Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) students and teachers/sponsors gathered May 6 for the second-annual TDS Day at the Capitol.

The group gathered to honor outstanding TDS teams and exceptional teachers/sponsors who won SponStar awards, to present the first TDS Leadership Award, and to recognize three outstanding State Farm representatives. Honorees received the VIP treatment from Secretary of State Hope Andrade, her staff and TDS staff.

The first-ever TDS Leadership Award was given to Mayor John Cook of El Paso, Texas. Mayor Cook is a distinguished leader in the TDS program. His efforts with the Mayor’s 100 Teens serve as an example for other communities to emulate. Thank you for your continued support of the TDS program.

The three State Farm representatives who were honored at the event were Dee Dee Bates from Garland, Texas; John Bower from Carrollton, Texas; and Russell Wiggs from El Paso, Texas. Thank you for being leaders in your communities and selflessly giving your time and resources to support TDS schools.

The 2009-2010 TDS Teen Advisory Board held its final meeting, while the 2010-2011 Teen Advisory Board had its first meeting at the TDS Day at the Capitol.

Congratulations to all award winners, and thanks to everyone who helped make the second-annual TDS Day at the Capitol a huge success.
Distractions cause increase in nighttime crashes for teens

A new nationwide analysis suggests that distractions — not alcohol — are contributing to a steady increase in nighttime fatal crashes for teenage drivers.

Vice Chairman of the House Transportation Committee Rep. Larry Phillips, TDS Director Russell Henk, and TDS Teen Advisory Board members Ashley Thompson and Fernando Sosa announced the findings on May 6.

The trends are illustrated in a report produced by the Teens in the Driver Seat Center at the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI). The analysis that produced the report examined the effects of lighting conditions on crashes from 1999 to 2008 in all 50 states, along with the presence of alcohol, as a factor in those crashes. The findings suggest something other than alcohol is pushing the nighttime fatal-crash numbers up for teen drivers. The most likely reason, researchers say, is the use of cell phones.

Researchers found:
- The proportion of nighttime fatal crashes increased for all drivers but went up slightly more for teenage drivers than for drivers age 20 and older.
- Alcohol use as a contributing factor increased for older drivers but decreased slightly for teen drivers.
- The increase in nighttime fatal crashes contrasts with a decrease in overall crash fatalities nationwide during the same period.

Russell Henk, a senior research engineer for TTI, noted that nighttime driving is the most common documented factor associated with crashes involving young drivers. Primary causes for nighttime crashes are a combination of the visibility challenges caused by dark conditions, slower response time brought about by fatigue, and lack of experience driving under such conditions. In addition, young drivers use cell phones behind the wheel (primarily for texting) much more than nonteenage drivers do.

“Being on a cell phone behind the wheel impairs our driving ability,” Henk said. “When you add the nighttime danger, you create the perfect storm, and that storm is much more severe for young drivers, largely because of their lack of driving experience.”

Despite its place at the top of the list of dangers for young drivers, the danger of nighttime driving is not well recognized. In surveys of nearly 20,000 Texas teenagers conducted by TTI, only 3 percent cited nighttime risk as a major contributor to crashes. Similar results have been noted in more limited survey samples in Georgia, California and Connecticut.

“Other dominant risk factors for teenage drivers (lack of experience, additional teenage passengers, speeding, not wearing seat belts and alcohol) have been present and well recognized for many years, long before cellular communication became prevalent,” the report notes.

“However, it is cell phone use — propelled by rapid technological advancement and increased affordability — that is likely the most notable new driving risk factor for contemporary teens,” the report says.

Read the full report at http://t-driver.com/nighttime-fatal-crash-trends/.
Congratulations to the 2009-2010 SponStar winners

Congratulations to the winners of the 2010 Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) SponStar awards. A SponStar is a teacher/sponsor that goes above and beyond what is required of him or her to make the TDS program more effective and fun.

This year's winners are:

- Marina Alcantar, Mission Early College High School, El Paso, Texas
- Lisa Gibbs, Bronte High School, Bronte, Texas
- Kimberly Hazleton, Bristol Eastern High School, Bristol, Connecticut
- Nicole Jowers, Sweeny High School, Sweeny, Texas
- Deborah Marsh, La Vernia High School, La Vernia, Texas
- Diana Nuñez, City of El Paso, El Paso, Texas
- Estela Quintanilla, Laredo Independent School District, Laredo, Texas
- Suzanne Reese, Creekview High School, Carrollton, Texas
- Brad Schaffrick, Bristol Eastern High School, Bristol, Connecticut
- Dorothy White, City of Garland/Garland Youth Council, Garland, Texas

To read their full profiles, visit the SponStar page on t-driver.com (http://t-driver.com/about/sponstar/).
The 2010-2011 Teen Advisory Board's (TAB) term for Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) has begun, and the board members have hit the ground running. The board consists of 15 teen members that represent twelve cities across Texas. This year’s board members kicked off their term with a meeting at the TDS Day at the Capitol on May 6.

The 2010 - 2011 TAB members are (clockwise from left corner):
- **Caleb Conrady**, Windthorst High School, Windthorst, TX
- **Danielle De La Paz**, Loretto High School, El Paso, TX
- **Ari Diaz**, Clint High School, Clint, TX
- **Gabby Franco**, Mission Early College High School, El Paso, TX
- **Danny Frias**, Irvin High School, El Paso, TX
- **Ana Garcia**, Richland Collegiate High School, Garland, TX
- **Cori Hash**, Archer City High School, Archer City, TX
- **Courtney Kirkland**, Brackett High School, Brackettville, TX
- **Tori Morris**, Cooper High School, Cooper, TX
- **Jose Parga**, Americas High School, El Paso, TX
- **Scott Pofahl**, Bandera High School, Bandera, TX
- **Heath Richey**, Bronte High School, Bronte, TX
- **Avery Simmons**, Tulia High School, Tulia, TX (not pictured)
- **Fernando Sosa**, United High School, Laredo, TX
- **Ashley Thompson**, Keller High School, Keller, TX

The current board members have agreed to participate the entire school year. Their term will end on April 30, 2011. Each school year, a new Advisory Board will be selected through an online application process on the TDS website. TAB members may serve more than one term, but they must re-apply and meet qualifications each year.

Please help us welcome the new Teen Advisory Board to the TDS family!

Check out the full bios the members of the TAB at http://t-driver.com/teen-advisory-board/
Congratulations to the 48 Outstanding TDS Schools that represent four states:

- Andress High School, El Paso, TX
- Argyle High School, Argyle, TX
- Brenham High School, Brenham, TX
- Bristol Central High School, Bristol, CT
- Bristol Eastern High School, Bristol, CT
- Bronte High School, Bronte, TX
- Cedar Grove High School, Atlanta, GA
- Channelview High School, Channelview, TX
- Clarendon High School, Clarendon City, TX
- Clarksville High School, Clarksville, TX
- Columbus High School, Columbus, TX
- Creekview High School, Carrollton, TX
- Del Valle High School, El Paso, TX
- Desert View Jr. High School, El Paso, TX
- Early College High School, Midland, TX
- El Paso High School, El Paso, TX
- Garland High School, Garland, TX
- Guillen Middle School, El Paso, TX
- Henderson Middle School, El Paso, TX
- Hutto High School, Hutto, TX
- Iraan High School, Iraan, TX
- Irvin High School, El Paso, TX
- J.M. Hanks High School, El Paso, TX
- Jefferson High School, El Paso, TX
- Kolarik 9th Grade Center, Channelview, TX
- La Vernia High School, La Vernia, TX
- Lakeview Centennial High School, Garland, TX
- Lamesa High School, Lamesa, TX
- Lindsay High School, Lindsay, TX
- Magnolia High School, Magnolia, TX
- Manvel High School, Manvel, TX
- Midland High School, Midland, TX
- Mission Early College High School, El Paso, TX
- Naaman Forest High School, Garland, TX
- Progressive Alternative High School, Missouri City, TX
- Randolph High School, Universal City, TX
- Raymond Telles Academy, El Paso, TX
- Riverside High School, El Paso, TX
- Rowlett High School, Rowlett, TX
- Sachse High School, Sachse, TX
- Silverado High School, Victorville, CA
- Sweeny High School, Sweeny, TX
- Taft High School, Taft, TX
- Tulia High School, Tulia, TX
- Valle Verde Early College High School, El Paso, TX
- Vidal M. Treviño Magnet High School, Laredo, TX
- Weslaco High School, Weslaco, TX
- Ysleta High School, El Paso, TX

2009-2010 TDS Outstanding Schools pictured from top to bottom: Creekview High School, Carrollton, Texas; Magnolia High School, Magnolia, Texas; Naaman Forest High School, Garland, Texas; Vidal M. Treviño School of Communications and Fine Arts, Laredo, Texas.
Graduation and summer bring extra dangers: how to stay safe

The end of the school year is right around the corner, so Teens in the Driver Seat wants to remind you to be safe while you’re celebrating graduation or vacationing over the summer break. Here are some tips on how to stay safe while you’re driving this time of year:

For graduation:
- Celebrations are a part of graduation. Make sure to get plenty of rest the night before so you are on top of your game when driving from place to place on the big day. Remember being awake for 18 hours affects your driving the same as having a .08 blood alcohol content (BAC).
- If your school is having a project graduation, join in on the fun. It’s much safer than being on the roads late, and you could win some cool door prizes.
- Remember to buckle up when you’re going to and from graduation parties and events – even if you’re in the back seat.

For summer:
- Before you travel anywhere, make sure that you give your car a once over. Inspect belts, hoses and don’t forget your tires.
- If you’re going on trips where you will be the driver make sure to get plenty of rest. Experts recommend scheduling regular stops every 100 miles or two hours.
- While summer time does mean that you have extra time to hang out with your friends, it can also mean extra passengers in the car, which means extra distractions. Make sure your friends keep it down while you’re driving and when you’re the passenger, do the same.

Have fun this summer, but remember to stay safe while you’re driving. Check out the top five major crash risks at http://t-driver.com/about/teen-dangers/ for more tips on safe teen driving.
Austin
TDS Rep. Casey Dusza & Christie Madsen Bellamy

• Casey Duzsa met with San Angelo High School and San Angelo Junior High School in May. Both schools are planning on starting the program next year.
• In April, Casey Duzsa met with Rochelle High School. They are planning on starting the program next year.
• In April, Casey Duzsa met with Austin ISD contacts and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) traffic-safety specialists about starting the program in Austin-area high schools and junior high schools.
• Christie Bellamy and Casey Duzsa are planning on meeting with Jim Riley of the Austin Police Department, who is the traffic-education coordinator with the Highway Enforcement Command, in late May. Officer Riley coordinates a program for all Austin ISD high schools and is interested in working with Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS).

BCS/Waco & Yoakum
TDS Reps. Bernie Fette, Sam Holland

• On April 13 Gatesville High School held a Safe Driving Day, where they had seven different organizations (one of which was TDS) set up exhibit booths during lunch.
• On April 19, Sam Holland spoke to the College Station Lions’ Club about getting the program started in the Bryan/College Station area.

• Sam Holland met with A&M Consolidated High School on May 3. They are planning on starting the program next year.
• Sam Holland met with St. Joseph’s High School, in Victoria, Texas on May 3. They are planning on starting the program up next year in their student council. A local newspaper and TV station were there to cover the presentation. Check it out at http://bit.ly/czvgnw

Dallas
TDS Rep. Jen Ross

• Clarksville High School sponsored a Teens in the Driver Seat Safe Driving Week. They had activities planned leading up to prom in which they handed out promotional items to the students. They posted safety messages on their electronic school sign, their picture was in the local newspaper, made announcements each morning on the intercom about the five major risks of teen driving. The leadership team wore their TDS shirts to school handed out key chains in the cafeteria. The students held a cupcake walk at lunch to illustrate “Safe driving is a piece of cake; walk away from bad habits.” Local law enforcement brought the “fatal vision” goggles to school to emphasize the danger of drunk driving. They also hosted a guest speaker whose daughter was killed by a drunk driver. The students were encouraged to wear black to school on Friday in memory of the high school students who were killed in car accidents.

• Garland High School seniors hosted an information awareness fair table on the Teens in the Driver Seat program for other students to learn more about TDS. Student Council volunteers promoted TDS and traffic safety at a local Firewheel event in March. Senior Class Officers held a TDS Awareness table at the SOS Show April 30. Student Activities aides created posters with traffic safety messages for the Senior Prom in May. Student Council students created a banner for Teens in the Driver Seat and No Phone Zone pledge to get peer signatures from seniors to sign prior to June 5 Commencement ceremony.

• Argyle High School students passed out promotional items to their peers the week leading up to prom, as a reminder to make smart decisions going to and coming from prom.

• Creekview High School Safety message boards were designed by Suzanne Reese’s Leadership Class as part of the Teens in the Driver Seat program. The students displayed their boards in the cafeteria two weeks before prom to remind the underclassmen to stay safe and drive smart, and then in Mustang Canyon (where all of the seniors exit to go to lunch) the week of prom. A PROM PROMISE board was created asking seniors to sign a pledge that they would not drink and drive on prom. Additionally each guest of the prom will be given a lifesaver a a wallet card that reads, “Think Before You Drink!” on one side and the number of a taxi service on the other. The Creekview High
What’s going on in your area?

School Leadership Class just completed a night time driving PSA featuring the “night fairy” that will air over the video announcements during class.

El Paso
TDS Reps. Llubia Corella, Lupe Ramos, Jeff Shelton
• Lupe Ramos attended the Kids Day Fair at the Westside YMCA on February 27.
• On May 10 Lupe Ramos attended the Daisy Day Girl scouts event at Ascarate Park.
• Attended the Lower Valley Health Fair at Socorro High School on May 17.
• Lupe Ramos will be attending the Scout Expo presented by the Boy Scouts at Cohen Stadium on May 24.
• Llubia Corella presented a Driving the Message Contest award to Angel Ortiz on April 16.

San Antonio
TDS Reps. Russell Henk, Timothy Lai, Krizia Martinez & Kathy Montemayor
• Steele High School in Cibolo, TX is passing out promotional items for the week on their prom.
• On the week of April 9th, Dawson High School in Welch, Texas handed out promotional items and presenting driving safety information to their students.
• On April 17th, Comfort High School held a Project Graduation fundraiser “Fiesta De Comfort” to support their high school’s project graduation event. Teens in the Driver Seat representative Timothy Lai and Amanda Pina exhibited a TDS booth and spoke at the event. Information and promotional items were handed out to the parents, students, and staff of the high school.
• On March 9th, Randolph High School in Universal City jumped on board and started TDS in their school. Timothy Lai presented the program and brainstormed with the student council members of the high school.
• Clarendon High School just finished having a teen driving safety week where they highlighted one risk per day. They handed out promotional items, did body outlines, hosted a mock wreck, had a guest speaker come and share her story regarding distracted driving, and supplemented those big projects with many others.
• On April 9 and 10th, Timothy Lai and Krizia Martinez exhibited a TDS booth at the FCCLA State Leadership Conference in Dallas, Texas.
• On May 14, over 50 La Vernia High School students were recognized for superior deployment of the TDS program. SponStar Debbie Marsh received an award for helping the students organize a two week safety campaign that involves showing a teen produced video theater arts students made, a student testimonial sharing about his involvement in a single-person 1-car rollover accident. Students had dress up days highlighting each risk factor and those who participated received a TDS promotional item. They are also involving their local precinct judge who is arranging to have a wrecked car placed across the parking lot. Job well done!
• Communications Arts High School was honored for winning 1st place in both the poster and PSA “Driving the message” contest. We celebrated with State Farm representative Enrique Enriquez who helped present the winning group with two large enlarged checks, and awarded them with certificates. Pizza was sponsored by a TDS supporter and Comm. Arts alumni Julian Contreras.

Houston
TDS Rep. Lori Gray
• At Robert E. Lee High School in Baytown, Texas, TDS students created a banner to go up before prom. The banner was hung in the school cafeteria.
• Martinsville High School’s FCCLA group has been busy this year with TDS activities. In April the group made posters to hang in classrooms reminding student about the major crash risks for teen drivers, and assembled TDS treat bags in green and black from prom that had reminder tags, pamphlets on drinking and driving, TDS key chains, and candy in them. They are also planning a TDS week and an end-of-year presentation.
• Teacher/sponsor Nicole Jowers from Sweeny High School was a 2009-2010 SponStar award winner.

Angel Ortiz won third place in the poster category for the 2010 Driving the Message Contest.
What’s going on in your area?

Comm. Arts is continuing the TDS program by enlarging and displaying the winning poster and distributing promotional items toward the end of the school year.

- On May 6th, Lamesa High School had a Drive Square Simulation brought out for their entire community that uses software that proves how dangerous texting and driving is.

- On April 21, State Farm representatives Tony Burris and Debe Tomblin joined TDS to honor MacArthur High School for their 3rd place PSA and 2nd place poster winning entries. The celebration included a plaque for the school, certificates for the students and enlarged checks for photo opportunities. The students were also treated to pizza sponsored by TDS supporter Julian Contreras. (Picture2 )

- McAllen High School’s TDS teens will be speaking at the Pharr Districts Click it or Ticket Teen Rally on Thursday, May 27 at the McAllen Convention Center Exhibit Hall.

- On Friday before the prom, Tulia High Schools TDS group joined their Student Council for their “See You On Sunday” ice cream sundae party. They gave out key chains and wrist bands and air fresheners with flyers that also had information about the top 5 on it.

- Taft High School in Taft, TX TDS team attended a relay for life in which they promoted TDS by passing out promo items and information.

Out of Texas

- Kim Hazelton Bristol Eastern High School was a 2009-2010 SponStar award winner.

- Brad Schaffrick of Bristol Police Department was a 2009-2010 SponStar award winner.

- Bristol Eastern High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

- Bristol Central High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

- Summit High School had their leadership conference Friday, May 19 where they plan on highlighting the TDS project. The team has also been doing weekly activities some including a lunch time rally where they handed out promotional items, and putting up signs on all the classroom doors promoting the five risks. Silverado is also being recognized as an outstanding TDS school.

TDS Jr. High Updates

- Bandera Middle School is being recognized for superior implementation of the Teens in the Drive Seat Jr. High. TDS Director Russell Henk and State Farm representative Rosemary Monsivias and Billy Holt helped present the check and awards during the presentation. The school received a plaque, certificates for their students, tacos, doughnuts and a cash prize for their hard work.

- Taft High School in Taft, Texas, TDS team at Relay for Life.

- Cedar Grove High School in Atlanta, GA is being recognized as a TDS award winning school. They plan on having an awards celebration, planning on attending this celebration is the superintendent, and a few media outlets. The TDS group will be receiving certificates and a plaque for their superior deployment of the program. Way to go!

- Kim Hazelton Bristol Eastern High School was a 2009-2010 SponStar award winner.

- Brad Schaffrick of Bristol Police Department was a 2009-2010 SponStar award winner.

- Bristol Eastern High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

- Bristol Central High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

- TDS Reps. Russell Henk, Christie Madsen & Marsha Anderson-Bomar

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- Cherokee High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

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- Cherokee High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.

- Bristol Central High School was a 2009-2010 Outstanding TDS School.
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. For out-of-Texas contacts, please contact Russell Henk or Bernie Fette.
We were excited to host the TDS Day at the Capitol in conjunction with Texas Secretary of State Hope Andrade and recognize many impressive TDS groups around our state and nation. We celebrated the efforts of 48 Outstanding TDS Schools, recognized 12 members of the inaugural Teen Advisory Board (TAB), introduced 15 new TAB Members, honored 10 SponStars and 3 Outstanding State Farm Reps and presented the first-ever TDS Leadership Award to Mayor John Cook of El Paso. We are so proud of these groups and leaders for their passion to help stop the number-one killer of teens in America.

While the school year is almost over, please be careful in your own upcoming celebrations. Prom, graduation and other end of school year activities can often end in tragedy, but they can be prevented. Continue to spread the word about the top driving risks — driving at night, speeding/racing, distractions, not buckling up and alcohol — and help prevent devastating crashes.

During the summer you can continue to be involved in TDS.

- Wanna be famous? We are highlighting TDSers of the Month on our homepage. Visit http://tds.tticomdev.com/tow/form.php to nominate yourself or a friend.
- Sign up to get safety messages from Teens in the Driver Seat by texting “idrive” to 69302. Then, forward these messages to your friends to help them stay safe!
- Post a comment on the Back Talk blog and you’ll be entered to win an iTunes gift card. Visit http://t-driver.com/back-talk/back-talk-itunes/ for more details.

Thank you to all of our TDS schools, students, teacher sponsors and community supporters for making a difference and helping to save lives! We would also like to thank our sponsors, the Texas Department of Transportation and State Farm Insurance of Texas, for their continued support of the TDS program.

Watch for our next edition in early October. Have a great summer and stay safe!

My best to you,

Russell Henk
Newest TDS Schools

NEAREST TEXAS HIGH SCHOOLS
• Alvarado High School (Alvarado, TX)
• Argyle High School (Argyle, TX)
• Belton High School (Belton, TX)
• Canyon High School (New Braunfels, TX)
• Clarksville High School (Clarksville, TX)
• Cinco Ranch High School (Katy, TX)
• Communications Arts High School (San Antonio, TX)
• Dawson School (Welch, TX)
• Deer Park High School (Deer Park, TX)
• Early High School (Early, TX)
• Elkins High School (Missouri City, TX)
• Fayetteville High School (Fayetteville, TX)
• Flatonia Secondary School (La Grange, TX)
• Gatesville High School (Gatesville, TX)
• Hightower High School (Missouri City, TX)
• Huntsville High School (Huntsville, TX)
• Irvin High School (El Paso, TX)
• J.M. Hanks High School (El Paso, TX)
• Killeen High School (Killeen, TX)
• Peaster High School (Peaster, TX)
• Poolville High School (Poolville, TX)
• Randolph High School (Universal City, TX)
• Ronald Reagan High School (San Antonio, TX)
• Round Top-Carmine High School (Carmine, TX)
• Rowlett High School (Rowlett, TX)
• Schulenburg Secondary School (La Grange, TX)
• Thorndale High School (Thorndale, TX)

NEAREST TEXAS TDS JR. HIGH SCHOOLS
• Desert View Jr. High School (El Paso, TX)
• Sugar Land Middle School (Sugar Land, TX)

NEAREST OUT-OF-TEXAS HIGH SCHOOLS
• Gwinnett School of Math, Science & Technology (Duluth, GA)

SponStar winner Diana Nuñez attended the Day at the Capitol and also accept the first-ever TDS Leadership Award on behalf of El Paso Mayor John Cook.

State Farm Agents John Bower from Carrollton, Texas, and Dee Dee Bates from Garland, Texas, received awards and proclamations for their efforts to save teen lives.

Go to t-driver.com and find us on Facebook, Myspace and Youtube.

Calendar

Teens in the Driver Seat will be exhibiting at these upcoming events:

June 15-16, 2010       Coordinated School Health Institute Education Service Center 12 Meeting, Waco, Texas
July 23-26, 2010        2010 Annual Teen Leadership Conference St. Louis, Missouri

Know of an event TDS should participate in? E-mail the info to Jen Ross (j-ross@tamu.edu)