

Ontario
Provincial
Police

Police
provinciale
de l'Ontario



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Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators
2323 St. Laurent Blvd.,
Ottawa, Ontario
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Attention: Ms. Eileen Melnick McCarthy
Programs Manager
emelnick@ccmta.ca

Reference: CCMTA Police Partnership Award 2017

Ms. Todd,

Please find enclosed our submission for the 2017 CCMTA Police Partnership Award for the Ontario Provincial Police, Highway Safety Division and Georgian College, Barrie Campus.

This award is endorsed by Chief Superintendent Chuck Cox, and if successful, the award would be accepted by him.

Thank you,

Inspector Tracy Lowe
Ontario Provincial Police
Highway Safety Division

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Rethinking Road Safety through Young Minds

With 72,000 kilometres (45,000 miles) of paved roads to police from provincial border to border, traffic safety is a core function of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) in the delivery of its public safety mandate which directly supports Canada's Road Safety Strategy 2025 "*Towards Zero: Having the safest roads in the world*".

One of the attributes that has earned the OPP its international reputation as a leader in traffic safety is its dedication and commitment to finding new, innovative ways to reduce the number of injuries and lives lost on Ontario Roads.

Engaging the community in being part of the solution is a key pillar of Ontario's Community Engagement & Mobilization Model. The OPP is committed to increasing public safety through collaborative partnerships with the community. The power of youthful participation cannot be underestimated.

Canada's Road Safety Strategy 2025

The vision for Road Safety Strategy 2025 is "*Towards Zero: Having the safest roads in the world*". One of the strategic objectives of RSS 2025 is to focus on safer road users by raising public awareness and commitment to road safety.

One of the primary target/risk groups are young drivers (16 to 24 years old) with some of the key contributing factors being impaired driving, speed and aggressive driving, and occupant protection.

Target Group: Drivers Less than 25 years old

Young drivers have the highest crash rate per miles driven of any age group with young drivers between 16-24 years old continuing to be at higher risk of being killed in motor vehicle collision per distance travelled than all other age groups.¹

Measures to Improve the Safety of Young Drivers

Adjusting the driving behavior of young drivers during their early impressionable driving years may reduce victimization and injury in the long term.

Peers often have a strong influence towards peer behavior. According to Ward et al. (2010), traffic safety can be influenced by "the perceptions people have about what behaviors are normal in their peer group and their expectations for how that group reacts to violations to these behavioral norms". These perceptions apply to behaviors that either increase crash risk (e.g. speeding) or are protective (e.g. wearing seat belts), as well as behaviors related to acceptance or rejection of traffic safety interventions.

¹ Transport Canada, Road Safety in Canada. <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/motorvehiclesafety/tp-tp15145-1201.htm>. Accessed March 7, 2017.



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Raising awareness among young drivers through social media such as websites targeted at young drivers by young drivers may be an effective way to communicate the risky driving behaviors being exhibited by this age group.²

Innovative Partnership

In 2013, OPP Traffic Staff Sergeant Don Fawcett of the Highway Safety Division (HSD) Provincial Traffic Operations (PTO) forged a partnership with the Georgian College, Police Foundations Program in Barrie, Ontario through Professor Simon Bradford.

Aptly named, the “*Community Service Learning Opportunity*” provides students with the unique experience of creating a media product designed to address one or more of the “Big Four” causal factors in road deaths. These are speed-related, alcohol/drug-related and inattentive-related fatalities, as well as those associated with lack of seat belt use. Students in the Georgian College Law and Security Program are assigned to create a media product designed to target their age group (< 25 years) that identify negative driving behaviours.



Front row from left: Supt C. Gilpin, Chief Superintendent Cox, Chief Superintendent R. DiMarco
Back row from left: Simon Bradford, students from Georgian College, Police Foundations Program, Staff Sergeant D. Fawcett

Young Minds Think Alike

Engaging students in creating awareness through educational media with the target group encourages peer-peer influence to occur. Focus group survey data and research conducted in North America suggests that young drivers are more receptive to

² Transport Canada, Road Safety in Canada. <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/motorvehiclesafety/tp-tp15145-1201.htm>. Accessed March 7, 2017.



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messaging that comes from their peers. Through peer messaging, this initiative aims to create a positive impact on drivers in their early years and sets the stage for them to maintain this behaviour throughout their driving years.

Students Left to Their Own Devices

Now entering its fifth year since the pilot got underway in 2013, the *Community Service Learning Opportunity* allows students to approach their media project from various angles, while striving to meet basic criteria that encompass five categories: content, organization, style, creativity and presentation, and overall effectiveness. The product can be in any single or multi-media format such as a poster, short video or other type of social media product.

The project partnership has proven to be a resounding success with in excess of 25 submissions per year. The number of individuals affected would conservatively be in the 100s of thousands. In 2016, the winning submission led a campaign entitled project “Crash” with a mission to have the Ontario Ministry of Transportation post road signs to heighten driver awareness of the ‘Big 4’.



Maggie Bradley and Emily Bradley, winners of the 2014 Community Service Learning Opportunity displaying the erected highway signs of the 2016 top scoring submission.

Social Media Links & Website - Project C.R.A.S.H.

- Website <http://projectcrash2016.wixsite.com/projectcrash>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/projectcrash2016/>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/projectcrash2016/>
- Twitter <https://twitter.com/ProjectCRASH16>

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE



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- Orillia Packet News Article <http://www.orilliapacket.com/2016/10/20/students-spearhead-new-road-sign-project>

Awards with Meaning

The top three teams each year are recognized however, the team or individual with the winning submission receives a non-monetary award that assists students in their future career aspirations. The awards have included a “ride along” with the OPP’s Aviation Services during aerial enforcement, a road ride along with front-line HSD officers and a signed letter from and lunch with OPP Deputy Commissioner Blair, Provincial Commander of Traffic Safety and Operational Support and other Traffic Safety Senior Command, to name a few.



Chelsea Sara, winner of the 2014 Community Service Learning Opportunity after spending a day with OPP Aviation Services

Spreading Their Message

The cumulative effect of this program is accomplished through the encouragement of all groups disseminating their media products to fellow students and among other peer groups through social media platforms in an effort to spread their important road safety messaging.

It is difficult to quantify the measureable impact this partnership program has had or will have on public safety. Undoubtedly, the benefits realized by this partnership have brought increased awareness of road safety to young drivers.

