



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 5, 2009

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LOCAL INNOVATIVE, LIFESAVING ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS NATIONALLY HONORED

*Recipients from ten states awarded for efforts to reduce crashes,
injuries and fatalities*

(Washington, DC) -- The Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today recognized 14 local programs and one national program from 10 states across the country for excellence and innovation in operations, planning and roadway design to reduce fatalities and injuries on our nation's highways.

"The roster of award winners represents the most dynamic and creative highway safety programs, and sets a standard for others to follow," said Greg Cohen, Executive Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation. "These projects help prevent traffic crashes and fatalities, and assist in fighting the national epidemic of more than 37,000 road deaths and 2.5 million injuries that occur on our nation's roadways every year."

Roadway Safety Award recipients were evaluated on three criteria – innovation, effectiveness, and efficient use of resources. Program categories included infrastructure improvements, operational improvements and program planning, development and evaluation. The award recipients were selected from more than 100 entries received.

"This award ceremony is a good opportunity to shine a light on the nation's most innovative road safety projects and programs that eliminate or sharply reduce highway deaths across the United States," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. "We can never stop looking for new and creative ways to make driving and traveling safer."

This year's honorees include:

Operational Improvements Category:

* **Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks (TACT) (Nationwide):** The TACT program of The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is an education and enforcement program to reduce unsafe driving practices involving cars and large trucks.

* **Senior Zones (FL):** Florida's "Senior Zones" campaign worked with assisted living facilities on major roads and with high traffic volumes to incorporate reduced speed zones with solar-powered warning flashers, thermo-plastic speed markings, driveway access signs, and look down cameras to detect the presence of pedestrians.

* **Operation Teen Safe Driving (IL):** Illinois' peer-to-peer teen driving program challenged teens to develop a school-wide program that would have a positive impact on teen drivers. The program, which was conducted completely by teens, was met with huge success, with a forty percent reduction in teen driving deaths from 2007-2008.

Program Planning, Development and Evaluation Category:

* **Highway Safety Issues Group (WA):** A team of safety experts, advocates, and executives, the HSIG was instrumental in WSDOT providing greater resources and emphasis on safety by instituting centerline rumble strips, cable median barrier, and low-cost safety enhancement programs. These programs contributed to the decrease in fatal and serious injury collisions.

* **Strategies to Reduce Alcohol Related Fatalities in PA (PA):** The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) employed various strategies to combat the dangerous trend of drunk driving, resulting in the lowest incidence of alcohol related crashes and injuries in ten years in 2008, and a steadily decreasing alcohol-related fatality rate.

* **Plan 4 Safety (NJ):** Plan4Safety is an online comprehensive crash analysis software application developed by the Transportation Safety Resource Center (TSRC) and funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to support New Jersey safety professionals in making data-driven decisions by analyzing 144 pieces of data for over 300,000 crash records per year.

Infrastructure Improvement Category:

* **St. Petersburg City Trails Pedestrian Crosswalk Enhancer (FL):** The St. Petersburg City Trails Crosswalk Enhancer program increased motorist crosswalk compliance rates from 2% to 82% by installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, or Enhancers, at crosswalks throughout the greater St. Petersburg area.

* **Texas Safety Bond Program (TX):** The Texas Department of Transportation Safety Bond Program has provided more than \$1.2 billion for safety improvement construction projects aimed at reducing the number of motor vehicle crashes and associated fatalities and injuries on Texas highways.

* **Highway 7 Centerline Rumble Strip Project (AR):** Centerline rumble strips were installed as part of a statewide project in Arkansas to place shoulder rumble strips on more than 382 miles of Interstate and multi-lane facilities in the State, resulting in a forty percent reduction of roadway departure crashes and a thirty-nine percent reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes after the rumble strips were installed. Additionally, the state of Arkansas has realized an annual economic benefit of \$3.7 million to the State from the reduction in crashes.

* **Vasco Road Traffic Safety Improvement Measures (CA):** Officials in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, CA worked to reduce a high incidence fatal accidents on Vasco Road, a main thoroughfare, through a coordinated effort including speed display signs, community safety signs, daytime headlight signs, soft median barrier striping, centerline delineators, double fine zone, coordinated speed enforcement, and collaborative agency funding, resulting in a drop of the crash rate per million vehicle miles from 0.58 to 0.42, 36% less crashes in 2007 than in 2005.

Honorable Mentions Include:

* **Teens in the Drivers Seat (TX):** The Teens in the Driver Seat® Program (TDS) is a peer-to-peer safety initiative for young drivers that has shown outstanding progress in reducing car crashes involving teen drivers, and stands apart from other programs by involving the teen audience directly in both the development and dissemination of safety messages. Since the program's introduction, the number of teens involved in fatal crashes in Texas has dropped by 33 percent – more than any other state and more than twice the national average from 2003 to present.

* **Strategic Highway Safety Plan (CA):** California's Strategic Highway Safety Plan was formed by identifying the state's highest-priority safety issues and establishing 152 distinctive objectives from sixteen challenge areas identified from input by local, state, and federal stakeholders. In 2008, California's traffic fatalities decreased 13.2%, reaching their lowest level since the federal government began recording traffic fatalities in 1975.

* **Roundabout Implementation Program (WI):** The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) embarked on an extensive intersection safety improvement effort through the use of roundabouts, compiling and utilizing information on best practices for the design, engineering, and operation of roundabout systems, as well as educating the public on their proper usage, creating a model program for other states to follow.

* **Midwest States Pooled Fund Program (NE):** The Midwest Guardrail System, in response to studies showing high rollover risks for traditional guardrails, worked to design

new standards for the construction of guardrails on highways, creating a design that performs better in crash tests at lower costs than other systems. The system is currently under consideration for adoption by 12 states.

*** Interstate 10 Delineator System (CA):** In response to high incidences of damage to low-visibility raised islands along I-10, the California Department of Transportation installed highly visible and damage resistant Qwick Kurb delineators along a two-mile segment of I-10 to increase the visibility of the raised islands separating the freeway from the collector road. Over a one year span there is no damage and no replacements or repairs are necessary.

Blue Ribbon Panel Judges included: Philip Caruso, Deputy Executive Director for Technical Programs, Institute of Transportation Engineers; Cathy Gillen, Managing Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation; Anthony Giancola, Executive Director of the National Association of County Engineers; Peter Kissinger, President and CEO of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, and James McDonnell, Deputy Program Director, Engineering of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

Roadway safety programs are a critical part of the nation's solutions to saving lives and preventing injuries on our nation's highways. Of the 37,261 people killed in traffic crashes on U.S. roads in 2008, nearly 59 percent of the fatalities involved a departure from the roadway and 21 percent were at an intersection or intersection-related (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2008 Annual Assessment of Motor Vehicle Crashes).

The Federal Highway Administration and the Roadway Safety Foundation present the bi-annual Roadway Safety Awards to programs and projects across the nation exhibiting excellence in roadway design, operations and planning. The RSF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable and educational organization solely dedicated to reducing the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes by improving the safety of America's roadways. For additional information on RSF please visit www.roadwaysafety.org. For additional information on FHWA safety programs please visit <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov>.

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ATTENTION EDITORS – Digital photographs of the award winners at the luncheon in Washington, DC will be available by calling (202) 857-1203. Detailed information on the award winning programs will be posted at www.roadwaysafetyawards.org.