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DRIVE SAFE ATLANTA CONTEST INVITES GEORGIA TEENS TO HELP CREATE MESSAGE ABOUT DANGERS OF DISTRACTED DRIVING

Video Contest Winner Gets \$2,000, Works With Emmy-Winning Director To Create TV Ad That Debuts at Atlanta International Auto Show Before Airing Nationwide

ATLANTA, Dec. 11, 2017 -- Teens from Atlanta and throughout the state of Georgia are being invited to create a TV message about the dangers of distracted driving in the second *Drive Safe Atlanta* PSA Contest, sponsored by The National Road Safety Foundation in partnership with the Atlanta International Auto Show.

Drive Safe Atlanta invites teens ages 13 through 19 to submit ideas for a 30-second public service announcement about distracted driving. The winner will receive \$2,000 and an Emmy Award-winning director will come to his or her school to film a TV public service spot that will debut at the Atlanta International Auto Show before airing on more than 150 TV stations nationwide. One runner-up will receive \$1,000.

Teens who live in Georgia can enter by sending a script, descriptive paragraph or storyboards for a TV ad that reminds people not to drive distracted. Entries will open on Dec. 11 and the deadline is Feb. 20, 2018. All contest entrants will receive two free tickets to the Atlanta International Auto Show.

“Even though today's cars are safer than ever, with many innovations that help avoid crashes and protect occupants, distracted driving continues to be a factor in crashes resulting in some 3,500 fatalities and tens of thousands of injuries every year,” said Shayne Wilson, President of the Metro Atlanta Automobile Dealers Association and Show Manager for the Atlanta International Auto Show. “We encourage young people from throughout Georgia to participate in *Drive Safe Atlanta* to be messengers to their peers and to all drivers that distracted driving is dangerous driving.”

“We are constantly spreading the message to drivers of all ages about the dangers of distracted driving and the best way to get teen drivers to listen and more importantly pay attention to the road is through messages that come from other teens,” Harris Blackwood, Director of the Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety said. “This video contest not only will allow students to be making a difference in the lives of their friends and classmates, it will also give them a better understanding of why we all need to make safe driving a priority when we are behind the wheel.”

Last year's winner was Gabriel Howland, a student at the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School. His winning entry shows a large group of people in either blue or orange shirts. Some people in blue shirts step forward one at a time and say, "It wasn't my fault. The other guy was drunk," and then "It wasn't my fault. The other guy ran a red light." Someone in an orange shirt steps forward and says, "It was my fault. I was on my phone. Those people I hit, the mom and the girl, they could die." The lights come on to dozens of people – some in orange shirts and the rest in blue, as all those in orange say together, "It was my fault. I was on the phone." The spot ends with words on the screen, saying "One in ten crashes is caused by a cell phone. Turn it off!"

The PSA has aired more than 500 times to date on more than 150 TV stations throughout the country.

The National Road Safety Foundation says that although texting and cell phones get the most attention, drivers can be distracted by many other things including use of other mobile devices like GPS, adjusting sound system controls, eating and even talking with passengers.

Information about distracted driving and the *Drive Safe Atlanta* PSA Contest, including contest rules and entry form, can be seen at <http://www.nrsf.org/teenlane/contests/drivesafeatlanta>

The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc. (NRSF) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit charitable organization that for more than 55 years has been dedicated to reducing crashes, deaths and injuries on our nation's highways by promoting safe driving habits through greater public awareness.

NRSF produces documentaries, educational programs and public service campaigns for broadcast and for use in safety, educational and enforcement programs by police, teachers, traffic safety agencies, healthcare professionals, youth advocacy groups and other grass-roots related agencies, as well as federal, state and local government agencies. NRSF programs, which are free, deal with distracted driving, speed and aggression, impaired driving, drowsy driving, driver proficiency and pedestrian safety. The Foundation also works with youth advocacy groups and sponsors contests to engage teens in promoting safe driving to their peers and in their communities. For information or to download free programs, visit www.nrsf.org or www.teenlane.org.

About the Atlanta International Auto Show. The 36th Annual Atlanta International Auto Show will return to the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) on March 21-25, 2018. It is produced by the Metro Atlanta Automobile Dealers Association (MAADA).

Not only is the Atlanta International Auto Show the largest consumer event held annually at the GWCC, it is also one of the nation's great auto shows, attracting many of the world's major automotive manufacturers during its five-day run. There will be more than 500 new and pre-production vehicles on display on the 400,000 square foot show floor.