March 9, 2017

Dear ITE Selection Committee Members:

I am submitting this nomination letter in support of the LOCATE Chapter Drive Smart student outreach program. This program fits the criteria for the ITE Transportation Safety Council Organization Award and is a fantastic example of engineers making a difference by doing safety outreach through a local ITE chapter. The Drive Smart program is a leader in transportation safety education in the state of Nebraska and serves as an example for other local ITE chapters looking to make a difference in their communities.

You will find a lot of information about the Drive Smart program in the nomination document. I have to share with you that I am both pleased and impressed that an organized volunteer effort by engineers has been underway since 2007 to educate young drivers in Nebraska. The privilege of driving is taken for granted by many as we work as an engineering community to "drive to zero" fatalities. As we look to improve safety, it is clear that we can't just focus on building safer cars and safer roads, we have to be in the business of making safer drivers. That is just what the LOCATE Drive Smart program is about.

It is important to note that the Drive Smart program has been very well received by students, teachers, parents and administrators in our local communities. I have heard that at some schools the teachers reach out to the program coordinator prior to each academic semester to schedule the classroom time. They have literally built the program into their curriculum. What a wonderful proof of the value of the program.

It is a pleasure to nominate the Drive Smart program for the ITE Transportation Safety Council Organization Award. It is a wonderful example of engineers working together through volunteerism to increase safety and bring drivers to their destinations safely. The Drive Smart volunteer program is truly deserving of this great ITE award.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kyle Schneweis, P.E.
Director

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Why is the Drive Smart Program Worthy of Recognition?

Drive Smart is a deserving candidate for the 2017 Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Transportation Safety Council Award. Through Drive Smart’s work and dedication to the community, it has made significant contributions to transportation safety in the state of Nebraska. The program is a leader when it comes to transportation safety and education. The one-of-a-kind approach takes technical transportation professionals to local high schools to present practical transportation safety lessons. As an extension of ITE, we advocate for transportation safety through engaging in meaningful discussions with young drivers and implementing programs to address safety. Drive Smart serves as an example for other local ITE chapters looking to make a difference in their communities.

Drive Smart is an interactive presentation given by Transportation Professionals to students in the classroom. The presentation includes impairment goggle activities that simulate the negative physical impacts of drinking and drugs. The message: wear your seatbelts, avoiding distracted driving and avoiding impaired driving!
Ambassadors for Transportation Safety

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teenagers. The Drive Smart program knows this and has become ambassadors for transportation safety to help our community mitigate the known risks associated with being in a motor vehicle crash. We work with the teachers and teenagers to communicate the three “E’s” of transportation safety: engineering, education and enforcement. We wear the engineering hat every day of our careers. We have committed ourselves to wearing the education hat by presenting at multiple high schools in the state of Nebraska. We also wear the enforcement hat by partnering with local police departments to participate in safety conferences and seminars.

The Drive Smart program continually demonstrates excellence in providing educational presentations to local high schools in the state of Nebraska. The program has committed transportation planners and traffic engineers that provide meaningful in-person presentations to local student-drivers. It is a team approach that requires commitment from a group of people for the greater good.
Millard North High School invites the Drive Smart presenters each semester to speak to students. This presentation brings to life our curriculum on decision making using real world examples. **The Drive Smart program helps us, as teachers, reinforce the importance of decision making behind the wheel and has a large impact on all of our students.** The Drive Smart presenters are always so well prepared and their expertise brings new information to our students that we would not be able to provide otherwise. — Haley Ryan, Millard North High School

The leaders of the Drive Smart program live transportation safety by practicing transportation safety on a personal level as well. **We are the program that bridges the gap between technical transportation engineering principles and practical transportation safety education.**

**Dedicated to Implementing Meaningful Safety Educational Initiatives**

The high rate of teen drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes where cell phone distraction is a factor is one of the many problems our communities face. To solve this problem, the program collaborates with local high school teachers and administrators to integrate the Drive Smart presentation into existing health and well-being curriculum tracks. This seamless integration and coordination between transportation professionals, teachers and administrators has provided benefits to the student-drivers, parents and community.

No text message is more important than arriving safely at your destination. As such, the program is dedicated to educating teen drivers about the risks associated with texting and driving. To accomplish this, Drive Smart has implemented meaningful safety educational initiatives and has demonstrated this commitment by exercising a program presentation for nine years, allocating more than 30 transportation professionals to the program’s goals and continually presenting to more.

The Drive Smart presentation was beneficial to the students at Millard South. **We appreciate the community commitment that the program makes to ensure the safety and awareness of our students.** The no-nonsense approach made a positive impact at Millard South. — Barb Vanderbeek, Millard South High School
Over the last several years, I have had the privilege of integrating the Drive Smart Presentation into my 8th/9th grade curriculum. The LOCATE presenters have given my students a real-life understanding of how distracting driving can influence their choices regarding safe driving habits. The information, videos, and interactive demonstrations shown during their presentation provide life lessons about distracting driving and its consequences.

The Drive Smart program is a natural extension of high school classes and lessons can be streamlined into many communities' education curriculums across North America. The Drive Smart program has completed a significant project that focuses on three easy choices that teen drivers can make to mitigate the risk associated with distracted and impaired driving and texting while driving: wearing seatbelts, avoiding distracted driving, and avoiding dashboard distractions.

Drive Smart developed an educational presentation that focuses on three easy choices that teen drivers can make to mitigate the risk associated with distracted and impaired driving and texting while driving: wearing seatbelts, avoiding distracted driving, and avoiding dashboard distractions.

The results of the program over the last decade show that Drive Smart has completed a meaningful transportation safety initiative and is dedicated to growing in the future.

Drive Smart partners with agencies, safety organizations, and special event sponsors in the state of Nebraska to improve transportation safety and responsibility amongst drivers. The program has shown exemplar support for transportation professionals and educational institutions. The program has shown exemplary support for transportation professionals and educational institutions. The program has shown exemplary support for transportation professionals and educational institutions.

Knowing every day that you killed two people is one of the hardest things you can live with. The accident was preventable. You put your phone away when you drive and you're safer.

— Reggie Shaw, Norfolk Safe Driving Summit 2014

LOCATE Drive Smart
Transportation Safety Council Award - Organization
presentations around the state. One example of Drive Smart collaborating with other transportation safety groups includes participation in the 2014 Norfolk Safe Driving Summit in Norfolk, Nebraska. The summit’s purpose was to educate teen drivers through a day filled with breakout sessions on safe driving topics, seatbelt convincer, vehicle rollover demonstrations, and a texting and driving simulator. The summit also featured a keynote address from Reggie Shaw, a convicted distracted driver who is responsible for the death of two people and who now advocates for transportation safety through education and outreach around the country. Another example of Drive Smart partnering with other groups that promote transportation safety is participation in the Omaha Police Department Safety Expo. The Safety Expo is a family friendly event that promotes safety, allows the community to meet local first responders and includes participation from local advocates from various agencies and organizations. For the expo, Drive Smart collaborated with National Safety Council — Nebraska to host a booth where we promoted safe driving choices and allowed attendees to utilize a driving simulator, for texting and impaired driving, with consequences modules.

The Drive Smart program has made a real difference in the local community. It has shown and continues to show exemplary support and commitment to transportation safety through educational outreach and partnerships. The program is unique and is the only program that is dedicated to educating teen drivers about the 3 “E’s” of transportation safety: engineering, education and enforcement.

“...In our Everyday Living classes for sophomore students in Millard Public Schools we have implemented the Drive Smart presentations. This is an impressionable age at which students are starting to drive on their own and making critical decisions related to driving. The program is an important partnership that encourages our students to make better choices when it comes to getting behind the wheel.

— Brenda Schmidt, Millard West High School

“We have had Drive Smart present to our 8th grade health classes for the past two years to help educate our students about distracted and impaired driving. The information, activities, and videos that are shared with our kids keep their attention and promote healthy discussion of safe driving habits.

— Channon Oseka,
Gretna Middle School