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Regional traffic safety initiative put the brakes on speeding drivers

To help combat an alarming rise in speeding and fatal crashes on Michigan roadways, dozens of law enforcement agencies across the state recently issued 2,941 speeding citations and 2,353 warnings as part of a regional traffic safety initiative.

The OHSP and the NHTSA's Region 5 Office partnered with five other states (Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin) as part of the *Great Lakes, High Stakes* campaign. From June 19 to 27, more than 50 municipal, county and



Michigan State Police (MSP) law enforcement agencies focused on stopping speeding drivers.

"This effort was a wake-up call about the significance of traffic safety," said Michael L. Prince, director of the OHSP. "Speed kills. This campaign was a timely reminder about the need to educate motorists about the importance of obeying the speed limit and the value of enforcing

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Buckle up, Michigan!

STATE'S SEAT BELT USE RATE FALLS TO 92.6 PERCENT—ITS LOWEST RATE IN 17 YEARS

Michigan's seat belt use rate has decreased sharply, dropping from 94.4 percent in 2019 to 92.6 percent in 2021, according to results from a grant-funded direct observation study conducted by Michigan State University. This is the state's lowest seat belt compliance rate since 2004, and traffic safety advocates are concerned.

"The seat belt use numbers are moving in the wrong direction, and it's important to turn things around as quickly as possible," said Michael L. Prince, director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP). "Seat belts are the cornerstone of any effective traffic safety strategy. We must continually remind drivers and passengers of all ages to buckle up, every trip, every time."

The survey results come just a few weeks after the MSP Criminal Justice Information Center confirmed that Michigan traffic deaths peaked above 1,000 for the first time in three years. The 1,083 fatalities in 2020 marked a 10 percent increase from 985 fatalities in 2019 and the most traffic fatalities in Michigan since 1,084 deaths in 2007. Preliminary statistics for early 2021 show the pace of fatalities accelerating.

To help address the situation, the OHSP funded a statewide campaign to enforce seat belt and impaired-driving laws. The OHSP also has a paid advertising effort encouraging rear seat belt use, including a [video](#) titled *Backseat Excuses*.

Michigan's all-time belt use record
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SAFETY Network

BICYCLIST SAFETY ENFORCEMENT WEEK

Police focused on reducing bicyclist injuries and fatalities

Overtime mobilization grants were recently awarded to law enforcement agencies in seven Michigan cities to address an alarming rise in bicyclist injuries and fatalities on Michigan roadways. During Bicyclist Safety Enforcement Week, which was a high-visibility safety campaign that took place from August 5 to 11, officers focused on laws related to bicycle safety.

The OHSP identified the cities of Dearborn, Detroit, Farmington Hills, Kalamazoo, Pontiac, Sterling Heights, and Warren as having some of the highest number of bicycle-involved crashes over a five-year period. The enforcement was particularly

needed this year because, in 2020, Michigan experienced an 81 percent increase in bicyclist fatalities from 2019's numbers and a 76 percent rise in bicycle-involved fatal crashes for the same period.

Between 2016-2020, bicycle crash data for the seven Michigan cities showed Detroit with a total of 805 crashes, Kalamazoo with 171, Warren with 148, Dearborn with 116, Sterling Heights with 112, Pontiac with 69, and Farmington Hills with 45. Over the last five years, 141 people have been killed in bicyclist-involved crashes in Michigan.

Officers during the campaign were on the lookout for violations by drivers that

included illegal turns, failing to stop at a signal or stop sign, failing to give at least three feet when passing a bicyclist, and blocking a roadway that interferes with the normal flow of traffic. Officers were also watching for violations by bicyclists that included not riding with traffic, not using lights when biking at night, and riding more than two abreast.

The enforcement campaign was supported with federal traffic safety funds provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the NHTSA and coordinated by the OHSP.

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the laws already on the books."

Preliminary numbers show that in addition to the speeding citations and speed-violation warnings, there were also 314 seat belt violation citations issued. Among motorists taken off the roads were 109 drivers arrested for Operating While Intoxicated and 25 arrested for Operating Under the Influence of Drugs.

Law enforcement agencies cited numerous examples of risky and dangerous driving:

- During nine traffic stops by the MSP Grand Rapids Post in a 55 mph zone, all of the motorists were driving 70 mph or more.
- The Hazel Park Police Department reported that of the 111 speeding citations issued, two were for 20 to 24 mph over the speed limit; four were for 25 to 29 mph over the speed limit; five for 30 to 39 mph over; one for 40 mph over; and one for 60 mph over the speed limit (100 mph in a 40).
- The Chippewa County Sheriff's Office reported a semi-truck going 86 mph on M-28.



A trooper with MSP's northern Michigan post recently stopped a driver going 23 miles per hour over the speed limit.

While Michigan has seen a 22 percent reduction in traffic crashes—245,432 in 2020 compared to 314,377 in 2019—there has been a spike in fatalities. Crash data from the MSP Criminal Justice Information Center indicates 1,083 people died from crashes on Michigan roads in 2020, a 10 percent increase over 2019, when 985 deaths were reported. In 2020, there were 200 speed-related fatalities on Michigan roadways compared to 185 in 2019, an 8 percent increase.

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was 97.9 percent in 2009. Every 1 percent increase in seat belt use means an estimated 10 fewer traffic deaths and 100 fewer serious injuries. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), seat belt use in the United States during 2019 ranged from 70.7 percent in New Hampshire to 97.1 percent in Hawaii. The nationwide seat belt use rate was 90.7 percent in 2019.

Michigan's 2021 direct observation survey also included driver use of electronic devices, encompassing both talking with a handheld or hands-free device and/or typing. The rate has dropped to 6.4 percent, lower than the 7.5 percent rate in 2019.

The NHTSA requires states to conduct annual seat belt observation surveys to determine belt usage. Last year's study was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

TZD **Toward Zero Deaths™**
National Strategy on Highway Safety



SAFETY Network

Strive for a Safer Drive student contest winners announced

WEST SHORE ESD STUDENTS FINISH FIRST IN COMPETITION PROMOTING SAFE TEEN DRIVING

[West Shore ESD Career and Technical Education Center](#) criminal justice students in Mason County recently took top honors statewide for the third year in a row in recognition of the school's Strive for a Safer Drive (S4SD) campaign.

The first-place selection recognizes the outstanding efforts of West Shore ESD students in educating their classmates and community about the dangers of speeding with the campaign *Before You Proceed, Watch Your Speed*.

[Dundee High School](#) in Monroe County finished second, while [Anchor Bay High School](#) in St. Clair County earned third place. [Grand Ledge High School](#) in Eaton County took fourth place, and [Plymouth High School](#) in Wayne County finished in fifth.

The top schools were selected based on creativity, execution, and compliance with the S4SD participation requirements. The top five campaigns will receive cash prizes ranging from \$500 to \$1,500.

In its tenth year, S4SD is a public-private partnership between Ford Motor Company Fund's Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) program and the OHSP. S4SD provides funding and resources to help teens talk to their peers and community members about safe driving, with the



As part of their winning campaign, West Shore ESD students chose to display a teen safe driving billboard, which was located on eastbound US-10 near Ludington.

goal of reducing traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

This past school year, 23 Michigan high schools each received \$1,000 to create a student-led, peer-to-peer traffic safety awareness campaign. Campaign topics included distracted driving, seat belts, underage drinking/impaired driving, speeding, and winter driving.

The students met in-person and virtually between January and April of this year to conduct activities before submitting a final report.



For the second year in a row, a hands-on driving clinic with professional driving instructors at the Ford Proving Grounds in Romeo was canceled due to the pandemic. However, students are urged to participate in the Ford DSFL online academy to gain valuable safe driving skills featuring the same professional instructors.

The OHSP partnered with the Transportation Improvement Association to coordinate activities of the S4SD program. For more information about S4SD, visit: www.michigan.gov/s4sd.

Ford Fund and GHSA award teen safe driving grants

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Ford Motor Company Fund, the philanthropic arm of Ford, and the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) are extending their 18-year commitment to improving teen driving skills by awarding grants totaling \$135,000 to Michigan and five other State Highway Safety Offices (SHSO).

Vehicle crashes remain the leading

cause of death for teen drivers. Data from GHSA and Ford Fund's [Teens & Speeding: Breaking the Deadly Cycle](#) report released earlier this year found that more than 2,000 teen vehicle occupant deaths occur each year. When looking at data from fatal motor vehicle crashes between 2015 and 2019, 43 percent of teen driver and

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SAFETY Network

Delta-8 THC and Driving

By: Kenneth Stecker and Kinga Canike

A cannabinoid that is growing in popularity is delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol. Products containing this cannabis compound, also commonly referred to as delta-8 THC or delta 8, are appearing at tobacco shops and other businesses throughout Michigan.¹

Delta-8 THC binds to the same receptor in the central nervous system as delta-9 THC, which is the main compound in cannabis that causes euphoria and is classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).² According to a study by NMS Labs in Pennsylvania, delta-8 THC has psychoactive characteristics, but at a lower potency than delta-9 THC.³ However, one website geared toward users cautioned that, unlike inhaling, ingesting delta-8 THC edibles can deliver the same intoxicating effects as delta-9 THC.⁴

There is a great deal of confusion as to whether delta-8 THC is legal under federal and Michigan law.

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, also known as the Farm Bill,⁵ was signed into law in December 2018. For years, hemp and marijuana were considered the same under federal law. The Farm Bill changed that by differentiating between the two, consequently removing hemp from the Controlled Substances Act.⁶ As a result, any cannabinoid that comes from hemp is now considered legal under federal law as long as the final

product contains less than 0.3 percent delta-9 THC.⁷ In 2020, the DEA issued an interim rule stating that all synthetically derived THC products will remain Schedule I controlled substances.⁸ Since delta-8 THC is produced through an extraction process involving hemp, this has resulted in confusion as to its legality under federal law.⁹

In Michigan, delta-8 THC is still unregulated.¹⁰ A bill requiring hemp-derived delta-8 THC to be regulated by Michigan's Marijuana Regulatory Agency (MRA)¹¹ was signed into law and is now Public Act 56 of 2021.¹² As of October 11, 2021, businesses in Michigan will have to get a license from the MRA to sell delta-8 THC.¹³

According to the MRA, delta-8 THC side effects include dry mouth, red eyes, increased appetite, short-term memory loss, paranoia, and anxiety.¹⁴ More research is needed to fully understand how delta-8 THC affects the mind and body.¹⁵

Michigan's OWI law, MCL 257.625, states the following:

"Sec. 625. (1) A person, whether licensed or not, shall not operate a vehicle upon a highway or other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles, including an area designated for the parking of vehicles, within this state if the person is operating while intoxicated. As used in this section, "operating while intoxicated" means any of the following:

(a) The person is under the in-

fluence of alcoholic liquor, a controlled substance, or other intoxicating substance or a combination of alcoholic liquor, a controlled substance, or other intoxicating substance.

(25) As used in this section: (a) "Intoxicating substance" means any substance, preparation, or a combination of substances and preparations other than alcohol or a controlled substance, that is either of the following: (i) Recognized as a drug in any of the following publications or their supplements: (A) The official United States pharmacopoeia. (B) The official homeopathic pharmacopoeia of the United States. (C) The official national formulary. (ii) A substance, other than food, taken into a person's body, including, but not limited to, vapors or fumes, that is used in a manner or for a purpose for which it was not intended, and that may result in a condition of intoxication."¹⁶

Because delta-8 THC falls under the category of "intoxicating substance," a person violates this law only when he or she operates a motor vehicle while under the influence by an intoxicating substance.¹⁷

Michigan Criminal Jury Instruction 15.3 defines "Under the influence" as noted below:

"Under the influence of [alcohol/a controlled substance/an intoxicating substance] means that because of [drinking alcohol/using or consuming a controlled substance/consuming or taking into (his/her) body an intoxicating substance], the defendant's ability to operate a motor vehicle in a normal manner was substantially lessened. To be under the

¹ <https://vidaoptimacbd.com/blogs/cannabis-encyclopedia/is-delta-8-thc-legal-in-michigan>.

² Ayako Chan-Hosokawa, Loan Nguyen, Nicole Lattanzio and Wendy R Adams, Emergence of Delta-8 Tetrahydrocannabinol in DUI Investigation Casework: Method Development, Validation and Application. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology*, 2021,;bkab029, <https://academic.oup.com/jat/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/jat/bkab029/6180563>

³ Id.

⁴ <https://weedmaps.com/learn/dictionary/delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol>.

⁵ <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2019/12/20/president-trump-signed-farm-bill-law-one-year-ago-today-usda>.

⁶ <https://deltaeffex.com/blogs/news/the-2018-farm-bill-and-delta-8-thc>.

⁷ Id.

⁸ <https://www.fraserlawfirm.com/blog/2021/05/michigan-house-committee-advances-bill-to-regulate-delta-8-thc/>.

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ [https://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S!15hr2s3loaj1xdshdoswdyva\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2021-HB-4517](https://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S!15hr2s3loaj1xdshdoswdyva)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2021-HB-4517).

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

¹³ https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mra/2021-lara-mra-delta-8-sheet_729914_7.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.michigan.gov/mra/0,9306,7-386-90056-563487--,00.html>

¹⁵ Id.

¹⁶ MCL 257.625, et. al.

¹⁷ MCLA 257.625(1)(a)

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OHSP welcomes:

NANCY FELDBUSH

Nancy is the OHSP's new senior editor in the Communications Section, where she will be responsible for helping disseminate OHSP's traffic safety messages.



Prior to joining OHSP, Nancy worked in communications at the Historical Society of Michigan, along with serving as editor in chief for Michigan History magazine.

Nancy, who has a bachelor's degree in communication and organizational leadership from Rochester University, lives in Lansing.

ROSS ANDERSON

Ross is the OHSP's new accounting tech in the Fiscal Management Section. He will be responsible for processing payments, reconciling expenditures, preparing cost statements, setting up payment codes, preparing journal vouchers, and establishing purchase orders.



Prior to joining OHSP, Ross worked in the Michigan Department of State's Expenditure Unit as an accounting assistant. He also serves as an assistant men's and women's soccer coach at Olivet College.

Originally from Edinburgh, Scotland, he graduated from Davenport University with a bachelor's degree in business and lives in Grand Ledge.

KIMBERLEE KENYON

Kimberlee Kenyon is the OHSP's new senior executive management assistant (SEMA) to Director Mike Prince.

This December will mark Kimberlee's thirtieth year working for the State of Michigan in various capacities. She worked 18 years for the Department of Health and Human Services and, most recently, as an executive secretary with the Office of Recovery Oriented Systems of Care.



Kimberlee lives in the village of Vermontville on the western border of Eaton County.

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influence, a person does not have to be falling down or hardly able to stand up. On the other hand, just because a person has [drunk alcohol or smells of alcohol/consumed or used a controlled substance/consumed or used an intoxicating substance] does not prove, by itself, that the person is under the influence of [alcohol/a controlled substance/an intoxicating substance]. The test is whether, because of [drinking alcohol/using or consuming a controlled substance/consuming or taking into (his/her) body an intoxicating substance], the defendant's mental or physical condition was significantly affected and the defendant was no longer able to operate a vehicle in a normal manner."¹⁸

To establish probable cause that a

¹⁸ https://courts.michigan.gov/Courts/Documents/HTML/Criminal%20Jury%20Instructions-Responsive%20HTML5/index.html#t=Criminal_Jury_Instructions%2FCrim_Jury_Ch_15%2FM_Crim_JI_15_2_Operating_While_Intoxicated_OWI.htm.

driver may be under the influence of delta-8 THC, the officer should look for the general indicators, or side effects, of delta-8 THC as mentioned above. In addition, a Drug Recognition Expert-trained officer should be called to evaluate any suspect who may be under the influence of delta-8 THC.

We have a responsibility for traffic safety in Michigan. One way we can make a difference is by making sure those drivers under the influence of delta-8 THC are kept off Michigan roads.

For more information on this article and PAAM training programs, contact Kenneth Stecker or Kinga Gorzelewski Canike, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutors, at 517-334-6060 or e-mail at steckerk@michigan.gov or canikek@michigan.gov. Please consult your prosecutor before adopting practices suggested by reports in this article. Discuss your practices that relate to this article with your commanding officers, police legal advisors, and the prosecuting attorney before changing your practice.

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passenger fatalities involved speeding. By comparison, 30 percent of fatalities involving drivers and passengers aged 20-plus were speeding-related.

According to the NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System, traffic deaths are estimated to have reached a 13-year high in 2020, despite a decline in driving during the COVID-19 pandemic. A [NHTSA report](#) estimates that 38,680 people were killed on U.S. roadways in 2020 — the highest number since 2007 and an increase of 7.2 percent from 2019. Speeding is often identified as a factor in fatal crashes.

Michigan is being awarded a \$25,000 grant. SHSOs in Kentucky, Montana, New York, Tennessee, and Utah are also receiving grants to create and implement programs to help combat teen speeding.

Since 2003, [Ford Fund](#) has invested more than \$60 million in its Ford Driving Skills for Life program and provided free, advanced driver education to more than 1.25 million newly licensed teen drivers in all 50 U.S. states and 46 countries worldwide.

SAFETY Network



Staff Profile: Kara Rueckert

OCCUPANT PROTECTION
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Kara has been with the OHSP since April 2014, when she started as an administrative assistant in the fiscal section. She then moved to the executive administrative position in 2017, assisting OHSP Director Michael Prince, before accepting a program position in February 2020. Kara is married to Jeremy; they have three children and a fourth on the way: Cooper (3), Tucker (2), baby boy No. 3 (due in October)—and Shelby, a retriever-hound mix (4).

What do you like most about your job?

I absolutely love the number of people I am able to reach on a daily basis—whether it's my own network of child passenger safety technicians and instructors, the general public to offer guidelines on occupant protection, or our staff by assisting with a project they are in the middle of.

What are you most proud of at work?

I am most proud of, and grateful for, the same thing—my ability to move and adapt within a division I am proud to be a part of. I have been able to continue moving my career forward while helping work toward our mission of saving lives and reducing injuries on Michigan roads.

What are your interests or hobbies?

Our family loves to be outdoors and spend time visiting new places. We usually do this while camping in our fifth wheel from spring to fall in our beautiful state. Sometimes we're fortunate enough to visit amazing destinations outside of Michigan as well!

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

Even though they're still young, I have to say raising two (soon to be three) respectful and incredibly intelligent boys. They are so full of life, love, and curiosity. I am proud each and every day to be their mom.

What's your favorite vacation spot?

As cliché as it sounds, anywhere my family and I are able to go together. We don't typically go to the same place over and over, but we make amazing memories wherever we end up!

What's something people don't know about you?

I actually went to college in Fort Myers, Florida, and got a job at our campus marine lab. Our main priority was to collect and do research on oysters for red tide—I have never eaten an oyster and probably never will!

SADD explains why mental health is vital to traffic safety

By Students Against Destructive Decisions

When we get in the driver's seat, we know to check our mirrors and adjust if necessary. What if we also checked our minds to make sure we're in the right mental state to drive?

That's a practice Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) would like to build into our culture, starting with the youngest drivers.

SADD is an organization founded by students to empower young people to make safe decisions in their everyday lives. Mental wellness, they say, is integral to making good driving decisions.

"Studies have followed really young drivers and show that those experiencing negative emotions had unsafe driving behaviors...excessive speeding, tailgating, and potentially distractions," said Isabelle Boullier, national president and student representative of SADD.

Boullier said making numerous driving decisions can be difficult enough for experienced drivers, but even more so for young drivers.

Teen brains are still developing. Teens also experience major changes, such as adjusting to new schools and managing friendships and family dynamics.

Car crashes continue to be a leading cause of death for young people in the United States, with alcohol, drugs, and other substances involved in a large percentage of those incidents.

To raise awareness, SADD is working to normalize conversations about mental wellness and distributing resources. Together with the National Road Safety Foundation, SADD has created the [Passport to Safe Driving toolkit](#) as a refresher for young drivers and parents on the most important facts and skills to keep in mind as they get back on the road.



SAFETY Network

GTSAC honors six for their efforts to improve traffic safety



The Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) recently honored six organizations, programs, or individuals during its Traffic Safety Awards Virtual Ceremony on May 27. The awards recognize outstanding involvement in traffic safety.

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 MSP and departments of Education, Health and Human Services, State and Transportation, as well as the Office of the Governor, the Aging and Adult Services Agency, and the OHSP. There are also three representatives from local government appointed by the governor.

To watch a video of the GTSCA Awards Virtual Ceremony, [click here](#).

RICHARD H. AUSTIN LONG-TERM SERVICE AWARD

The Long-Term Service Award is named in honor of the longest-serving secretary of state in Michigan history—Richard H. Austin, who served from 1971 to 1995 and earned a national reputation as an outstanding and effective advocate for traffic safety.



Dr. Dan Petterson



Mason County Sheriff Kim Cole was honored for his 35 years supporting traffic safety efforts.

Dr. Dan Petterson was recognized for his continuing work supporting motorcycle safety efforts, education, and programs as president and CEO of Skilled Motorcyclist Association Responsible, Trained, and Educated Riders.

Dr. Petterson's efforts helped decrease the number of motorcycle-related crashes in recent years from more than 4,000 in 2008 to approximately 2,800 in 2019. Petterson earned a doctorate in education and certification by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) as a chief instructor. In addition, he was named the MSF 2003 RiderCoach Trainer of the Year and received an MSF award for "Extraordinary Contributions to Motorcycle Safety." In 2014, the Michigan Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association chose Dr. Petterson as recipient of its Silvermale Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to traffic safety education.

Sheriff Kim Cole, Mason County Sheriff's Office, was honored for his 35 years of work supporting traffic safety efforts.

Cole, an accident reconstructionist who has worked thousands of hours on crashes, was the lead reconstructionist

for the county sheriff's office from 2001 to 2012 and is considered an expert witness in courts of law. He has partnered with his community on various safety projects, including working with the local educational service district to provide proactive response training for school bus drivers; working with businesses along US-10 to provide traffic signage to help motorists navigate safely; and researching the types of crashes on US-10 and securing left-turn signal arrows at major intersections, which helped reduce the number of "head on/left turn" crashes in the county.

Kids Always Ride Safely (KARS) was recognized for its efforts in providing child restraint seat installation, instruction, and inspection, along with the seats themselves, for families in the Upper Peninsula.



The work of KARS, a program that began in 2011, addressed the problem of unrestrained or improperly restrained children in passenger vehicles. KARS

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provided inspections and installations of child restraint seats for U.P. families and furnished child safety seats at a deeply discounted cost to those who could not afford one at retail prices. In addition to the installation of privately supplied seats, the program has sold 6,688 seats to families at a steep discount. Those actions have ensured that thousands of U.P. children are better protected while traveling in a vehicle and greatly reduced their chance of injury in a crash.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

The MSP Gladstone Post was recognized for its Horse-Drawn Carriage Safety program, which is part of the Gladstone Post's Traffic Education and Awareness campaign.

In 2019, six Amish families purchased farms in rural Delta County and established residence. Local officials and the families met to discuss traffic safety concerns regarding the Amish's horse-drawn carriages. Numerous steps were taken to alert the community, including the county road commission setting up road traffic signs along Amish-traveled routes; local radio stations and newspapers raising awareness and helping spread safety messages; and the MSP and businesses working together to create safe zones, where Amish customers could secure their horse-drawn carriages while shopping.

There have been no safety issues or crashes since creating this initiative.

Kentwood Police Department, Traffic Services Bureau was honored for its



Madelynn Johnson and Reegan Graham, seniors at Traverse City West Senior High School, were recognized for their outstanding efforts addressing teen safe driving issues. They were nominated by Trp. Dave Prichard.

dedication to school speed zone and school bus violations during the 2019-2020 school year.

In the course of the past school year, the Kentwood Police Department's Traffic Service Bureau initiated a unit goal of dedicating time for school speed zone and school bus violations. That involved multiple traffic units patrolling during morning and afternoon time periods utilizing stationary enforcement at high-traffic school bus stops and shadowing buses to watch for violations. The program, which included 183.6 hours of enforcement, was effective and well received by the community. There were 31 school bus violations and 428 school speed zone violations issued. For a comparison, the previous school year there were 10 school bus zone and 51 school speed zone violations.

STUDENT AWARD

Madelynn Johnson and Reegan Graham, seniors at Traverse City West Senior High School, were recognized for their leadership and involvement in a Drug Awareness Basketball Game and Students Together Against Negative Decisions (S.T.A.N.D.).

As members of Traverse City West Senior High's S.T.A.N.D. program, Johnson

and Graham were pivotal in bringing awareness, education, and resources to both student and adult populations regarding illicit drug use, mental health stigma, and counseling available in the community. More than 2,000 people attended the "Drug Awareness Basketball Game," where informational tables included professionals from Families Against Narcotics, Hope Not Handcuffs and local addiction treatment services.

The students also sought monetary and in-kind donations from local businesses to hold the event, conducted live interviews during the event, and compiled a press release to inform area media.



A student safety program developed by the Kentwood Police Department was recently recognized by the GTSAC.