Park bench is a way to memorialize or honor a loved one. In recognition of contributions to the fund, the Central Park Conservancy installs a personalized plaque on a park bench of the donor’s choosing. This group maintains the Park and its benches. The Watson family endowed their bench privately.

 **DON'T MISS FUTURE NEWSLETTERS,
SIGN UP AT: WWW.HUNTERWATSON.ORG**

One Summer as Rock Stars

The Story of Black Out Band



Black Out Band

when a trio of 10 and 11 year old musicians made a video that took YouTube by storm. Black Out Band, as they were known, included Hunter Watson on vocals and guitar, Matt Salutillo on drums and Robert “Tug” Hunter on bass. Their song, “Video Games” penned by Hunter and his mom Judy, has an up-tempo pop-style melody that made it an instant hit at school assemblies and local festivals.

Like many kids their age, these boys were obsessed with video games. Judy recalls Hunter not wanting to go to music lessons or even to school. He told her, “I just want to play video games.” Judy and Hunter’s music coach suggested he write a song about it. So, he did — writing the chorus and one verse. And when he got stuck, his mom helped out with the other verses.

The band began practicing the song and adding it to their repertoire of covers. Then came the big debut, the band performed on Field Day at Matt and Tug’s school and everyone loved the song. Matt recalls, “It was great. We were rock stars for the day in front of all our friends.”



Hunter Watson 11 Years Old

During one of the band’s Saturday practices in the basement of the Watson home, the subject of doing a video came up. Hunter’s mom Judy Watson recalls, “We were thinking it was something fun to do on a weekend. A way to encourage the kids in their creativity. We never imagined it was going to be so big.”

But the video blew up on social media. As of this writing, the song has been viewed more than 10 million times on YouTube. You can check it out yourself by searching on YouTube for “Black Out Band Video Games”. In the months after its release, the Watsons had to stop answering their phone at home because they were receiving so many calls. Judy remembers, “Everyone was looking for the video games kid.”

As the boys got older and had other demands on their time, Black Out Band stopped performing. They never had a hit record or became professional musicians. And truth be told, as young adults, they endured some teasing from their friends about their ‘tween band’ fame.

Plus, Matt and Tug acknowledge that losing Hunter has made the band memories a tad bittersweet. But both young men look back with gratitude to their summer as rock stars. Tug recalls, “The summer we made the video, it became my whole life. We were only 11 and 12 but

we were artists...playing gigs and having video shoots.”

Matt shared, “I still think of Hunter all the time. The hurt never goes away. But it reminds me to focus on doing the things that make me happy. Hunter was really good at that. He didn’t worry too much about what other people thought. I think that piece of him is a little bit inside of me now and that’s a good thing.”

Tug and Matt both support Hunter’s Fund and appreciate the organization’s focus on supporting young artists. According to Tug, “Life isn’t worth living without artists, without creativity. Anything I can do to make it easier for the next kid who’s into film or music or art, I’m all in.”

Not all families have the resources to hire music coaches and video producers, but all kids have dreams. According to Judy, “With the Hunter’s Fund grants, we are nurturing creativity in other young people just like we were able to do for Hunter, Matt and Tug with this video. It’s been a wonderful way to carry on Hunter’s passion.”

With the support of our generous donors, Hunter’s Fund invests in young people’s dreams each year. So far 10 grants have been awarded just this year and whether the grants provided to these young people result in a successful career path, or a few months of YouTube fame, we are proud to invest in a world where they can follow their hearts. Thank you for believing in their dreams.

Many Interests – One of a Kind



With Hunter’s Fund you are supporting young men and women of diverse interests and talents, so they can let their passions shine.

The inspiration and our mission come from Hunter himself. He was a young man of extremely diverse talents and interests. Wherever he went, whatever he did, he brought a spark and a smile and a contagious energy that inspired those around him.

And while his life was too short, and the hurt that those who loved him feel will never fully heal, there is a peace that comes from knowing that Hunter succeeded in *getting the most out of every day he lived.*