

Teens in the Driver Seat®

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2008

Gearing up for the TDS Summit

Are you looking for a way to get plugged in to the Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) movement? Don't miss your chance to get involved and stay informed on teen driving safety issues by registering for the [Teens in the Driver Seat Summit](http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tds08/). Teens, parents, professionals and safety advocates from Texas and beyond will gather on October 24-25 at the University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA) to explore the transportation issues that plague America's youth and discuss innovative solutions to combat this epidemic.

Award-winning teams from a few of the 125 schools involved in TDS will share their group's activities and the impact their messages are making on their communities. Roundtable teen discussion groups will talk about the roots of the teen driver crash problem and

Teens in the Driver Seat SUMMIT

Register now at

<http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tds08/>

discuss how to take the TDS program back to high schools with fresh ways to share key message points.

Don't miss your opportunity to be a TDS star by sharing your personal driving experiences and TDS success stories and recording a public service announcement to spread safety messages on TV and radio.

While in beautiful San Antonio, schedule a UTSA campus tour before or after the summit by calling the UTSA Visitor Center at (210) 458-5145 or by visiting their "[1604 Campus Tour](http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tds08/)" page on their website.

For those who cannot attend the TDS Summit in person, please join a free webinar session ("Session 2 – How to do TDS" on Friday, October 24, 2:00–2:45 p.m. CST) on the Internet. To participate in the webinar, send an email with the subject line, *TDS Webinar Request*, to [Kathy Montemayor](mailto:kathy@montemayor.com). In the body of the email include your full name and email address. Upon your request a unique invitation will be emailed to you containing the link, log-in

password and instructions. All requests must be received before 5:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, October 22, in order to participate in the webinar.

Last year, Congress declared October 19-25 as National Teen Driver Safety Week, recognizing that car crashes are the number-one killer of America's youth, with an annual toll of more than 6,000 teenage fatalities, 400,000 teen injuries and a national economic cost of over \$40 billion. Teens in the Driver Seat is committed to stopping this tragic epidemic, but we need your help.



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Check TDS out
on YouTube!

They spoke up, now they are cashing in!

Teens across Texas recently had a chance to speak up about teen driver safety issues as part of the *Driving the Message* contest hosted by the Texas Transportation Institute's Teens in the Driver Seat program. The contest helped raise awareness of teen driver safety issues across Texas. High school students showcased their creative work in the form of video public service announcements, scrapbooks of TDS activities or posters.

Overall, 41 posters, 25 PSAs and 6 program scrapbooks were judged by both teens and adults from State Farm Insurance of Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas Transportation Institute and Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing. Contest winners received cash awards in the amounts of \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second place and \$250 for third place. Thank you to State Farm of Texas for sponsoring these cash prizes!

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Congratulations to the winners of the *Driving the Message* contest

Video/PSA Category

- 1st Place: MacArthur High School: "Crash Course"
 2nd Place: Communications Arts High School: "Distracted"
 3rd Place: Creekview High School: "We Are Family"

Poster Category

- 1st Place: Communications Arts High School: "6000"
 2nd Place: Communications Arts High School: "Jet Crash"
 3rd Place: Ore City High School: "Think Texting"

Overall Program Category

- 1st Place: La Joya High School
 2nd Place: Creekview High School
 3rd Place: Garland High School

Thank you to all of the teens who submitted entries. We look forward to seeing your entries for the 2008-2009 school year's *Driving the Message* contest coming in the spring.



Communications Arts High School winning poster, "6000."



Communications Arts High School won first and second place in the poster category and second place in the video PSA category.

The Teen Perspective



Paul Head from Communications Arts High School in San Antonio, Texas.

When people learn the number of teenagers that die in car-related crashes each year, they are shocked and oftentimes appalled. It is difficult to believe that more than 6,000 teens die each year in these crashes. That's equivalent to one airplane full of teens crashing each week for an entire year. This number is astonishingly high. The reasons teens die in car crashes are talking on cell phones while driving, driving at night, drinking while driving, having too many people in the car and not wearing seatbelts. These five things can be prevented, and Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) seeks to aid in this prevention.

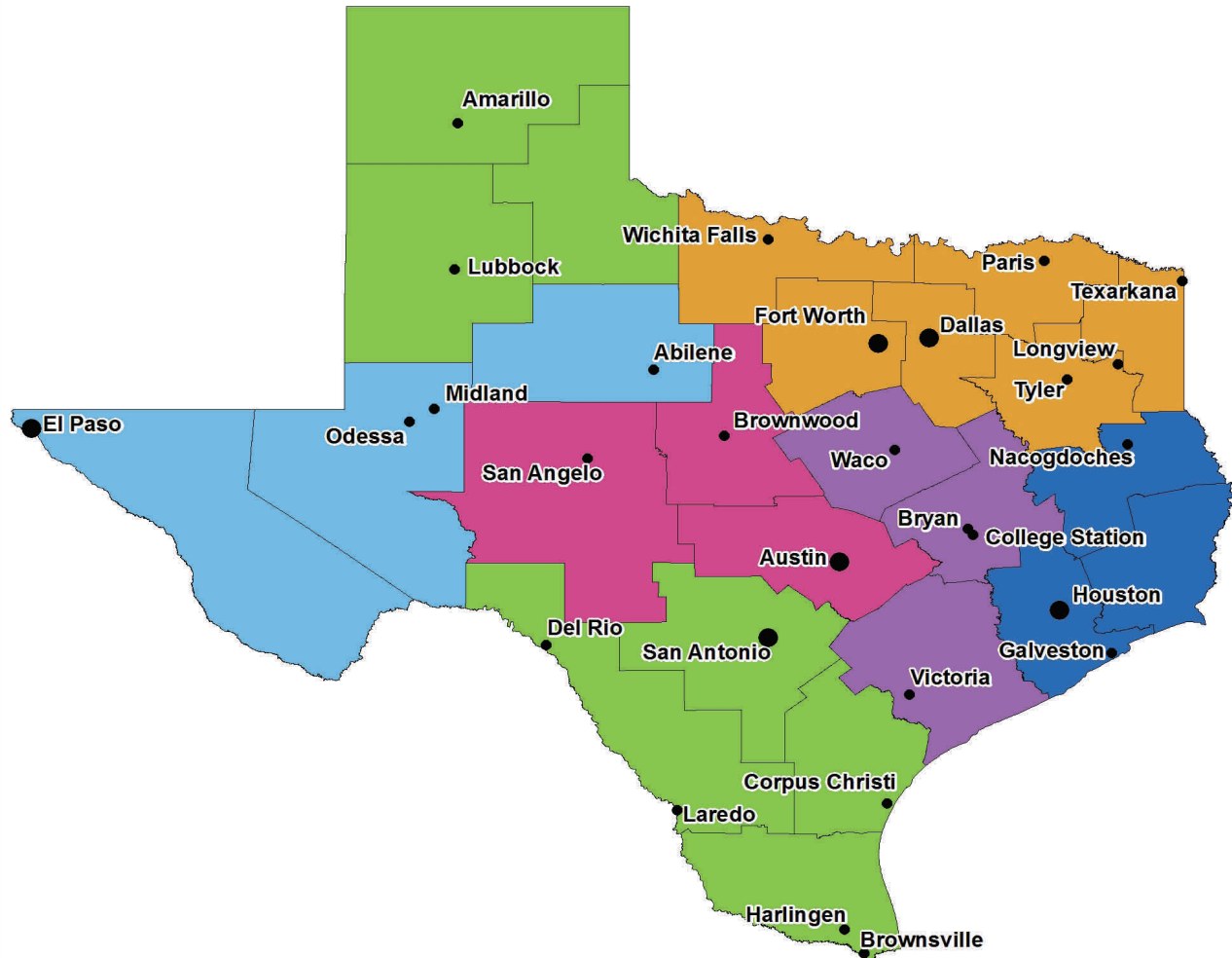
Being a part of this program has given me, and my peers, an insight into how we can change our driving habits in order to create a safer environment for us and other drivers. We brainstormed answers to the question, "What would be the best way to reach out to our classmates?" Then it hit us: posters and video PSAs. Graphic design and video production are not only our forte, but these two mediums of communication are highly effective. In addition to effectively reaching out to our peers, this gave us a chance to earn money for our school because there were two contests, one including video and one posters, that had a cash reward. As a team of eight, we came up with two posters and two videos that we submitted to the contest; we won first and second place in the poster category and second place in the video PSA category, earning \$2000 for our school. After entering the contests we then posted the large posters around our campus and showed the two videos on our weekly video announcements. We had a seminar in our school's lecture hall and gave out our full stock of promotional items. After the seminar we had many students come up to us and ask, "How can we join this effort?" or "How can we help our friends become safe drivers as well?"

When it comes to 16-year-olds, one out of five will be in a car crash, averaging about 10 crashes per day. Unfathomable. As this school year settles in, we hope to bring the TDS program back into our yearly routine, and to create more posters and more PSAs. Our slogan: "Don't become another statistic."

- Paul Head, Communications Arts High School, first place winner in the poster contest

To add your own "teen perspective" in our guest column, please e-mail your thoughts/comments to the TDS webmaster at tdswebmaster@ttimail.tamu.edu with "teen guest column" in the subject line.

TDS Regional Contacts



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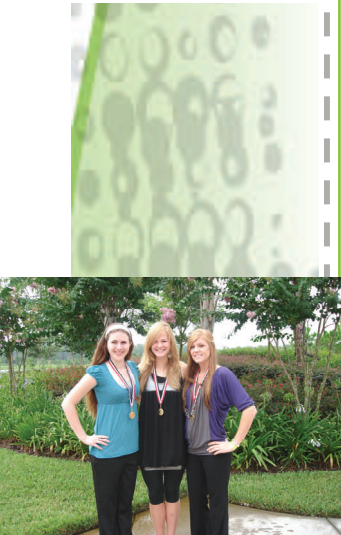
Jen Ross j-ross@tamu.edu
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Do you know teens who want to start TDS? Do you have an update to share? Does your TDS group need assistance? If so, find your location on the map and contact your regional coordinator. Your regional contact is available via phone or email. For out-of-Texas contacts, please contact Russell Henk or Bernie Fette.

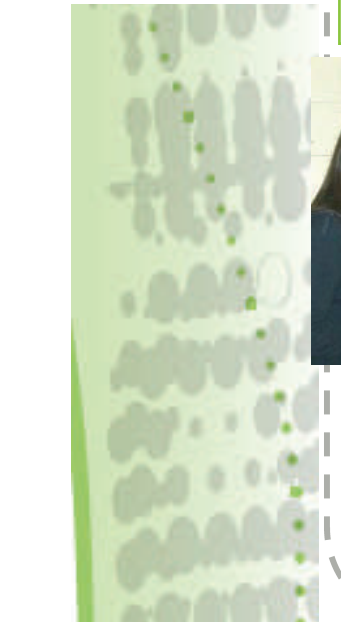
What's going on in your area?



A photo of the TDS booth set up at the Girl Scout Triathlon to recruit girls for the TDS training on October 4.



Baeli-Jones Briscoe, Susanna Lile and Calie Turley, showing off their medals after winning first place for their TDS project at the National FCCLA Conference in Orlando, Florida.



Dallas/Fort Worth

TDS Rep. Christie Madsen and Chris Poe

- **Jacksboro High School** – July 14, 3 teenagers from Jacksboro High School took first place at the National Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Conference in Orlando, Florida, for their TDS program.

Houston

TDS Rep. Lori Gray

- **Channelview High School** – A press conference previously scheduled was cancelled due to weather conditions brought on by Hurricane Gustav and Hurricane Ike. The press conference will be rescheduled. The high school group plans to incorporate a TDS float in their homecoming parade.
- **Alief ISD** – Students representing the three high schools in Alief ISD, heard a presentation on TDS by Lori Gray.
- **Prairie View A&M** – Students from across Texas attended the Career, Awareness and Youth Leadership Laboratory at Prairie View A&M to discuss leadership opportunities available in Texas. Lori Gray presented the TDS program to more than 150 students, 43 of which have shown interest in taking the program back to their high schools.
- **Montgomery ISD** – Montgomery Emergency Services Health Education Coordinator is gearing up to start the program at 10 high schools in the school district.



Miriam Baca, Monica Baca, Cindy Fierro and Manny Codina received certificates for participating in the Teens in the Driver Seat program at Socorro High School.

El Paso

TDS Reps. Jeff Shelton & Llubia Corella

- **Joint Action for Healthy Life – 66th Annual Meeting of the US-Mexico Border Health Association** – May 7-9, Jeff Shelton presented "Uniting Nations - Reducing Teen Driving Fatalities through a Peer-Based Bi-national Driving Safety Program" in Sonora Mexico.
- **Girl Scouts of the Rio Grande** – TDS and the Girl Scouts of America are joining forces. Liz Matson, Girl Scouts regional director, plans to add TDS to the Girl Scouts winter program guide. The guide reaches about 1,300 active members. TDS will host a workshop on October 4 to train the girls serving as ambassadors for the TDS program.
- **El Paso High School** – A core group of students from El Paso High School won first place for their TDS program at the Texas Delta Epsilon Chi Association (DECA) conference.
- **Irvin High School** – District IX Representative, Victoria Banuelas made a proposal to the district's school board for TDS to be an on-going permanent project. The district Student Council is pledging their full support for the TDS program in their region.
- **Girl Scouts triathlon** – October 4, TDS held a booth at a Girl Scouts Triathlon to recruit girls for the TDS ambassador training. To date, 17 girls have been recruited.
- **Eastwood High School** – During Eastwoods' homecoming parade students displayed a truck with TDS posters.
- **Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition and the Rio Grande Police Department** – Two agencies in the Rio Grande region have joined forces to work on a project that includes an assessment of underage drinking in specific communities. The coalition will be collecting data from the community questionnaires and interviews from individuals in law enforcement, public policy, education and prevention. Upon completion, the data will be used in presentations from individuals representing the communities.

El Paso continued

The project goal is to use the findings from the communities and reinforce positive action against underage drinking.

Lubbock/Amarillo/ San Antonio/Laredo

TDS Reps. Krizia Martinez, Kathy Montemayor & Russell Henk

- **La Joya High School** – Russell Henk met with students and staff to award them a plaque for winning entries in the TDS *Driving the Message* contest for superior implementation of the TDS program. The visit included a brainstorming session to kick off plans for the 2008-2009 school year. La Joya was also invited to be a highlighted school during the TDS Summit in San Antonio in October.

BCS/Yoakum, Waco

TDS Reps. Bernie Fette & Jen Ross

- **Connally High School** – The Connally ISD School Board recognized TDS and the students involved for outstanding achievement and effort to save lives in their school district. The student group is making plans for implementing TDS for the second year at their high school.

Austin/Tyler

TDS Rep. Casey Dusza & Tina Geiselbrecht

- **Schools making a comeback** – Elkhart, Robert E. Lee, Llano, Mason and Lampasas High School are all planning on being second year TDS schools.
- **TASC** – September 20, the TDS program was presented by Casey Dusza at the Texas Association of Student Councils in Austin.

OUT OF STATE

- **Connecticut** has kicked off their TDS program in three high schools: Bristol Eastern, Bristol Central and Windsor Locks High School. They are planning a press event the second week in November.
- **Georgia** is on their way for a second year of TDS implementation.

Knot Me



Here is a sample of the
"Knot Me" project

Need a new idea to keep your TDS program fresh? Some students in the Garland area have started "Knot Me".

A play on words, the knot is a symbol that the next teen lost will not (knot) be me. The idea is simple and effective and easily personalized.

With the use of rope and scraps of material or ribbon, each TDS messenger can show how many people they have reached. For every person that the core material and program information reach, a knot of material or ribbon will be tied to the rope.

Many students are attaching their "knot me" knots to their backpack, and it has created a conversation storm at high schools.

You will need:

- Rope
- Ribbon or material (use school colors to personalize the project)
- Some motivated teens to start the "Knot Me" project

Take the challenge and see how many people you can reach by starting "Knot Me" at your high school.

The Director's Corner

Welcome back! I can't believe how fast the summer went and that we are already over a month into the 2008-2009 school year. We hope you enjoyed your summer and are ready for another active TDS year. It was great to see over 120 schools actively implement the TDS program last year and to honor 15 of you as award-winning TDS schools. We enjoyed visiting with you and awarding plaques, and even cash in many cases, to recognize your great achievements. We are eager to help you accomplish continued growth of the program and see the amazing ideas and resources you come up with this year. We hope to have even more award-winning TDS schools as we continue to work together to save young lives.

During the summer, we were hard at work for you. We have been busy planning for the first-ever Teens in the Driver Seat Summit. The summit will be hosted by the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) on October 24-25. The registration spots are filling up fast – we hope you will be one of the attendees! If you can't attend this year, we welcome you to join our free online webinar on the afternoon of Friday, October 24. Directions on how to participate in the webinar are included on the [TDS Summit website](#). We are also beginning to plan the second annual TDS Summit – it will be held in the fall of 2009 in El Paso, Texas.

We also spent a lot of time over the summer checking to see if we have been making positive things happen with the TDS program, and we have exciting news to report. Since the TDS program began, fatal teen traffic crashes have decreased by about 125 per year. That's 125 teens per year - their families, their friends and classmates – that are no longer having to suffer through these preventable tragedies and wonder "why did this happen – why did their life have to end when they had so much to offer and experience?" These positive changes are not a coincidence. You really *are* making a difference with your efforts. Keep up the great work!

With the end of daylight saving time coming, we'll soon be driving in the dark at earlier hours. Please be aware that driving at night is one of the top risks for teen drivers. When you couple that with other risks – texting while driving, friends in the car, etc. – your risk of having a crash increases significantly. With football games and other evening events, be sure to plan ahead and be extra careful. We want you all to have a safe and enjoyable year.

The fall is one of the best times to start the TDS program at your school. If you haven't started yet, find your regional contact on page 3 of this newsletter and let us know you are interested. There are many ways we can help you get the program started. We've even included several ideas for projects in this newsletter to help you get rolling. We're looking forward to a successful 2008-2009 school year. Thanks for all you are doing to help save teen lives. Together, we're making a real difference in which we can all take great pride and find motivation to continue our efforts.

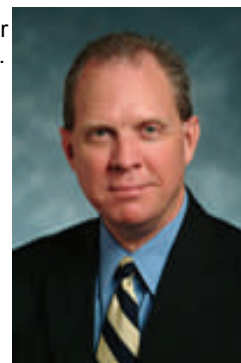
Watch for our next edition in December before the dangerous holiday break.

My best to you,
Russell Henk



Russell Henk,
TDS Director

Bernie Fette,
Director of TDS Public
Affairs



Has *your* school joined TDS in 08-09? If not, join the others that have...

- Alba Golden HS
- Aledo HS
- Alvarado HS
- Americas HS (El Paso, Texas)
- Andress HS
- Angleton HS
- Anton HS
- Archer City HS
- Argyle HS
- Azle HS
- Bethel Christian School (El Paso, Texas)
- Bosqueville HS
- Brackett HS
- Brady HS
- Bronte HS
- Caldwell HS
- Caldwell Middle School
- Channelview HS
- Connally HS (Waco, Texas)
- Cooper HS
- Edgewood HS
- Elkhart HS
- Everman HS
- Garland HS
- Grandview HS
- Harmony HS
- Irvin HS
- Killough Lewisville HS
- Lake Worth HS
- Lampasas HS
- Liberty HS (Frisco, Texas)
- Lindsay HS
- MacArthur HS (Irving, Texas)
- Mason HS
- McKinney North HS,
- Naaman Forest HS
- Nacogdoches HS
- Raymond Telles Academy
- Robert E. Lee HS (Tyler, Texas)
- Rockwall-Heath HS
- Sachse HS
- South Grand Prairie HS
- Sterling City HS
- Sweeny HS
- Waco HS
- West HS

Are you on the TDS listserv?

The listserv is a great way to get the most current information and TDS announcements. To join, email your request to the TDS webmaster at tdswebmaster@ttimail.tamu.edu.



4-H Clubs in Happy, TX and Swisher County hosted a TDS day and invited the public to learn more about the dangers teens face on the road.

Check out our profile
and friend us at

Myspace.com/teensinthedriverseat

Calendar

- October 16-20** **HARTFORD, Connecticut** - [American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\) Conference](#)
- October 18** **SAN ANTONIO, Texas** - Love UR Life
- October 19-25** **National Teen Driver Safety Week**
- October 24-25** **SAN ANTONIO, Texas** - [Teens in the Driver Seat Summit](#)
- November 17-19** **HOUSTON, Texas** - [Statewide Traffic Safety Conference](#)
- November 21-23** **DALLAS, Texas** - Family, Career and Community Leaders of America National Cluster Meeting
- November 27** **Happy Thanksgiving!**