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NHTSA Administrator Runge Announces New Crash Injury Research Center At Medical College of Wisconsin



October 25, 2001. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. NHTSA Administrator Jeffrey W. Runge, M.D., joined by Wisconsin officials and

Medical College of Wisconsin faculty and representatives of Froedtert Hospital, today announced the opening of the 10th national Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN) center. The center at the Medical College of Wisconsin will further the study of real-world automobile crashes and their prevention, and will help improve the prognosis and treatment of crash trauma patients.

“Research into the injuries suffered by people in real world crashes is a vital component of our program to make vehicles safer,” Dr. Runge said. “The CIREN trauma centers are in a unique position to carry out that detailed research. CIREN’s expansion continues important efforts to prevent injuries on America’s highways and underscores safety once again as President Bush’s highest transportation priority.”

The center, self-funded by the Medical College and its partner, Froedtert Hospital, will conduct basic and clinical research and use the new findings to develop strategies to reduce fatalities and injuries in automobile crashes. A key focus of CIREN is to provide feedback to the auto industry. By designing safer vehicles, manufacturers will be able to prevent or mitigate severe injuries to crash victims—people who wouldn’t have lived a decade or more ago now survive crashes because of vehicle safety devices, such as air bags.

It will be the first self-funded center in the CIREN network. Seven receive federal funding from NHTSA and two others, one in Birmingham, AL and the other in Falls

Church, VA, are privately funded by Mercedes-Benz and Ford respectively.

“The mission of the CIREN center epitomizes what we do at the Medical

College,” said T. Michael Bolher, J.D., President and Chief Executive Officer. “It is to teach and train doctors, create new knowledge,

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Pictured from left to right: Dr. Dennis Maiman, Co director, CIREN Program; Dr. Tom Gennarelli, Co director, CIREN Program; NHTSA Administrator Dr. Jeff Runge, Dr. Frank Pintar, Dr. Yoga Yoganandan.

Dr. Runge Joins Ford Motor Company/United Way to Distribute Booster Seats in Advance of New Booster Seat Law in California

October 15, 2001. Long Beach, CA. NHTSA Administrator Jeffrey W. Runge joined Ford Motor Company President and CEO Jacques Nasser, California Business, Transportation and Housing Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet, the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, Toys “R” Us and a coalition of

local and national partners as they presented the first of more than 60,000 booster seats in the state as part of Ford’s *Boost America!* child passenger safety campaign.

Ford is working through United Way agencies across the state to distribute 40,000

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NHTSA Partners with Ford and United Way to Distribute Booster Seats

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free booster seats to families in financial need. In addition, Ford Motor Company dealers are distributing vouchers redeemable at Toys "R" Us stores for free or discounted booster seats to Ford customers. Nearly 20,000 vouchers have already been redeemed in the state and more than 230,000 nationwide.

"The leading killer of our children between 4 and 8 years old is not polio, measles, pneumonia, or AIDS...it is motor vehicle crashes," said Dr. Runge. "The majority of

children who are killed in a crash are totally unrestrained. It's a crime. It's also one of the nation's most profound public health problems, but it is a problem for which we have a vaccine," he said.

Dr. Runge further noted that *Boost America* is providing America the vaccines for this public health emergency. "Right now, fewer than 10 percent of children in this vulnerable age group ride in a booster seat on a regular basis. On behalf of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, I pledge to do

all that we can, together with our partners, to turn those numbers around. We have the experience with getting younger kids into car seats. We know that the government can't do it alone. It takes the strength of corporate America, and the ubiquitous presence of grass roots organizations working together to change behavior of parents. We can reach the point where 90 percent are immunized against crash injury, instead of 10 percent," he said.

Dr. Runge announced that after months of thorough research, public meetings and deliberation, NHTSA has developed an updated booster seat use recommendation for states to use as a guide when developing

"There is nothing more important and responsible than making sure our children are buckled up in a seat that fits and protects them from death and injury"

— Jeffrey W. Runge, M.D.

booster seat legislation. NHTSA's new recommendation is:

Every child should be restrained in a child safety seat or a booster seat until they turn 8 years old, unless they are at least 4' 9" tall.

Many speakers at the event praised California for their new child passenger safety law. California is one of only seven states to have a booster seat law. The law that requires children to use a safety seat or booster seat until they are at least 6 years old or 60 pounds takes effect January 1, 2002.

More information on *Boost America!* is available at www.boostamerica.org or (866) BOOST-KID. ■



Pictured from left to right: John Moffat, Chairman, National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives; Liam McGee, Chairman of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Board of Directors; Jacques Nasser, Ford Motor Company President and CEO; NHTSA Administrator Dr. Jeff Runge; Randy Irwin, Toys "R" Us District Manager for Orange County; Maria Contreras-Sweet, California Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing.

New Crash Injury Research Center At Medical College of Wisconsin

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provide humane and expert patient care and leadership in health services. It also will forge local, regional, national and global partnerships in education, health care and research and be a national repository for biomechanics and biomedical research."

The Medical College of Wisconsin was chosen as a CIREN center because of its historical commitment, over two decades, to biomedical research, and its international reputation in biomechanics; the Level 1 Trauma Center of its primary adult and pediatric partners, Froedtert Hospital and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin; and its unparalleled impact testing facilities at the Veterans Medical Center in Milwaukee.

Created in 1996 by NHTSA, CIREN's mission is to reduce the severity of injuries and gain a better understanding of crash dynamics to reduce deaths, disabilities, and human and economic costs. A linked computer

network allows all CIREN researchers to review crash and injury data and share their expertise.

NHTSA's nine other CIREN centers are the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, Baltimore, MD; University of Medicine and Dentistry/ New Jersey Medical School, Newark, NJ; Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC.; Lehman Injury Research Center, University of Miami School of Medicine, Miami, FL; University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, MI; Harborview Injury Prevention Center, Seattle, WA; the

San Diego County Trauma System, San Diego, CA; the Mercedes-Benz CIREN Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham; and the Ford Inova Fairfax Hospital Center in Falls Church, VA.

Research findings and other information on CIREN are on the Internet at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-50/ciren/ciren.html>. ■



More Than a Day's Work

By Lorie Dankers, Region X

Nearly 1200 car seats were inspected at this child safety seat event in Renton, Wash., on Saturday, September 29. Booster seats were also distributed to 551 income-eligible families through the national *Boost America!* campaign and Washington's Safety Restraint Coalition.

By The Numbers:

- 37 Fitting Stations
- 50 child passenger safety technicians on-site
- 2 hours average wait-time per vehicle
- 1000 children weighed and measured
- 50 child safety seats were replaced on-site
- 105 families followed-up with since September 29
- 1200+ children who are riding safer because of this effort

"I am excited that parents with children of all ages are interested in child passenger safety issues. With the support and energy of technicians and child passenger safety advocates statewide, we were really able to make a difference," said Alaina Cunningham, public health educator with the Spokane Regional Health District. Alaina is a certified instructor and drove nearly 300 miles to participate in this event. ■



One College Takes Traffic Safety Seriously

By Sue Ryan,
Traffic Safety Programs, NHTSA

Longwood College, a public four-year academic institution located in Farmville, Virginia, took a strong stance on keeping their student athletes safer beginning this school year. They have instituted new policies regarding the transportation of student athletes. These include: requiring a coach, assistant coach or trainer to travel with each van; allowing only ten people to ride in each van; requiring the van driver to be a resident of Virginia and have a clean driving record; and requiring all passengers and the van driver to wear seat belts at all times. The college took a serious look at their transportation policies based on issues raised by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the NCAA last year and decided to institute stricter policies to protect their student athletes. "We are concerned about the safety of all our students, including the transport of student athletes to and from sporting events. We want to protect our college students and their families, and the college community, from the tragedies suffered by other colleges last year in traffic crashes," said Mr. Don

Lemish, Athletic Director for Longwood College. The athletic department also

increased its bus transportation budget to cover an additional 8-10 team travel opportunities necessitated by the fact that teams had more than 20 players, the maximum number for two vans. ■



The Longwood Women's Lacrosse Team shows their support for the new policies, especially requiring seat belt use, as expressed in their banner – *Longwood Lax Buckles Up*. Sue Ryan's daughter, Traci, plays for the Longwood Women's Lacrosse Team.



Recent People Saving People/Teamwork Leadership Challenge Awards

Marcia Robertson, NCC

For volunteering to remove obsolete legal reference materials (three full sections of library shelves) and re-shelving the remaining legal service volumes.

**William Naff, III
Roderick L. Chu, III**

For going beyond their assignment in helping to make Region III's office move go smoothly.

Vanessa Johnson, III

For an exceptional job coordinating all the administrative details necessary to ensure a smooth office move.

**Rod Chu, R-III
William Watada, R-VIII**

For participating in the upgrade to the Grants Tracking System.

**Andrew Stancell, R-IV
William Kootsikis, R-IV
Ken Quintana, R-IV**

For his participation in conducting the NHTSA Managing Federal Finances and Tracking Grants training course in Nashville, TN.

William Kootsikis, R-IV

For his willingness to go beyond his normal assignment and his outstanding performance appearing on the local Nashville CBS TV program discussing the benefits of Safety Belts and the Tennessee *Click It or Ticket* campaign.

**William Reiting, VII
James Green, VII
Susan de Courcy, VII**

For teaching two Financial Management classes at the Transportation Safety Institute.

Philip Weiser, R-VIII

For serving on a contract evaluation team to identify occupant protection projects for 157 funding. In addition, he abstracted information from the applications to be submitted for publication in our *Traffic Safety Digest*. All this was done at headquarters while on a two week detail.

Linda D. Dodge, R-VIII

For accelerating South Dakota Highway Safety expenditures.

Rhonda Keith, NPS

For her leadership, diligence and technical expertise in helping develop and launch a new DOT/NHTSA – CART safety campaign, *Safety – The Ultimate Rush*.

Scott York, NSA

For his willingness to take on extra workload from other investigators thus allowing the office to complete issues as accurate and as timely as possible.

Aysha Ahmed, NPP

For performing above and beyond her duties for the past few months. She provided leadership for all the staff assistants in Plans and Policy and kept the office running efficiently during the retirement of the head secretary.

Ivonne Rodriguez, NAD

In recognition for her timely and efficient updates to our training dBASE. She expeditiously completed this project that required her to edit more than 150 employee records in our current training dBASE.

**Sandy Richardson, NTS
Dave Seiler, NTS
Chuck Peltier, NTS
Sue Ryan, NTS
Bob Hohn, NTS
Brian Chodrow, NTS
Earl Hardy, NTS**

For going beyond their normal duties by coordinating and participating in a meeting recently hosted by NHTSA's Office of State and Community Services for the purpose of upgrading and re-invigorating the Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) training program.

**James Onder, NTS
Alexander Sinclair, NTS
Diane Krause, R-I
Judy Craig, R-7
Rosemary Nye, R-9**

In recognition for developing and piloting the successful media skills workshop to enhance delivery of life-saving messages through the media.

Shannon M. Reed, NRD

For being instrumental in completing the year-end purchasing and funding reconciliation.

**Deirdre Fujita, NCC
Cathy Gotschall, NPP
Michael Huntley, NRD
Zahid Khawaja, NPP
Tami Levitas, NTS
Linda McCray, NRD
Lori Miller, NTS
Sandy Sinclair, NTS
Lisa Sullivan, NRD
Joan Tetrault, NSC**

For developing several options for language advising consumers on the safe use of booster seats. All this was done in a relatively short period of time, while handling other major agency responsibilities.

**Jack Oates, NSC
Joe Tinning, USCG
Sandy Richardson, NTS
Ross Jeffries, NAD**

For their efforts to increase participation in the occupant protection high visibility enforcement mobilization.

**Cheryl Neverman, NTS
Marlena Glaze, NTS
Robin Mayer, NTS
Veronica Ferguson, NTS
Ed Pachetti, NTS
Debra Boykin, NTS
Luis del Rio, NTS
Ruth Estaban, NTS
Craig Killgo, NTS
Ethel Ezell, NTS
Peggy Proctor, NTS
Evelyn Proctor, NTS
Gayle Yarborough, NTS
Karen Scott, NTS
Elaine Wheeler, Contractor
Antoinette Stephenson, NTS
Janice Flemming, NAD
Margaret Bryant, NAD
Rose Watson, NAD
Ross Jeffries, NAD
George AnneMoses, NAD
Jose Ucles, OPACA**

In recognition for their hard work in hosting a Diversity Summit which drew over 500 youth from across the country.

Freeman W. Bowley, R-I

NHTSA Now is an official publication of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Public and Consumer Affairs.

Kathryn Henry
Editor

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Let us resolve to be masters, not the victims, of our history, controlling our own destiny without giving way to blind suspicions and emotions.”

—President John F. Kennedy