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Students shine light on danger driving habits

BY **SEAN MURPHY**

HUNDREDS of students have campaigned for safer roads and warned of the "deadly consequences" of bad driving.

The road safety initiative involving University of Limerick and An Garda Síochána saw over 1,000 students highlight the dangers.

A college spokesperson said: "The students across Ireland engaged in the potentially life-saving project as part of the Road Safety Reimagined initiative, highlighting the lifelong and potentially devastating impact of a moment's distraction behind the wheel.

"Research from the Road Safety Authority (RSA) in 2023 found that nearly one in 10 Irish drivers have been caught using their phones while driving.

"In response, Road Safety Reimagined tasked students from UL, South East Technological University, University of Galway, Maynooth University, and University College Cork to reimagine road safety through contemporary marketing concepts and develop solutions to positively impact driving behaviour."

The students highlighted several dangerous driving habits that distract motorists from responsible road safety.

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These include applying make-up behind the wheel, engaging in distracting conversation with passengers,

and using a mobile phone.

The headline for the best safety message by a winning team of UL students was 'Worst passenger? Your phone'.

The college spokesperson said: "The winning concept highlighted the dangers of using a phone while driving, taking a driver's eyes, hands and focus away from the road.

"By merging these ideas, our campaign highlights the deadly consequences of distracted driving and urges drivers to make safer choices behind the wheel."

Garda Commissioner Drew Harris, who began his role in 2018 and is due to leave in September, praised the Road Safety Reimagined project, which started three years ago.

He said: "It opens up conversations around road safety and helps us to reach those who often struggle to connect with this key message.

"Too often we see tragedy on the roads, and so, anything we can do to prevent this from happening An Garda Síochána is glad to support."



CAMPAIGN Two members of winning team, students Esther Olaoye and Callum O'Leary, with Sergeant Tony Miniter of the Limerick Roads Policing Unit and Dr Christina O'Connor, UL