

State Highway Safety Agencies Receive Teen Driving Grant Funding

Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri and New York are the winners

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- As [National Youth Traffic Safety Month](#) kicks off, the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) announced that four of its members have received \$80,000 in grant funding from [Ford Driving Skills For Life \(Ford DSFL\)](#), the teen driving program developed collaboratively by Ford Motor Company Fund and GHSA. \$20,000 each is being awarded to highway safety agencies in Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri and New York. States will use these funds to conduct teen driving initiatives incorporating the award-winning Ford DSFL program.

Earlier this year, GHSA invited its members to apply for the grants. A panel consisting of GHSA and Ford representatives reviewed applications and selected winners. Summaries of planned activities include:

- **Maine** - The [Bureau of Highway Safety](#) is developing a statewide program incorporating Ford DSFL that will be taught to the state's school resource officers. Then, the officers will teach a 2-4 hour course to teens in their schools. Ford DSFL is providing funding for a new driving simulator. The program will include a focus on the state's [graduated driver licensing law](#), [distracted driving](#), [speeding](#) and [drunk driving](#).
- **Massachusetts** - The state's Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, [Highway Safety Division](#) will host a one-day event for up to 300 attendees with elements mirroring Ford DSFL. The state will partner with a driving school to reach out to young drivers and their parents with activities including crash prevention training, driving simulators and stations featuring new driving technology.
- **Missouri** - The [Department of Transportation](#) plans to conduct a seat belt competition between Missouri high schools this fall, with Ford DSFL as one of the lead sponsors. A host of activities are planned to encourage high school students to buckle up. Using Ford DSFL funding, the DOT will purchase window clings and \$25 gas gift cards. Teams of spotters will identify students who are buckled up and displaying a window cling at participating schools and reward them with a gas gift card.
- **New York** - The [Governor's Traffic Safety Committee](#) will organize a hands-on driving training for teens in Nassau and Suffolk counties. Both areas have experienced a significant number of tragic teen driving deaths. Teens will complete a "ride and drive" course conducted by law enforcement instructors and participate in traffic safety activity stations focusing on the state's [graduated driver licensing law](#), [seat belt use](#) and [drunk driving](#). This program will be featured as part of a New York State Fall Safety Symposium involving many state partners.

Since its creation in 2003, Ford DSFL has partnered with approximately 40 [GHSA members](#) on a wide-variety of teen driving programs and activities. According to [GHSA Executive Director Barbara Harsha](#), "With state budgets continuing to be very tight, this private sector support is absolutely critical. Ford has stepped in and helped states educate teen drivers in an innovative manner." In addition to the state grants, this year Ford DSFL is conducting a 30-city high school tour, a statewide program in Illinois, a summer camp in Kentucky and hands-on driving events in Arizona.