* Tatum Venckus
* The Challenge
* When I was younger about 10 years old I was hit by a car. I will forever remember that moment in my life because I woke up thinking I was thankful to be alive.
* It started off as any normal day, a day spent well with my friends. All we wanted to do was go for a walk to the store, every thing seemed good except the walk back from the store turned into a living disaster and a scene for everyone to remember. When I reached an intersection that was under construction, I started making my way across the street and stopping at the big orange sign that said “DO NOT CROSS” (how ironique right?). As I peered into the far lane the cars appeared to be stopped, but what was I thinking? I didn’t even think to check the inside lane. I can still remember all the noise and my intuition telling me not to cross. Finally with anticipation I began to cross. BAM!!! I was struck. My body flailed into the air landing on top of the hood, as I rolled down the windshield I found my way to the hot scratchy pavement snapping my collarbone in three places. As for me that’s what someone told me, as soon as the car stuck me I was out like a light only remembering the aftermath of waking up on the ground. Waking up not knowing what happened is the worst feeling in the world but as soon as I saw all these strangers standing above me I knew, I just knew I had been hit. I will never forget everybody’s eyes staring me down to see if I was still alive or all right. I lie there in shock not knowing what to think, feel or do. Just nothingness. Before I knew it the ambulance arrived and I was strapped to a stretcher and carried away. The ride on the way to the hospital was a stressful environment. The pain I was feeling in my right collarbone was uncomfortable and unfamiliar.

Anyways after I got home, it was time for recovery and rejuvenation. If you think about it this was a lot for a 10 year old and the parents to handle especially since it could’ve been a close call for my life.

Ever since this happened I started thinking a lot about something that dealt with safety involving cars and people. It wasn’t until this year, (my junior year) I decided to attend Riverpoint Academy. Coming to this school I realized that my potential idea for nighttime visibility for runners could possibly include light up LED bands and headbands, could come true with the right team and inspiration. The teammates and I wanted to make it possible. We thought “ How might we make runners more visible to cars at night from far away?” This statement took a lot of contemplating and thought. This was our challenge. We gathered Intel and discovered what we could do. We wanted to help both sides from the runner’s perspective and the drivers. That’s when LITE NITE came to life.

We ended up brainstorming over 100+ ideas narrowing them carefully; we came up with our LED bands. The LED lights are programed for certain colors and functions with only one goal, and that is to keep runners visible at night and to give drivers reaction time to someone running or walking on the side of the road. The members of the group each had something to bring to the table whether it was ideas, organization or sewing and arts and crafts. Working together really showed us how much we could get done and how much of a problem we could solve!

It all started with wanting to raise awareness to everybody around us that running at night or nighttime activities aren’t always safe for people and especially the driver. LITE NITE provides safety, quality and style to all those nighttime runners and athletes.

How we came to know what we know? We started off basic, gaining empathy towards our goal and future product, we set out to know what runners and drivers wanted out on the market that would make a safe environment for everyone! That’s how we found our brightest ideas, which were from former athletes, present athletes and drivers! All there opinions helped us form our final idea for LED bands.

What can you do to help? What can everyone do to see the big picture? Maybe a small donation to start manufacturing LITE NITE Leds would be helpful! After all who wouldn’t want to be visible at night? Lets make the world a safe place for runners and athletes at night. Can you imagine how much less of a hassle it would be to actually see runners at night and for runners to know they are visible? Think about it. Less stressful environment makes the world go round and everybody happy. Just picture that with the new and latest LITE NITE Led bands. Run. Through the Nite.

So on and so forth, throughout our struggles and challenges I really learned what its like to be on a real team and face real world problems. I also learned the importance of each member and how I could not do it without them. So in the end I am thankfully glad that we all learned from each other in ways, which I thought I would never learn. For example I’m for sure we all had our ups and down in communication skills but overall we learned to overcome that, after all communication is a practice not a right and only happens if you make it happen. Over the past months this project opened our eyes to so many amazing things and amazing people that we met along the way and that just made our journey so much more exciting! We learned so much and I don’t regret any of it and I’m thankful for that and my wonderful teammates. As said before “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; and working together is success.” –Henry Ford