



Teens in the Driver Seat

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Dear Community Leader,

Did you know that car crashes are the number-one killer of teenagers in America? In response to this critical problem, over 15 years ago, the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) developed *Teens in the Driver Seat*® (TDS), a grassroots safe driving program, focusing exclusively on teen driver & passenger safety. Unlike any other teen safe driving program, TDS involves the target audience directly to help develop & deliver safety messages. Student volunteers run this program at their local school & TDS staff works with communities to bring together young drivers, parents, school administrators & other stakeholders to reduce teen driving fatalities and injuries. A detailed study indicated that the impact of the TDS program is an average reduction of 14.6% in teen crashes where the program has been sustained for 3 or more years.

TDS is just one part of the Youth Transportation Safety (YTS) Program that focuses on 3 major areas: 1) TDS-Jr. High, 2) TDS-High School and 3) UDS-College students. To date, the TDS program alone has successfully reached over 1,315 unique schools & almost 1.4 million teens in 38 states – and your state is one of them. Students in your community are actively working on this program and are working to keep your roads safer.

To further spread the life-saving TDS message, we are hosting a TDS Summit on May 19-21, 2018 in San Antonio, Texas. The TDS Summit showcases our student leaders in bringing awareness about this problem to their peers, their families & their community. Included at the Summit is the annual Teen Advisory Board in-person meeting <https://www.t-driver.com/about-us/teen-advisory-board/>, Teacher/Sponsor training, professional speakers, & our annual Awards Brunch, where we recognize outstanding high school and junior high school students & their teachers by presenting cash awards to top-tier TDS schools for their volunteer life-saving efforts.

This is where we need your help. Students in your area are working to raise funds to attend the TDS Summit <https://events.tti.tamu.edu/conference/tds-summit-2018/>. Can you help donate funds to assist with their related costs? There are several ways you can help. Some schools will assist their students with travel costs, and you can make a donation directly to their school. Some students are funding the trip privately and need to be the direct recipient of your donation. If your donation is required to be donated to a 501(c)(3), then you can donate directly to the YTS program (through the Texas A&M Foundation) on their behalf at <https://www.t-driver.com/donate/> or you can donate as a direct sponsor of the TDS Summit at <https://events.tti.tamu.edu/conference/tds-summit-2018/sponsorship-opportunities/>.

Your student can provide the best suggestions on how to help them the most.

Thank you for your consideration of supporting students in your community to attend the annual TDS Summit. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me or Kathy Montemayor at k-montemayor@tti.tamu.edu. We hope that you will support your local students and join TDS in fighting to stop the number-one killer of teenagers in America.

With kind regards,

Russell H. Henk, P.E., CPPE

Teens in the Driver Seat Director

Texas A&M Transportation Institute – Texas A&M University System