



**LifeSmarts**  
Learn it. Live it.

## Faces of LifeSmarts | Kelsey Becker

LifeSmarts Student of the Year



### Safety first

How LifeSmarts is helping save lives

Kelsey Becker was driving in the midst of a storm when her car hydroplaned. Most other teenagers would not have known what to do in this perilous situation. Instead of panicking, Becker remembered what she had learned while studying for LifeSmarts: to take her foot off of the accelerator, steer to an open area, and maintain her composure. She was able to safely avoid a fateful accident that day.

This incident may be one of the reasons why

health and safety is Becker's favorite LifeSmarts topic. "LifeSmarts has really taught me important knowledge that is applicable to everyday life. It helps me and others know what to do. We know our rights, and can cash in on them. The safety aspect of the program can even save lives," said Becker.

Another reason the importance of safety knowledge hits close to home for Becker: her father was a firefighter for 34 years. "I like that

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information about health and safety is still getting out there through LifeSmarts. Fire safety was only taught in early elementary school, and that material is so important for people – like being sure a fire alarm is operable, or learning what to do if there’s a grease fire.”

This 2015 Student of the Year has been involved with LifeSmarts since her freshman year of high school and has, remarkably, made it to the national LifeSmarts competition each year.

Becker, who was her team’s captain her junior and senior years, kept her teammates informed through text messages and at school, organized fundraising events, scheduled and led practices, communicated with the local media to promote the LifeSmarts program, and even coordinated Safety Smart programs with local elementary school classrooms. It is no wonder that with Becker’s leadership, the Jamestown High School’s LifeSmarts team is North Dakota’s state champion.

Becker, who is also a part of the national LifeSmarts Student Advisory Board, has found that aside from the practical knowledge gained through the program, she has also developed new



*Becker poses with her team, the North Dakota state champions from Jamestown, ND, at the 2015 National LifeSmarts Competition in Seattle, WA.*

leadership skills. “When you have a team that looks to you for the answers and for knowing what to do next, it really is an opportunity to either make it or break it. It’s an important skill I’m grateful to have acquired so that I can apply it in other areas of my life,” said Becker.

She disputes the notion that LifeSmarts is purely an academic competition. “When you hear you have to sit and study, you think of reserved, nerdy kids, but you actually have to be aggressive in LifeSmarts, kind of like when you’re playing sports.”

She recalled one of her favorite moments throughout her four-year career with LifeSmarts – the trip to Disney World in Orlando with her team during her junior year. “LifeSmarts has provided me with new opportunities that I wouldn’t have gotten to have otherwise,” noted Becker.

On what kept her motivated to succeed in LifeSmarts for four years, Becker said, “I really loved the information and the people that I got to interact with. If you want a chance to learn very useful information that will help you and others throughout your life, then you should definitely join LifeSmarts. On top of that, it’s so much fun. So, the choice is yours.”

Becker will take the knowledge that she has gained through LifeSmarts with her to MIT this fall. “All in all, she is the ‘mother hen’ and the ‘glue’ of our program. And with her graduation this year, it will be a tremendous loss to our program. She will be greatly missed,” said Coach Marchel Krieger.