



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GOVERNOR'S TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION

LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

KATIE BOWER
CHAIR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Safety awareness campaign “Buckle Down on the Buckle Up” to receive award from Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission

The “Buckle Down on the Buckle Up” awareness campaign is being recognized by the Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) for amplifying messages on car seat and seat belt safety. The GTSAC honors organizations, programs and individuals for distinguished involvement in traffic safety.

The creators of the “Buckle Down on the Buckle Up” campaign, Andrea Grube and Jessica Knapp, will be presented with an Outstanding Traffic Safety Achievement Award on Wednesday, June 14, at the GTSAC’s award celebration, which starts at 11:45 a.m. The ceremony will occur at the DeVos Place during the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning’s 26th annual Traffic Safety Summit in Grand Rapids.

“Buckle Down on the Buckle Up” is the first campaign of the Simple Safety Rescue Force, a Kalamazoo County-based nonprofit founded by Andrea Grube, a nationally registered emergency medical technician-paramedic, and Jessica Knapp, an emergency medical technician-paramedic. Both first responders regularly see the consequences of people who are not using safety restraints correctly or at all.

According to Michigan Traffic Crash Facts, there were 8,236 crashes recorded in Kalamazoo County in 2021. After responding to a particularly devastating crash in February of that year, Grube and Knapp began making and posting videos of themselves and first responder partners using seat belts and encouraged and challenged others to do the same. Their efforts launched “Buckle Down on the Buckle Up,” a social media campaign with a positive message and the goal of preventing injuries and fatalities.

Apart from that robust social media presence, Grube and Knapp appear on local news stations, provide live social media events, and use their voices as first responders to educate the community under their care.

The GTSAC was formed in 2002 to serve as the state’s forum for identifying key traffic safety challenges and developing and implementing plans to address those issues. The commission includes representatives from the departments of State Police, Transportation, Education, State, and Health & Human Services, as well as the Office of the Governor, the Aging and Adult Services Agency, and the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning. There are also three representatives from local government appointed by the governor.

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• Gregg Brunner, Department of Transportation • Linda Scarpetta, Department of Health and Human Services
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