



**MITCHELL STERLING
FOUNDATION**

Mitchell Sterling Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship will be awarded to three graduating seniors in the state of Indiana who will continue their education at a two-year or four-year College or University or Vocational/Trade Program. Applicants must hold a 3.3 Cumulative GPA or higher, participate in extracurricular activities and also demonstrate a desire to make a positive or impactful change in their community. Each recipient will be awarded \$3000 and will be recognized on the Mitchell Sterling Foundation website as a safe driving ambassador.

Mitchell Sterling was a junior at Valparaiso High School. He was a committed student and a two-sport varsity athlete, running in hurdles for the track team and playing on the varsity tennis team. Mitch was a new member of the Mayor's Youth Council and just started to pursue his dream of flying lessons. Fellow students often described Mitchell's positive energy and the uplifting presence he brought to the halls and classrooms of Valparaiso High School. He planned to attend Indiana University after graduation, following the path of his older brother.

Outside of school, Mitchell had a love for the outdoors, especially hiking and skiing. He dreamed of climbing Mount Hood and Patagonia, earning his pilot's license, and travelling the world. His sharp wit and sense of humor left a lasting impression on everyone around him, and the friendships he built were meaningful and sincere. Above all, Mitchell was known for his genuine character, his kindness, sense of humor and his faith in God that guided him throughout his life.

Mitchell was 16, in the midst of his junior year, when a tragic and preventable accident took his life at 6:30 pm on Monday, November 4, 2024. Since there was no school the next day, Mitchell invited a group of friends over to his house. In true Mitch fashion, he jumped on his e-bike to greet them at the end of his driveway and while waiting, took a short ride out onto the road. Upon his return to the driveway, he was struck from behind by a distracted driver. The driver was driving over the speed limit while talking on the phone. By the time her attention was on the road, it was too late. This preventable tragedy happened in a split second, and could have been avoided if the driver was not distracted.

This scholarship is not only to honor the beautiful, yet short life of Mitchell Sterling, but also to raise awareness about the prevalent issue of distracted driving. Sending or reading a text message takes your eyes off the road for 3-5 seconds. That is the same as driving the entire length of a football field at 55 mph with your eyes closed! Texting/phone use is not the only form of distracted driving. Having two eyes on the road and two hands on the wheel at all times could have saved over 3,000 lives last year - including Mitchell's.



Application

Date Submitted _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

What high school do you attend?

Cumulative GPA _____

Do you participate in extra curricular activities and if so, what are they?
(Include jobs, clubs, sports, volunteering)

What school will you be attending after graduation?

What do you plan to study? Or What trade do you plan to pursue?



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Use this space for anything else relevant to this application that you would like to share with us

*By signing and submitting this application, you agree to uphold the **Two Eyes Two Hands pledge**, committing to keeping two eyes on the road and two hands on the wheel at all times while driving. Please sign below as your promise to be a safe driving ambassador in honor of Mitchell Sterling and others whose lives have been lost.*

Signature



Essay Prompt

Please touch on all of the following in your essay:

1. After visiting the website, what part of Mitchell's story had the most impact on you? Did you learn or feel anything new about the impact of distracted driving that you did not know before?
2. Do you have any personal experiences with distracted driving and how has it made you think differently each time you get behind the wheel?
3. What can be done to stop distracted driving?
4. What do you think is the most prevalent form of distracted driving? Is it more than just smartphone use?
5. Currently, Indiana Law prohibits drivers from holding mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, in their hands while driving to reduce distracted driving and improve safety. Do you feel this has been effective?
6. What additional law or laws do you think should be implemented to protect other drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists from distracted drivers?

You are encouraged to provide any personal experiences regarding distracted driving that you may have been affected by or witnessed or add to these prompts. Essays will be judged on clarity, emotional impact, originality, and thoughtfulness.



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Submission

Please include a letter of recommendation from a teacher, coach, counselor or faculty member that you have interacted with during high school, who can tell us more about you and why you would be the best recipient for this scholarship.

Note: Application page and essays should be submitted by email to:
mitchellsterlingfoundation@gmail.com.

***Winners are asked to post on their social media accounts announcing their scholarship. This will help us raise awareness about the foundation, its mission, and the 2 Eyes 2 Hands campaign. The post graphics and caption will be provided to assist with the announcement.**

****Your original thoughts are valuable and we want to hear your unique voice. To support academic honesty, submissions will be reviewed for possible use of AI tools to ensure original work.**