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Sailors Experience Drunk Driving In Save A Life Simulator

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Sailors at Naval Air Station Oceana felt what it was like to drive drunk Friday. The Save A Life Tour brought a simulator to the base to remind sailors to be the one to take the keys and save a life this holiday season.

Jorge Narvaez was all confidence as he sat in the simulator and started the "car". As the program ran, he began to feel more and more drunk. His reactions slowed. He nearly hit a truck. Almost ran off the road. And several times almost killed himself.

Standing up from the console his knees wobbled. Jorge was more than dizzy he was heartsick. He choked up as he told me he just lost a best friend in a drunk driving accident Thanksgiving weekend.

"I am really sweating. Knowing it doesn't have to happen. Knowing he's got a little girl who will never know him. It's hard."

Brian Beldyga helped develop the Save A Life Simulator. He says the wrap around screens and delayed programming play with your equilibrium. Your perception is distorted in the same manner as when you are drunk.

As the program intensifies, the reactions are similar to those of someone who's blood alcohol level is higher and higher.

"You experience the effect of alcohol in a way it's never been seen before because the only angle anyone ever had before was a drunk one."

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving more than 28-thousand people were convicted of DUI in Virginia last year. Almost 8-thousand injured, and more than 3-hundred killed in crashes involving alcohol.

The Save A Life Simulator is intended to do just that. Remind people to be the one to take the keys, don't let friends drive drunk, and save a life. When each person goes through the simulator they receive a bracelet that reads "I'll take the keys".

Jorge says he'll wear it all the time as a reminder. He just wishes he'd been the one to take the keys from his friend Thanksgiving weekend.

"This says I'm going to do the right thing. I'm going to take the keys."

The Save A Life Tour was scheduled to go to Naval Station Norfolk Saturday, Dam Neck on Monday, and Little Creek on Tuesday.

If you would like to learn more, go to <http://www.savealifetour.com/>



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