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Alabama Distracted Driving Summit Hosted by UAB UTC and UTCA

On Dec. 3, 2009, the UAB University Transportation Center (www.uab.edu/utc) joined forces with the University Transportation Center for Alabama (<http://utca.eng.ua.edu>) to sponsor the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit. This first statewide summit on distracted driving was conducted a mere 61 days after Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood's Washington, D.C., summit. The purpose of this one-day event was: (1) to bring together researchers, educators, public policy and decision makers, and private citizens from across our state to describe the scope and nature of the distracted driving problem; (2) to identify meaningful ways to increase public awareness of the safety issues associated with distracted driving; and (3) to identify and review legislative and regulatory approaches/options for addressing distracted driving in Alabama.



Modeled after the transportation secretary's National Distracted Driving Summit, Alabama's summit brought together more than 300 transportation leaders, elected officials, safety advocates, law enforcement representatives and private sector

representatives, as well as transportation and public health scientists to discuss how to reduce motor-vehicle crashes resulting from distracted driving through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education.

The Alabama summit was especially significant due to the presence of Secretary LaHood, who in his keynote address praised both Alabama UTCs for their initiative and leadership in hosting the event: "The University of Alabama at Birmingham's summit – the first of its kind



Ray LaHood, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, speaks at the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit.

outside Washington – helps continue the national conversation on distracted driving and will put more good ideas on the table to prevent needless deaths. I hope other states will follow its lead."

Traffic safety experts from around the state and nation made concise presentations and participated in interactive audience-panel discussions throughout the day-long meeting. Key topics describing the extent and impact of distracted driving, current research, regulations and best

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ABOVE: More than 300 transportation leaders, elected officials, safety advocates, law enforcement officers and private sector representatives gathered for the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit.

RIGHT: Dr. Jay Lindly, Director of the UTCA (l) and Dr. Russ Fine, Director of the UAB-UTC (r) present the Pittman-Koopman Pioneer Award acknowledging his vision, leadership and commitment to traffic safety and injury control to US Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood.



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practices were presented and discussed. Additional information about the panelists and their topics appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are pleased the UAB UTC/UTCA-sponsored Alabama Distracted Driving Summit served to re-energize statewide anti-distracted-driving activities that were previously underway in Alabama. Because of the summit, many more people and private-sector entities, as well as other government agencies, have become better informed about the distracted driving problem. In addition, it increased awareness of the distracted driving efforts outlined by Alabama's Strategic Highway Safety Plan and executed by Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). ADECA's point man for these efforts is Mr. Terry Henderson, a summit panelist. Also, the Strategic Highway Safety Plan outlines a legislative approach for reducing distracted driving that is chaired by Rep. David Grimes of Montgomery.

Both Alabama UTCs are interested only in advancing the common cause of eliminating distracted driving in Alabama. Consistent with our intentions are planned activities that are two-fold: First, to be fully supportive of efforts currently underway or in place; and secondly, to offer ourselves as a unifier, perhaps the primary unifier of the many and varied contributors and prospective contributors to the anti-distracted-driving effort.

We envision a prominent role in increasing awareness among policy and decision makers, as well as the general public. A specific example of a planned educational awareness activity is providing each member of the Alabama Legislature with individual DVD copies of all presentations made and panel discussions occurring during the recent Alabama Distracted Driving Summit. Also, plans are in place for Internet broadcasting of the proceedings of the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit on the UAB UTC Web site (www.uab.edu/utc).

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Summit Co-Sponsors

- AAA of Alabama
- Alabama Broadcaster's Association
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
- Alabama Department of Public Health
- Alabama Department of Public Safety
- Alabama Department of Transportation
- Alabama Parent Teacher Association
- Alabama Trucking Association
- D. Michael Andrews, Attorney, UAB UTC Advisory Board Member
- Beasley, Allen, Crow, Methvin, Portis & Miles, PC
- Biolnjury, LLC
- Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services System
- Center for Advanced Public Safety, University of Alabama
- Federal Highway Administration
- Drs. Jay Goldman and Renitta Goldman
- Jefferson County Youth Transportation Program
- National Transportation Research Center, Inc.
- Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
- Safety Research & Strategies, Inc.
- Southeast Child Safety Institute
- Southern Consortium for Injury Biomechanics
- Translational Research for Injury Prevention Laboratory
- UAB Center for Aging
- UAB Center for Injury Sciences
- UAB Center for Research in Applied Gerontology
- UAB Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering
- UAB Department of Emergency Medicine
- UAB Department of Ophthalmology Clinical Research Unit
- UAB Injury Control Research Center
- UAB Master of Public Administration Program
- Dr. Andrea Underhill
- University of Missouri-St. Louis Center for Transportation Studies
- University of Pennsylvania Center for Brain Injury and Repair



TOP: Mr. Gene Vonderau, Mr. Clay Ingram, Mr. Fred Gray, Jr., Ms. Ginny MacDonald, Ms. Dee Fine, Dr. Russ Fine

MIDDLE: Sen. JT "Jabo" Waggoner, Mr. Terry Henderson, Col. Chris Murphy, Dr. Bill King

BOTTOM: Dr. Melvin Davis, Dr. Rich Hanowski, Dr. John Lee

ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT
PANELS AND SPEAKERS

PANEL 1: DEFINITIONS, DATA & RESEARCH RESULTS – A context setting panel that discussed the definition of distracted driving, data on the extent of the issue, types of distraction, research and research results.



Dr. Despina Stavrinou

Dr. Despina Stavrinou

Despina Stavrinou obtained a doctorate in Lifespan Developmental Psychology in May 2009 from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the UAB University Transportation Center (UAB UTC). Her research program primarily focuses on child cognitive development issues, particularly as they relate to transportation-related injuries. Stavrinou is Principal Investigator of a study funded by the UAB UTC and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Center for Child Injury Prevention Studies that is examining the effects of cell phone conversation and text messaging distraction on motor vehicle crash-related injury risk in teens with (and without) Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Stavrinou has authored or co-authored six manuscripts and three book chapters, and has made more than 25 scientific presentations throughout the U.S. She has received a number of awards, including a Dwight D. Eisenhower Fellowship through the U.S. Department of Transportation, the 2007 Lizette Peterson-Homer Memorial Injury Research Grant Award and the 2008 UAB UTC Student of the Year Award. Her work on distracted pedestrians, which was featured in *Pediatrics* in 2009, also earned her the Society of Pediatric Psychology and CDC Injury Prevention Student Research Award.



Dr. John Lee

Dr. John Lee

John D. Lee is a professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Previously with the University of Iowa, he was the director of human factors research at the National Advanced Driving Simulator. He also was a research scientist at the Battelle Human Factors Transportation Center for six years. He is a co-author of the textbook *An Introduction to Human Factors Engineering* and is the author or coauthor of more than 170 articles. He has served as a member of the National Academy of Sciences committee on human system integration and several other committees for the National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Lee serves on the editorial board of *Cognitive Engineering and Decision Making*; *Cognition, Technology and Work*; *International Journal of Human Factors Modeling and Simulation*; and is the associate editor for the journals *Human Factors* and *IEEE-Systems, Man, and Cybernetics*. His research focuses on the safety and acceptance of complex human-machine systems by considering how technology mediates attention.



Dr. Richard Hanowski

Dr. Richard J. Hanowski

Richard J. Hanowski is the Director of the Center for Truck and Bus Safety at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. He has formal training in human factors engineering, systems design, safety, research methods, experimental design, statistics, training and human-computer interaction. His experience includes transportation human factors with both heavy and light vehicles, laboratory and field testing, real-time automobile and heavy vehicle simulation, advanced system development and testing, design guideline development and human performance evaluation. Hanowski is the author of more than 150 publications and has received numerous research awards. His research, which has had an impact on national transportation policy (e.g., Hours-of-Service for truck drivers, driver distraction/texting), has been featured in many areas of the media including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *CNN*, the *Discovery Channel* and the *Weather Channel*. He currently serves as the Fatigue Subject Matter Expert for National Surface Transportation Safety Center for Excellence. Hanowski has served as Principal Investigator or Co-PI on approximately 50 projects, managing over \$22 million in contract research. He currently serves as the Project Manager for an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contract for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT
PANELS AND SPEAKERS



Dr. Melvin Davis

Dr. Melvin Davis

Melvin Davis has 31 years of experience in higher education administration, teaching and research. He has presented nationally and internationally in Australia and Canada. Since returning to full-time teaching and research five years ago, he has directed eight dissertations, written 10 articles and directed several research projects. Early in his career, he completed a research study for Spain Rehabilitation Center on spinal cord injury, a population in need study for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers of 41 counties along the Tennessee-Tombigee Waterway Corridor, and adapted the Bruns-Lens Model to understanding rural mental health among African-Americans. Having grown up in a southern rural African-American community, Davis is close to the African-American culture. Since becoming executive director of Mississippi Urban Research Center two years ago, he has been using this connection to investigate urban problems. He will tell you that cell

phone use ranks high on the list of urban problems. Davis is married with two adult daughters, three grandchildren, and one son-in-law.

PANEL 2: PUBLIC AWARENESS & EDUCATION – This panel reviewed various initiatives to increase public awareness of the safety issues associated with distracted driving.



Ms. Dee Fine

Ms. Dee Fine

Dee Fine is a familiar figure in Alabama, on radio, television and in newspapers, as well as in the State Capitol. Dee and her husband, Russ, founded Alabama’s first MADD Chapter during the 1980s. Dee quickly became MADD’s National Vice President and was among MADD National’s leaders responsible for its greatest success, the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984. After leaving MADD, Dee conceptualized, planned and implemented the Attorney General’s Office of Victims Assistance. She served three years as the executive director of that office. Upon leaving state government, Dee began her broadcasting career. Along with Russ, Dee enjoyed a 20-year radio gig which included nearly five years on both radio and television simultaneously. Dee has made numerous guest appearances on major television shows including NBC’s Today Show, ABC’s Good

Morning America and CBS’s Early Morning, The Montel Williams Show, Hannity and Colmes, The O’Reilly Factor, Neil Cavuto and The Lou Dobbs Show. Dee earned a Decided Black Belt in Taekwondo Karate and is the mother of two, grandmother of two and “Mommy” to three Rhodesian Ridgebacks, with whom Dee and Russ share their home.



Ms. Ginny MacDonald

Ms. Ginny MacDonald

Ginny MacDonald has worked with The Birmingham News for 19 years as a reporter and assistant features editor; she began writing the Driver’s Side column in 1999. The column attracts between 20 and 25 written questions and comments each week, plus numerous phone calls and “hey yous” on the street. A native of south Alabama, Ms. MacDonald moved from Pensacola, Fla., to Birmingham in 1990. She has previous journalism experience as a magazine editor, newspaper features editor and metro editor. Ms. MacDonald previously worked with the now-defunct Alabama Journal. Her husband, John, is assistant internet editor at the News. She has two children, Brad and John Matthew, as well as two grandchildren.

ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT
PANELS AND SPEAKERS



Mr. Clay Ingram

Mr. Clay Ingram

Clay Ingram has served as the Public Relations and Marketing Manager for AAA Alabama for over five years. His current responsibilities include state-wide media relations, traffic safety coordination and legislative initiatives. He formerly served as Marketing Director for SouthWare Innovations, Inc. in Auburn, Ala. He also has served as the General Manager of the Durham Braves Baseball Club in Durham, N.C. He has worked as the Communications Director for a U.S. Congressional Campaign and as the Sports Information Director at Auburn University - Montgomery. Clay is a Gulf War veteran, having served five years in the U.S. Air Force. He is a native of Ashland, Ala., and a graduate of Auburn University. He also volunteers as a youth baseball and basketball coach. He and his wife, Katie, have two sons, Jake and Zack.



Mr. Fred Gray, Jr.

Mr. Fred Gray, Jr.

Fred D. Gray, Jr., Esq., is a Partner in the Law Firm of Gray, Langford, Sapp, McGowan, Gray & Nathanson, where he has been an attorney for the past 21 years. Born in Montgomery, Ala., he is the child of famed civil rights attorney Fred D. Gray and the late Bernice H. Gray. Gray attended public schools in Macon County, Ala., and graduated from Alabama Christian High School in Montgomery. He graduated with the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Morehouse College, attained the Juris Doctorate Degree from Howard University School of Law and is licensed to practice law in Alabama and Washington, D.C. Gray is an Elder at the Tuskegee Church of Christ, where he teaches young adult bible classes, among other responsibilities. He is a member of many professional, political and civic organizations, including, but not limited to National Bar Association, Alabama Democratic Conference, Tuskegee Civic Association, NAACP, PTA and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. He serves as Vice President for Legislation and Advocacy with the Alabama PTA and Vice President for the State of Alabama Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. He and his wife, Bridgett, have two children.



Mr. Gene Vonderau

Mr. Gene Vonderau

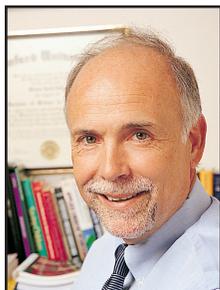
Gene Vonderau has served as the Director of Safety and Member Services for the Alabama Trucking Association since 1999. The association is made up of large and medium-sized trucking companies and allied firms, the majority of which are based in Alabama. Vonderau is a graduate of Fort Wayne Commercial College and holds the Certified Director of Safety designation from the North American Transportation Management Institute. He serves on the board of directors of Alabama Operation Lifesaver, and the advisory boards of the truck technician programs for Lurleen B. Wallace Community College in Opp, Ala., and Lawson State Community College in Bessemer, Ala. He also sits on several committees for the American Trucking Association Safety Council. He has been in the trucking business for nearly 40 years and has directed the safety programs for three trucking companies, ranging in size from 450 to 1100 trucks, operating in the 48 continental states and five provinces of Canada.

Using a cell phone while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.

(Sources: University of Utah via <http://www.distraction.gov/stats-and-facts/>)

ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT
PANELS AND SPEAKERS

PANEL 3: LEGISLATION, REGULATION & ENFORCEMENT– This panel reviewed legislative and regulatory approaches for addressing distracted driving, enforcement issues and public attitudes.



Dr. Bill King

Dr. Bill King

Bill King is Divisional Director of the Southeast Child Safety Institute, a child injury prevention program of Children’s Hospital of Alabama. His Division includes the Regional Poison Control Center, the Pediatric Telephone Triage program, the Alabama Safe Kids Campaign, the Think First program, and the Children’s Connection Line. Bill has practiced at Children’s Hospital since 1978. King received his BS in Pharmacy from Samford University and his Masters and Doctorate from the UAB School of Public Health. King is Professor of Pediatrics in the UAB School of Medicine and Assistant Professor of Epidemiology in the UAB School of Public Health. He has authored numerous works in the peer reviewed literature. King has served on the Alabama Child Death Review Team, the National Safe Kids Campaign Technical Advisory Committee and in other state and local advisory committees. He has received several recognitions and

awards for his work in childhood injury prevention including two U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission awards of service, Outstanding Service Award to Child Injury Prevention by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the William Henry Sanders Award in recognition of service to the public health by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama.



Col. J. Christopher Murphy

Col. J. Christopher Murphy

J. Christopher Murphy was sworn in as director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety in December 2006, upon his appointment by Gov. Bob Riley. Col. Murphy’s focus for public safety is improved effectiveness and efficiency, and his leadership has sparked adult-based trooper training, increased traffic safety, improved Driver’s License services, construction of a new academy in partnership with Postsecondary Education, and leadership development. The colonel commands almost 1,500 employees who staff the Administrative, Alabama Bureau of Investigation, Driver’s License, Highway Patrol, Protective Services, and Service divisions. A 30-year law enforcement veteran, Col. Murphy began his career with the Auburn Police Department. He then served as a special agent with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation before joining the U.S. Secret Service. Col. Murphy’s tenure with the Secret Service included protective details for

presidents, vice presidents and foreign heads-of-state; and criminal investigations, including financial and computer crimes. Upon retirement from the service in 2006, Col. Murphy was special agent in charge of the Birmingham District, managing offices in Alabama and Mississippi. A native of Birmingham, Col. Murphy earned an undergraduate degree at Auburn University and a master’s degree at Troy University. Col. Murphy and his wife have three sons.



Mr. Terry Henderson

Mr. Terry Henderson

Terry Henderson is the State Coordinator – Alabama Office of Highway Safety (AOHS) of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) – Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division (LETS). The Alabama Office of Highway Safety manages all grant funding received from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Mr. Henderson coordinates the activities of the nine Alabama Community Traffic Safety Program Coordinators, the Child Passenger Safety Coordinator and the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor and Department Program Managers. The major goal for the AOHS is to reduce Traffic Fatalities and major injuries resulting from Highway Traffic Crashes. Mr. Henderson is a member and Co- Chairman of the State Safety Coordinating Committee, Chairman of the State Traffic Records Coordinating Committee, and serves as the Alabama Senior Law Enforcement Liaison. He is also a member of

the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board and Emergency Medical Services for Children Advisory Board. Mr. Henderson is a native of Chambers County, a graduate of Auburn University, and currently resides in Ashland, Ala.

Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent.

(Carnegie Mellon University)

80 percent of all crashes and 65 percent of near crashes involve some type of distraction.

(Virginia Tech 100-car study for NHTSA)

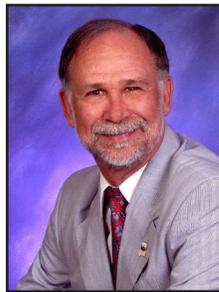
ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT PANELS AND SPEAKERS



Sen. JT "Jabo" Waggoner

Sen. JT "Jabo" Waggoner

J.T. "Jabo" Waggoner, a Birmingham native, is serving his fifth term in the Alabama Senate after serving 1966-1983 in the House of Representatives. Sen. Waggoner is president of Birmingham Business Consultants, LLC. He received his B.A. degree from Birmingham Southern College and his J.D. degree from Birmingham School of Law. He and his wife, Marilyn are the parents of four children: Scott (deceased), Mark, Lyn Waggoner Kilpatrick, and Jay. He serves on the following boards: United Cerebral Palsy, Metropolitan Development Board, Better Business Bureau, Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, and Pinnacle Bank. He served as head coach of the Birmingham Touchdown Club and was president of the Birmingham Tip-Off Club. Pursuant to Senate Rule 47(i), Sen. Waggoner was elected Senate Minority Leader in the 2002-2006 quadrennium, and re-elected for the current quadrennium on Jan. 16, 2007. Under the provisions of Rule 47(j), Sen. Waggoner, as Senate Minority Leader, is a voting member of all Senate Standing Committees, except the local legislation committees and the Rules Committee. Sen. Waggoner has the longest record of service of any legislator from Jefferson County in Alabama history.



Rep. Jim McClendon

Rep. Jim McClendon

Jim McClendon retired from his private optometry practice upon beginning his first term in the Alabama Legislature in 2002. He currently is serving his second term. McClendon did his undergraduate work at Birmingham Southern College and received his Doctor of Optometry from the University of Houston. He served in the Navy Medical Service Corps in Vietnam and afterwards taught clinical optometry at UAB. He was in private practice in Leeds and Moody, Ala., for many years. He is a past president of the Alabama Optometric Association and a former board member of St. Anne's Home and the Jefferson County Health Planning Commission. He was a founding director of the Davis Lake Fire Department and serves on several committees at First United Methodist Church of Springville. McClendon also serves on several House standing committees and joint House-Senate committees. He is chairman of the State Safety Coordinating Committee and member of the Joint Prison Oversight Committee, Joint Sunset Committee, House Health Committee and the House County and Municipal Government Committee.

Open Forum & Alabama Action Plan



Dr. Daniel Turner

Dr. Daniel Turner

Daniel Turner holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Alabama, and a Ph.D. from Texas A&M. During his 30 years at the University of Alabama, Turner has served as the Director of the Engineering Technology Programs, Head of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering and founding Director of the University Transportation Center for Alabama. Turner's specialties are teaching, research and service in traffic operations and safety; highway design; transportation management, finance and policy; and homeland security. He has conducted 110 research and training projects for more than \$25 million; published more than 300 articles, reports and books; made more than 500 presentations; and developed or taught 70 short courses. Turner has been an engaged leader of his profession, having been elected President of the American Society of Civil Engineers and President of the Council of University Transportation Centers. In addition, he has served on the Board of Directors of ABET (the engineering accreditation organization) and the American Association of Engineering Societies, and currently is poised to serve on the Executive Committee of the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies.

ALABAMA DISTRACTED DRIVING SUMMIT
UTC LEADERSHIP AND SPECIAL GUESTS



Dr. Russ Fine

Russ Fine graduated from Southern Illinois University (BA, 1966), the University of Missouri (MSPH, 1967) and the University of Oklahoma (PhD, 1970). Prior to being recruited by UAB, he conducted research at the FAA's Civil Aeromedical Research Institute, served as Research Director for the Chicago Board of Health, as an aide to the Governor of Illinois, and was VP of Mediclinic, Corp. From 1975-1987, Fine was a faculty member in UAB's Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, achieving rank of full professor in 1983. He was Director of Research for the Medical Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Spinal Cord Dysfunction and Co-Director of the UAB SCI Care System as well as the National SCI Statistical Center. In 1988, Fine moved to UAB's Department of Medicine. He is Principal Investigator/Director of the UAB Injury

Dr. Russ Fine

Control Research Center, the Southern Consortium for Injury Biomechanics and the UAB University Transportation Center. He chaired the Alabama Governor's Task Force on Drunk Driving, and serves on the Alabama Impaired Drivers Trust Fund board. He has published extensively in scientific journals and textbooks, and has presented expert testimony before various Congressional Committees and sub-committees.



Dr. Jay Lindly

Jay Lindly received his first two degrees in Civil Engineering and then began a five-year stint with Exxon Research & Engineering Company. While at Exxon, the company was strongly engaged in converting solids such as coal and oil shale into synthetic fuels. At that time, Lindly performed research and design work for the "solids handling" group that planned how large quantities of solids could be transported, stacked, reclaimed, fed into reactors, and removed and landfilled. After leaving Exxon, Dr. Lindly attended Purdue University, graduating with a Ph.D. in transportation engineering in 1987. His dissertation work concerned using falling weight deflectometers to design the thickness of flexible overlays of flexible pavements. Since that time, he has been employed at the University of Alabama, where he is now a Civil Engineering professor and the Director of the

Dr. Jay Lindly

University Transportation Center for Alabama. Current research interests include transportation safety, rural transit, the highway/utility interface and transportation funding methods.



Dr. Robert Rich

Robert Rich is Senior Vice President for Medicine of UAB and Dean of the School of Medicine at UAB. He received his M.D. from the University of Kansas. In 1973, Rich joined the faculty of Baylor College of Medicine as Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Immunology and Medicine. In 1978, he was promoted to Professor and in 1995 was named Distinguished Service Professor. He was an Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute from 1977 to 1991. From 1990 to 1998, he served as Vice President and Dean of Research at Baylor. From 1998 to 2004, he was Executive Associate Dean for Research and Strategic Initiatives at Emory University School of Medicine. From 2003 to 2008 he served as Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Immunology. He is also Editor-in-Chief of a comprehensive textbook Clinical Immunology: Principles and Practice. Currently Rich is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Centre for Infectious

Dr. Robert Rich

Diseases Research in Zambia, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the UAB Health System and a member of the Advisory Panel on Research of the Association of American Medical Colleges. In 2008, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award of the American Association of Immunologists.

The Honorable Ray LaHood

Ray LaHood became the 16th Secretary of Transportation on Jan. 23, 2009.

In nominating him, President Obama said, “Few understand our infrastructure challenge better than the outstanding public servant that I’m asking to lead the Department of Transportation.”

Secretary LaHood’s primary goals in implementing President Obama’s priorities for transportation include safety across all modes, restoring economic health and creating jobs, sustainability – shaping the economy of the coming decades by building new transportation infrastructure – and assuring that transportation policies focus on people who use the transportation system and their communities.

As Secretary of Transportation, LaHood leads an agency with more than 55,000 employees and a \$70 billion budget that oversees air, maritime and surface transportation missions.

Secretary LaHood said he would bring President Obama’s priorities to the Department and see them effectively implemented with a commitment to



fairness across regional and party lines and between people who come to the issues with different perspectives.

Before becoming Secretary of Transportation, LaHood served for 14 years in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 18th District of Illinois (1995-2009). During that time, he served on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and, after that, on the House Appropriations Committee.

Prior to his election to the House, he served as Chief of Staff to U.S. Congressman Robert Michel, whom he succeeded in representing the 18th District, and as District Administrative Assistant to Congressman Thomas Railsback. He also served in the Illinois State Legislature.

Before his career in government, Secretary LaHood was a junior high school teacher, having received his degree from Bradley University in Peoria, Ill. He was also director of the Rock Island County Youth Services Bureau and Chief planner for the Bi-States Metropolitan Planning Commission in Illinois.

Secretary LaHood and his wife, Kathy, have four children (Darin, Amy, Sam, and Sara) and nine grandchildren.



Attendees at the Distracted Driving Summit.



DSTRCTD DRVN DEF NOT LOL :(

Adapted from the original article by Matt Windsor and Bob Shepard

Appetite for Distraction

“The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that 800,000 vehicles were driven by someone using a cell phone in 2008, 6,000 people died in distracted driving-related vehicle crashes, and 500,000 were injured,” says Despina Stavrinou, Ph.D., UAB UTC post-doctoral fellow and transportation researcher scientist.

“Distracted driving is anything that takes a person’s attention away from the safe operation of their vehicle,” Dr. Stavrinou explains. Eating, drinking, applying makeup and tuning the radio used to be the prime culprits. But these days, cell phones, digital music players and Blackberries have fueled a marked increase in a problem that shows little sign of abating on its own.

“Texting, tweeting, surfing the Internet or even just talking on a cell phone provide multiple distractions,” Dr. Stavrinou says. “Almost without realizing it, you take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off of that other complex job you are supposed to be doing — driving safely.”

The danger is highest for young drivers, who have grown up surrounded by handheld electronic technology. According to surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center, 70 percent of 16- and 17-year-olds admit they’ve been in a car while the driver was texting.

Irony

“I’ve been driving for more than 20 years and only recently began to text, so I certainly recognize texting as a distraction,” said Richard Hanowski, Ph.D., director of the Center for Truck and Bus Safety at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, in remarks at the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit. “But for most teens, they’ve been texting or using handheld electronics since they were 9 or 10 years old, and are only now getting behind the wheel of a car. For them, it’s the driving that’s a distraction!”

New Rules of the Road

In search of solutions, the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit brought together leaders in transportation, public policy, law enforcement and science to discuss ways to change behavior through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education. In his remarks at the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit, Secretary Ray LaHood said that the same tactics that have curbed drunk drivers should be applied to distracted motorists. “Decades of experience with drunk driving have taught us it takes a consistent combination of education, effective enforcement, a committed judiciary, and collective efforts by local, state and national advocates to put a dent in the problem.”

LaHood outlined steps that he hopes will become part of the nation’s collective driving routine: Parents need to set clear ground rules for teenage drivers and enforce them. Teens need to exert peer pressure and tell friends they won’t ride with them if they text. Employers need to let employees travel to destinations without interruption. And everybody needs to use some common sense every time they get behind the wheel.



Attendees at the Distracted Driving Summit.

Forty-six states have legislation pending banning distracted driving in one form or another, and LaHood says the insurance and telecommunications industries are actively engaged in the struggle to curb dangerous driving behavior.

Increasing Awareness About Distracted Driving

The UAB UTC is helping spearhead a major educational push intended to increase awareness about the dangers associated with distracted driving. Dr. Stavrinou says the Summit identified a number of promising avenues, some of which are already in the planning stages. The state has assigned responsibility for addressing the issue of distracted driving to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the State Safety Coordinating Committee, which has developed an Alabama Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

“Because of the Summit, many more people in the private sector and in government have become better informed about the distracted-driving problem,” says Dr. Russ Fine, director of the UAB UTC. “Our goal and our role is to continue to increase awareness among policy- and decision-makers on both sides of the aisle, as well as the general public.”

Dr. Fine says the UAB UTC is providing each member of the Alabama Legislature with a DVD copy of presentations made at the Summit. The center is also exploring the possibility of setting up a Distracted Driving “theater” in the capitol in Montgomery, where legislators, their staffs, civil service employees and members of the general public will be able to view DVD copies of all presentations and panel discussions made during the Summit. UAB UTC personnel are also making arrangements to distribute other anti-distracted driving information at the theater, through the Center’s Web site and through a variety of other mechanisms.

“Our plan is to keep the anti-distracted driving education and information activity going throughout the entire regular 2010 session of the Alabama Legislature and even thereafter, because it will take a long time to achieve an attitudinal change among that segment of the driving public in Alabama who think, albeit incorrectly, that they can safely drive and text simultaneously,” Dr. Fine says.

UAB UTC Recognizes Ozge Cavusoglu as 2009-2010 Student of the Year

The UAB UTC leadership has named Ms. Ozge Cavusoglu, MS, MSCE, as the UAB UTC 2009-2010 Student of the Year. As Student of the Year, Ms. Cavusoglu received a \$1,000 award, along with a trip to Washington, D.C., in early January, where she participated in the annual awards ceremony honoring Students of the Year from UTCs across the country.

Ms. Cavusoglu is a doctoral student in UAB's Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering. In addition to the Master of Science in Civil Engineering she earned at UAB, Ms. Cavusoglu also holds a Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Planning from Mimar Sinan University (Istanbul, Turkey) and a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning/Transportation Planning from Gebze Institute of Technology (Kocaeli, Turkey). Ms. Cavusoglu works at the UAB Transportation Laboratory in the School of Engineering and is involved in one of the UAB UTC's major research projects, Dynamic Traffic Assignment and Simulation Model for Incident and Emergency Management Applications in the Birmingham Region (DDTAS).

Ms. Cavusoglu has a strong record as an investigator and as a scholar. Since coming to UAB, she has completed two major research projects funded by the University Transportation Center for Alabama (UTCA) and has participated actively in two others, one funded by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and another funded by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham. Ms. Cavusoglu's research interests mirror and complement the theme and goals of the UAB UTC, and her ability to pursue those research efforts, whether working independently or collaboratively, demonstrate her commitment to a transportation-related career.

Currently, Ms. Cavusoglu's Ph.D. dissertation research, funded through the UAB UTC, is examining how traffic behaves under



Dr. Dan Turner, founding director of the UTCA, Ms. Ozge Cavusoglu, Dr. Virginia Sisiopiku (Ms. Cavusoglu's mentor), and Dr. Russ Fine at the most recent CUTC Awards Banquet in Washington, D.C.

emergency conditions (ranging from traffic incidents to large scale natural disasters). Her research methodology includes the development of a comprehensive model of the Birmingham region to be used as a training and evaluation test bed. The comprehensive model being developed will allow examination of the impact of major incidents and emergencies and modeling of strategies which demonstrate the potential to minimize the impact of emergencies on traffic operations and the safety of the traveling public. This is a highly visible project that is expected to lead to numerous publications and technical presentations in the next two years. Ms. Cavusoglu's contribution to the development, refinement, and testing of the model is critical to the success of the overall research effort.

Ms. Cavusoglu's contribution to the transportation field is not just academic. Her upbeat and energetic personality has had a positive impact on the atmosphere in the UAB Transportation Laboratory. She has motivated fellow graduate students in the transportation engineering program to become more involved in professional activities and work as a team, and her efforts have resulted in a greater awareness of the diversity of transportation-related careers and of the UAB UTC. Ms. Cavusoglu devotes an enormous amount of her personal time to assist classmates with field work assignments and with the organization and activities of the student chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineering (ITE). Her enthusiasm and ability to mentor students, both in the lab and in extra-curricular activities, have increased student interest in transportation-related careers, increased student involvement with the DDTAS project, exposed more students to the UAB-UTC and increased student participation in UAB-UTC activities.

Please join the UAB UTC in congratulating Ozge Cavusoglu on her contributions to the transportation field.

First Student Graduates with Certificate in Transportation Safety and Injury Control Engineering

On Dec. 12, 2009, Ms. Ozge Cavusoglu became the first student from the UAB School of Engineering to be awarded a certificate in Transportation Safety and Injury Control Engineering. Ms. Cavusoglu, a doctoral student in the UAB Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering, is also the 2009-2010 UAB UTC Student of the Year. "Earning this certificate helped me realize the importance safety and injury control in transportation engineering," Ms. Cavusoglu says.

Last year, the UAB UTC and the UAB School of Engineering, Department of Civil, Construction & Environmental Engineering established a Certificate in Transportation Safety and Injury Control Engineering. The Certificate program consists of one required course for three semester hours, and an additional four courses, for 12 semester hours, of transportation and transportation-safety electives.

The program – a marriage between engineering, public health and the emerging discipline of injury control – is enabling



Ms. Ozge Cavusoglu

engineering students and other transportation professionals to acquire advanced training and experience in the public health and injury control aspects of transportation research. Specifically, the certificate program is enabling students, practicing transportation professionals and other professionals with an interest in transportation-related issues (such as urban planners, transit administrative personnel or emergency preparedness administrators) to focus on transportation safety-related issues, while learning to use the latest tools and technology available.

For more information on this Certificate, please visit <http://www.uab.edu/utc/Certification.htm>

Federal Ban on Texting While Driving

The U.S. Department of Transportation has banned texting while driving for all drivers of interstate buses and trucks over 10,000 pounds. Truck and bus drivers who text while driving will be subject to civil or criminal penalties of up to \$2,750. The prohibition is the latest in a series of actions taken by the department to combat distracted driving since the secretary of transportation convened a national summit on the issue last September.



TRIP Lab Staff (from left), LaKeshia Hyndman, Ashley Gentry, Sharon Welburn, Dr. Despina Stavrinos, Jonathan Feng, Khushboo Jhala, Annie Garner, & Gauri Singh. Not pictured: Nishita Baxi, Lindsay Harrison and Michael Schwartz

TRIP Laboratory Provides Experiential Learning for Students in Non-Traditional Transportation Disciplines

What is the best way for students to learn how to design and conduct a research project? In a classroom with a book? No! The best way to learn how to design and carry out a research study is to actually do it.

Unfortunately, students often have limited opportunities to fully participate in the research process because of the demands of their classes and, sometimes, their job. However, students working under the leadership of Director Dr. Despina Stavrinos in UAB's Translational Research for Injury Prevention (TRIP) Laboratory are getting a unique opportunity not only to participate in all stages of the research process but also to earn psychology course credit while doing so.

The TRIP Laboratory, which is housed within the UAB UTC, is committed to gaining a better understanding of the psychological aspects of injury and translating those findings to the practice of injury prevention and control. In line with the UAB UTC mission, the TRIP Laboratory is attempting to help the nation achieve a significant reduction in the rate of injuries and their resulting deaths and disabilities, especially in the southeastern United States.

Since its establishment in June 2009, nearly a dozen graduate and undergraduate students have been a part of the TRIP Laboratory. Students have the primary responsibility of assisting with the UAB UTC-funded project *Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD*, directed by Dr. Despina Stavrinos and co-sponsored by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. (See Research Spotlight, page 14).

"Students working in the lab have diverse career goals ranging from transportation science to medicine; however, the common bond is their desire to enhance their research skill set and this goal is accomplished through opportunities to be involved in all stages of the research



academic development.

This unique learning experience is partially made possible through UAB's Department of Psychology, which allows students to earn course credit for their work with actual research projects. This arrangement provides students with an excellent opportunity for experiential learning because time for participating in research opportunities is not in competition with time for taking traditional classes – the two activities are combined.

Working with the *Distracted Driving* research project, students not only learn about the research process, but also about how psychology contributes to the transportation field. Their experiences in the TRIP Laboratory are an excellent preparation as they plan their future psychology studies in a transportation context.

"I had not fully appreciated the importance of the relationship between psychology and the process of driving until joining the TRIP Lab and working with Dr. Stavrinos," says Annie Garner, TRIP Laboratory Graduate Research Assistant.

Student assistants will soon be involved with the TRIP Laboratory's newest project, which will launch in early 2010. This project, which will investigate the impact of distracted driving on traffic congestion, will facilitate additional collaboration between two University Transportation Centers (UAB UTC and University Transportation Center for Alabama [UTCA]).

For more information about the TRIP Laboratory, visit www.triplaboratory.com

Alabama House Votes to Prohibit Texting While Driving

A bill, sponsored by State Representative Dr. Jim McClendon (R-Springville), prohibiting all motorists from texting while driving passed the Alabama House of Representatives and awaits approval from the Senate. The bill carries with it a \$25 fine for the first conviction, a \$50 fine for a second conviction, and \$75 dollars for each subsequent violation. If passed by the Senate, this bill would make Alabama the 20th state in the nation to ban texting while driving.

Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD

The same tragic story is depicted in Alabama and throughout the U.S. – a teen driver, texting with friends while behind the wheel, is involved in a fatal motor vehicle crash. In fact, so many motor vehicle crashes are caused because the driver is distracted that Webster’s New World College Dictionary has declared Distracted Driving as its 2009 word of the year.

One way the UAB UTC is addressing the teen distracted driving issue is through the research project, Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD. Designed and directed by Dr. Despina Stavrinos, the study is examining what effect two common forms of distractions (cell phones and text messaging) might have on increased motor-vehicle injury risk in teens with and without Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) – a group that has been identified as one that is at particular risk for injury.

The study focuses on novice drivers – teens ages 16 to 18 years old. Not only are teens this age more likely to use text messaging to communicate, but also they may be particularly vulnerable to distraction because of their poorer anticipation and identification of driving hazards, their lack of skill and judgment required to navigate effectively and safely, and their willingness to take more risks in driving. This becomes an even greater problem for teens with ADHD given that the characteristics of the disorder (poor behavioral control and decreased attentional capacity) are clearly implicated in safe driving. In spite of these facts, distracted driving research to date has focused not on novice drivers, but on young adults and beyond.

Dr. Stavrinos has emulated distracted driving in a real-world situation for participants through the use of a state-of-the-art driving simulator. The teens sit within the cab of the vehicle where they can see the dashboard instruments and the roadway. They control the vehicle by moving a steering wheel and manipulating accelerator and brake pedals. Engine noise, external road noise, and sounds of passing traffic are provided by a stereo sound system. “It’s the next best thing to being in a real car,” Dr. Stavrinos says. While driving in the simulator, the drivers simultaneously text and talk with a research assistant. The conversations closely resemble real-world conversations a teen would have with a new friend. “We have a list of



A teen participates in a distracted driving simulation.

pre-determined conversation topics to choose from that include items such as the last movie they saw and their favorite hangout spot,” says Sharon Welburn, undergraduate Research Assistant. The simulator provides a safe and controlled environment for the study of distracted driving. Its use is made possible through Dr. Stavrinos’ partnership with Dr. Karlene Ball and the UAB Driving Assessment Clinic (<http://www.eyes.uab.edu/driving>).

To better measure the participants’ level of attention to the road while driving, Dr. Stavrinos uses sophisticated eye tracking equipment (specifically, FaceLab 5.0 and SceneTracker 2.0 by Seeing Machines, Acton, MA). The equipment, which was funded in part by a grant through the UAB UTC, tracks participants’ eye movements as they drive and as they observe other vehicles, signposts, traffic signals and their cell phones as they attempt to compose, send and read text messages.

Results from this study could have a major impact on intervention development for at-risk teen drivers by identifying factors that reduce the impact of distraction on driving performance.

This study is co-funded by Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s Center for Child Injury Prevention Studies. Recently, Dr. Stavrinos was awarded a grant from The University Transportation Center for Alabama which is making it possible for her to expand the study scope to also examine distracted driving’s impact on another critically important transportation issue: traffic congestion. For more information, or to participate in a study, please contact Dr. Despina Stavrinos (dstavrino@uab.edu; 205-934-7861).

Drivers that use handheld devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.

(Sources: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety via <http://www.distraction.gov/stats-and-facts/>)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. David Brown

On Dec. 3, 2009, the UAB UTC, along with the University Transportation Center for Alabama and the Center for Advanced Public Safety, presented Dr. David Brown with the inaugural David Brown Lifetime Achievement Award. This award, named in his honor, was presented to Dr. Brown for his unparalleled vision in pushing science to new limits in the advancement of traffic safety. Dr. Brown has made invaluable contributions to highway and traffic safety, including the creation of unique traffic safety software used by federal, state and local agencies throughout America. The importance of Dr. Brown's lifelong work to reduce injuries and deaths resulting from motor vehicle crashes is incalculable, and the goodness and decency of this kind, generous and humble man is incomparable. Alabama and the World are better places because of Dr. Brown's commitment to excellence.



Dr. David Brown

Dr. Brown is Professor of Computer Science at the University of Alabama; Deputy Director of the Center for



Dr. Dan Turner presents the award to Dr. Brown's children, Dr. Jonathan Brown and Ms. Lesley Brown Garland, who accepted it on Dr. Brown's behalf.

Advanced Public Safety; a Senior Scientist at the UAB Injury Control Research Center; and a member of the UAB UTC Advisory Board. Dr. Brown has worked on behalf of traffic safety in the state of Alabama since the 1970s, having now amassed more than 35 years experience in the design and development of computerized systems to facilitate traffic safety and law enforcement operations.

Accepting the award on Dr. Brown's behalf were his children, Lesley Brown Garland and Dr. Jonathan Brown.

Leadership Change at the UTC

Dr. Russ Fine, UAB UTC's Director and Principal Investigator, has announced the appointment of Mr. Jeffrey Foster, MPH, as the UAB UTC's new Associate Director for Administration and Finance. Jeff succeeds Dr. Andrea Underhill, who returned to her native Georgia in February.



Mr. Jeff Foster

phone at (205) 996-6086.

Dr. Underhill will remain closely affiliated with the UTC, telecommuting on an as-needed basis. She will retain responsibility for a few of her current duties and will serve in an enlarged advisory capacity for other aspects of UAB UTC operations. Dr. Underhill's current UAB e-mail account, Andrea.Underhill@ccc.uab.edu, will remain active, and she



Dr. Andrea Underhill

contact to ensure that the continuity and integrity of UAB UTC activities are maintained. Our goal is to affect the leadership change and responsibility shift in a manner so subtle that those outside the UAB UTC headquarters should not notice any functional differences in our day-to-day operations. The UAB UTC remains deeply committed to continuing to build a great University Transportation Center. The work will continue unabated and the UAB UTC will continue to strive for excellence in all we do.

Please join us in welcoming Mr. Foster to UAB UTC Leadership and wishing Dr. Underhill well in her new endeavors.

will have access to all of her computer files.

Drs. Fine, Goldman and Underhill and Mr. Foster have planned quite carefully for this administrative and organizational realignment. As a result, the transition should be seamless. UTC leadership is aware, however, that unexpected and unforeseen issues may arise from time to time. Thus, Dr. Underhill and Mr. Foster will remain in close

ADMINISTRATION

UAB UTC Leadership

Dr. Russ Fine, Director
rfine@uab.edu

Dr. Jay Goldman, Associate Director, Emeritus
jgoldman@uab.edu

Mr. Jeff Foster, MPH, Associate Director
Jeffrey.Foster@ccc.uab.edu

Dr. Ray Mundy, Chairman, UAB UTC Advisory Board
rmundy@umsl.edu

Dr. Kathleen Bolland, Educational Advisor
kbolland@sw.ua.edu



UAB University Transportation Center

CH19 401 • 933 19th Street South
1530 3rd Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35294-2041
205.934.7845

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