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### **TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

**Hampton Roads, VA** – The Annual John T. Hanna Awards, presented by Drive Safe Hampton Roads, will recognize ten local individuals and organizations for outstanding performance in the area of traffic safety. This year's recipients include police officers, a cab company, a concrete company, an attorney, and several other outstanding individuals from the area.

The awards will be presented on December 6, 2011 at 9:00am during a breakfast to be held at the Norfolk Airport Hilton, 1500 North Military Highway, in Norfolk.

John T. Hanna, the namesake of the awards, is widely known in the Commonwealth for his years of service dedicated to improving traffic safety in Virginia. Hanna served as the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Safety at the state Department of Motor Vehicles and worked in the traffic safety field for more than 60 years.

Drive Safe Hampton Roads is a regional coalition comprised of safety advocates from local law enforcement and fire safety divisions, corporations, the military, state, city and county government, and other individuals. For over 23 years, Drive Safe Hampton Roads has been dedicated to preventing crashes, injuries, and fatalities on the region's roadways.

The awards will be given in the following categories: The Martin H. Schlosser Award for Traffic Safety Activism; Employer Safety; Impaired Driving Prevention; Law Enforcement Initiatives; Legal; Occupant Protection; Public Transportation Safety; Pupil Transportation Safety; and Youth Traffic Safety. The Lifetime Achievement in Transportation Safety Award will also be presented to Wallace Timmons.

The 2011 John T. Hanna Award Recipients are as follows:

**The Martin H. Schlosser Award for Traffic Safety Activism:** *Bob and Kaye Walsh* is the recipient of this award. Bob and Kaye were parents of a daughter named Robin. Robin lost her life in 1997 as a result of a motor vehicle crash in which the driver that struck Robin's vehicle was under the influence of alcohol. As a result, Bob and Kaye Walsh became two very active members of the Southside Hampton Roads chapter of MADD in 2004. This couple is so passionate that they are often known as "Mr. and Mrs. MADD" due to the level of their activism. Bob and Kaye are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to driving home the strong message of not drinking and driving to members of our military as well as people who are ordered by the courts to attend the mandatory classes at *Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP)*. Bob and Kaye chose to take their presentation to the military in order to help reduce the surge in alcohol related incidents and traffic offenses that the military was experiencing with many of its members. They also go out to schools, churches and wherever they are requested throughout the Hampton Roads area and Virginia. In 2010 and for the most of 2011, Bob and Kaye have impacted more than 25,000 people including military personnel. They make their message very clear when they send letters to the judges and prosecutors about following and adhering to the sentencing guidelines.

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**Employer Safety:** *Capital Concrete, Inc* is the recipient of this award. Based in Norfolk, Capital Concrete currently has over eighty employees. Drivers spend 75% of each day driving in Hampton Roads. Boo and Helen, the owners of Capital Concrete, realized years ago how important it is to not only keep their employees safe but also all other Hampton Roads citizens. Capital Concrete has zero tolerance for on-the-job drug and alcohol use. Supervisors attend a yearly class on how to detect and handle employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Capital Concrete supports the Light Rail project, Town Hall meetings, non-profit traffic safety groups, and local employment, hiring a retired Drivers Education teacher to teach No Zone. Capital Concrete has partnered with an insurance risk management team to isolate areas of potential concerns and works together to correct concerns before they can become a reality. They believe in reinforcing positive choices made by the employee. An employee in good standing can earn extra money and vacation days.

**Impaired Driving Prevention:** *Lt. T.M. Foster of the Chesapeake Police Department* is the recipient of this award category. As with most communities, the City of Chesapeake has problems with impaired drivers who, in an instant, can adversely affect not only their lives, but the lives and well-being of so many others. Lt. Foster readily recognized the extreme danger caused by impaired drivers and, together with his staff, developed a comprehensive traffic safety plan which places emphasis on enforcement. Each month supervisors meet with each officer to advise/counsel on impaired driving enforcement. Having established how impaired driving enforcement would be addressed, Lt Foster then focused on impaired driving enforcement training for the 37 officers under his command. Officers who showed a propensity for DUI arrests and knowledge of DUI arrest procedures were paired with officers who were not as comfortable with the complex laws and procedures. At the conclusion of six months into the program, Lt Foster assessed the current program with the aim of improvement via additional training. During the last year, Lt Foster's command has made over 536 DUI arrests. This is most astounding as these officers also respond to all calls for service which decreases the time they have for DUI enforcement.

**Law Enforcement Initiatives:** These are very challenging times for law enforcement agencies. The *Hampton Police Division Motor Carrier Unit*, this year's recipient for the Law Enforcement category, has enhanced the safety of our community and roadways. In 2010, significant increases in the number of large vehicles using Hampton's roadways as well as damage to pavement and failure to comply with required safety standards by overweight commercial vehicles had become a major issue. There was insufficient staffing to be able to field a full time motor carrier team. Six dedicated officers stepped up and volunteered to work in addition to their normal assignments. Since most were not assigned to Day Shift Units, this meant often working their normal assignment and Motor Carrier checks on the same day or coming in on their day off. Members of this Unit put a lot of effort into acquiring the needed equipment and training, borrowing as needed to conduct the necessary inspections. In less than a year's time, the Motor Carrier Unit has been able to take what started out as an idea to increase traffic safety on our roadways and transformed it into functioning and self-sufficient unit. The Hampton Police Division is now in full partnership with the regional effort to improve motor carrier traffic safety. It is only through the dedication, hard work and determination of the officers who volunteered to go "above and beyond" their normal assignment that this has been able to happen. It is for the above reasons that the Hampton Police Motor Carrier Unit and its members, Cpl. M. Canny, MPO D. Pryor, MPO G. Thayer, MPO E. Gause, SPO K. Novak and Ptl S. Johnson are receiving the John T. Hanna Law Enforcement Initiative Award.

**Legal Category:** *Christopher Baker* is the recipient of this award. Mr. Baker is a prosecutor for the Virginia Beach Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney. He routinely goes "above and beyond" "to successfully prosecute all of the cases which are assigned to him, but more specifically DUI and traffic related cases. Mr. Baker takes the time to meet with officers in advance to review each and every case that is being challenged. He researches pertinent case law and makes himself available both during working hours and during his personal time for officers to contact him with questions that might arise during preparation for the case. Mr. Baker educates Virginia Beach police officers both for in-service instruction and at the Recruit Academy.

Recently, Mr. Baker led a two hour block of instruction, pointing out errors that officers may make, providing hints and tips for a successful prosecution, and explaining how to handle defense attorney challenges. He was so well received by the officers that his assigned block of instruction had to be extended. He provides this recruit class on his own time to help build a solid foundation for officers to begin their careers with. He is always trying to improve his ability to prosecute DUI and traffic cases. He attends regular traffic safety training, completes ride-a-longs with the Traffic Safety Unit and Fatal Crash Team, and attends Police Department DUI training. Chris Baker is a prosecutor who exemplifies all the characteristics for this award.

**Occupant Protection: Make it Click: A Car Safety Program for Tweens.** Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Less than half of tweens involved in crashes wear seatbelts, and 73% sit in the front seat when they are the sole passengers. Funded by the Virginia Highway Safety Office and created by Dr. Kelli England Will and her team\* at Eastern Virginia Medical School, the Make it Click Initiative targeted increased safety restraint use and back-seat use among 8- to 12-year-old children (tweens). Its design has 7 components. For example, a competition among classes to achieve a high rate of students buckled in the back; a contest with entries illustrating a car safety theme; and a series of parent education flyers. Make It Click also developed a fun, interactive, and educational website which includes a toolkit in English and Spanish, as well as interactive games for tweens, classroom activities, and educational pages and presentations. In mid-September 2011, the Make it Click team sent an email containing the website URL ([www.umakeitclick.org](http://www.umakeitclick.org)) out to 1753 individuals, coalitions and organizations throughout Virginia and the United States. In one month, the site had had over 1,180 visits and over 3,450 page views from 17 different countries. Some of the results: Make it Click intervention schools maintained significant increases in observed belt use at follow-up, increasing from 31.9% at baseline to 67.9% at follow-up, while belt use at control schools (which did not receive the program) did not differ at follow-up compared to baseline. Tweens in intervention schools were 3.3 times more likely to wear their safety belts at the 4-month follow-up than control schools. Current members of the Make it Click team at Eastern Virginia Medical School include Kelli England Will, Ph.D., (Principal Investigator) and Melissa Minnick, B.S. (Research Assistant). The development and evaluation team also included Krystall E. Dunaway, Ph.D. (Program Coordinator), and Edward Lorek, M.S. (Research Associate). Website Development was contracted with Visual Harbor.

**Pupil Transportation Safety: Newport News Public School Pupil Transportation Summer Bus Camp** combines a necessary element of new school bus driver training with a fun and educational component for public elementary school students and a volunteer opportunity for certain high school students. Summer bus driver classes tend to be the largest. Trying to fulfill the 12 hours of driving time with students on board can be challenging. The creative mind of Linda Hamilton, Safety & Training Specialist, conceived the idea of Summer Bus Camp as an answer to the training delay, at the same time providing educational opportunities to select students within the school system. Prior to the end of the regular school year, invitations are sent home with elementary age students enrolled in selected schools. In early August, when summer school has ended, the training staff calls the parents with the relevant information and Summer Bus Camp begins. As the new school bus drivers pick up the students, the drivers learn to read the schedule, the streets, and they perfect their skills at making bus stops. The students are taken to the Pupil Transportation office where they receive instruction in school bus safety, practice in appropriate grade level skills such as math, science, and reading, and have time for crafts, games, and physical activity. As the high school volunteers, supervised by training staff, teach the younger students how to ride the school bus safely, show them how to use a microscope, or read stories to them, they earn credit toward their community service requirement for graduation. The bus drivers are then given several other opportunities to drive the students, to their "field trip" and then on towards home, while the students get to practice the safety lessons they have learned. This three-fold mission provides new school bus drivers with accurate transporting experiences, students learn the safe way to board, ride, and disembark from the school bus, including how to be safe crossing the street and waiting at the bus stop, and high school students earn their community service hours and become advocates for school bus safety in their own schools. Safety is thus improved for both drivers and riders of public school buses.

**Public Transportation Safety: *Black and White Cabs of Norfolk*** is the recipient of this award. Black and White Cabs has had a safe ride home program with the Navy for over 20 years. They are active participants in Cab Alert and is Old Dominion University's preferred taxi service at their football games. Black and White partners with non-profits, like Drive Safe Hampton Roads, to provide giveaways for festivals and holiday designated driver promotions. This cab service display posters in restaurants not only for their service, but to promote the "Don't Drink and Drive" message.

**Youth Traffic Safety: *Catherine Wilson*** is this year's recipient of the Youth Traffic Safety Award. For the past twelve years, Ms. Wilson, the Traffic Safety Manager for AAA Tidewater Virginia, has been helping children travel to and from school safely by teaching traffic safety skills in local elementary schools. These presentations, called SAFETY SMARTS, are free and fit into a 30-45 minute time frame. Ms. Wilson presents to groups of students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade, adapting the presentations to meet various age groups and learning levels. While Ms. Wilson gives talks on a variety of traffic safety topics, the two most requested presentations are "School Bus and Pedestrian Safety" and "Passenger Safety for Children". From October 2010 through September 2011, Ms. Wilson has given 36 SAFETY SMARTS presentations in 27 schools to over 4,400 students and educators. Evaluations received from the teachers emphasize Ms. Wilson's talent as a community educator. We are proud to announce Ms. Wilson as this year's winner of the Youth Traffic Safety Hanna Award.

**The Lifetime Achievement in Transportation Safety Award: *E. Wallace Timmons*** has had quite an exemplary career in traffic safety. Mr. Timmons is a 1957 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute. During the 1960s, he worked for the lowering of the blood alcohol level for drunk driving from .15 to .10, and he was later instrumental in the establishment of the Alcohol Safety Action Program in Virginia. He has developed programs for junior high school students, for college students, public school teachers, and for senior citizens. Wallace Timmons has dedicated his life to traffic safety, serving on a wide variety of commissions, boards, and committees including: the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Science, the Highway Safety Advisory Committee of the University of Virginia Research Council, and the Transportation Safety Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia. He spent 44 years at AAA (American Automobile Association of Tidewater) servicing the transportation safety cause statewide, retiring in 1998. Even after his retirement, he continued to advocate for greater transportation safety, pushing for clarity on legislative issues. He served as an early President of Concerned Citizens Advocating Traffic Safety, now known as Drive Safe Hampton Roads. He has received numerous awards, citations, and certificates of achievement. Mr. Timmons was a 1976 recipient of the Silver Beaver Award from the Boy Scouts of America and a 1997 recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Military-Civilian Workshop. Even long after retirement, you can find him almost every year the week before Christmas out on Interstate 264 at the old Toll Plaza, helping to pass out goodies during the Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver Appreciation Day. As traffic safety was coming of age in Hampton Roads, Wally Timmons was always there.

For more information: [www.drivesafehr.org](http://www.drivesafehr.org) or call (757) 498-2562.

**NOTE: Live shots and photo ops will be accommodated and interviews will be available.**

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