



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Acting Secretary

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CONTACT:
Brian Williamsen 217.720.0443
Guy Tridgell 312.793.4199

IDOT's Operation Teen Safe Driving Program Announces 2014-15 Winning Schools

Innovative Program Helps Save Lives, Promotes Safe Driving Habits

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation, Ford Motor Company Fund, Allstate Foundation, Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White and Illinois State Police today announced the winning schools from each of the seven regions of the 2014-15 Operation Teen Safe Driving (OTSD) program.

OTSD began in 2007 in Tazewell County and expanded to a statewide program in 2008. Since the onset of the program the teen fatalities have dropped by 54.2% percent. The program lets teens create their own safe driving campaigns and share them with their peers, in an effort to promote safe driving habits among a traditionally high-risk age group.

“Through this educational initiative, we are working to reduce the number of teen injuries and deaths on Illinois roads,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “This engaging, peer-led program leaves a lasting impression on the students and their communities. We congratulate this year’s winners and all schools that participated.”

A total of 102 schools completed this year’s OTSD program, modeled after the Ford Motor Company Fund’s nationally recognized *Ford Driving Skills for Life* teen safety program. These schools each received \$2,000 to implement their safe driving programs.

“The Allstate Foundation is proud to support Illinois students in their efforts to promote safe driving in their schools,” said Bill McGrath, Regional Sales Leader for Allstate’s Midwest Region. “The Foundation’s research shows that peer-driven campaigns can have a powerful effect on teen driving attitudes and behavior while also helping foster leadership skills and



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advocacy among teens. Through Operation Teen Safe Driving, we're truly harnessing the power of peer influence to change the way teens think and act in the car."

"Teens face many challenges as new drivers in today's society such as increased distractions, new laws and more vehicles on the roadways," said Illinois State Police Colonel Mike Zerbonia. "Operation Teen Safe Driving is a valuable opportunity for a positive interaction between teens and law enforcement to develop innovative ways to reduce teen fatalities."

Final judging was held in Springfield in March. The top five winning schools from each OTSD region receive prizes ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 to host a post-prom event, and an invitation to the *Ford Driving Skills for Life* "Ride and Drive" events.

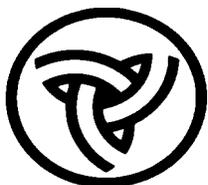
More than 35 schools will be invited to participate in the "Ride and Drive" events held in Springfield April 27-28 and Chicago April 30-May 1. Professional drivers will provide young drivers with rigorous behind-the-wheel driving exercises, including hazard recognition/accident avoidance, vehicle handling/skid control, and speed/space management.

"All of us at Ford Driving Skills for Life are so proud of the great student, parent and school engagement this program has seen over its eight year span. Working together with such great partners as IDOT, Illinois Secretary of State and Allstate Foundation, great strides have been made in reducing crashes across the state. We are excited to continue to see great enthusiasm by all involved," said Jim Graham, Manager of *Ford Driving Skills for Life*.

"When I established the Teen Driver Safety Task Force the goal was to overhaul Illinois' graduated driver licensing (GDL) law in a manner that would save lives," said Secretary of State White. "I am encouraged that teen driving deaths are down by over 54 percent since the law took effect January 1, 2008. Illinois' comprehensive GDL program, in conjunction with the Operation Teen Safe Driving initiative, is having the intended impact on teen driving safety. Congratulations to the winners as well as to the schools that participated in this important program."

Here are the winning schools in each region:

Region One: 1st place, Oak Forest HS; 2nd place, Hillcrest HS; 3rd place, Whitney Young College Prep; 4th place, Notre Dame College Prep; 5th place, Thornton-Fractional North HS
Region Two: 1st place, Gifford Street HS; 2nd place, St. Anne Community HS; 3rd place, Woodstock HS; 4th place, Seneca HS; 5th place, IC Catholic Prep



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Region Three: 1st place, Sandwich HS; 2nd place, Riverdale HS; 3rd place, Galva HS; 4th place, West Carroll HS; 5th place, Aquin Catholic HS

Region Four: 1st place, Beardstown HS; 2nd place, Quincy HS; 3rd place, Fieldcrest HS; 4th place, Farmington HS; 5th place, ROWVA HS

Region Five: 1st place, Gibson City Melvin Sibley HS; 2nd place, Lutheran School Association; 3rd place, Clifton Central HS; 4th place, Okaw Valley HS; 5th place, Tuscola HS

Region Six: 1st place, Waterloo HS; 2nd place, Griggsville-Perry HS; 3rd place, Mater Dei Catholic HS; 4th place, Jersey HS; 5th place, Litchfield HS

Region Seven: 1st place, Casey-Westfield HS; 2nd place, Patoka HS; 3rd place, Herrin HS; 4th place, Gillespie HS; 5th place, Beecher City HS

