



MEDIA RELEASE

Department of Public Safety

Ohio Department of Public Safety • John Born, Director
www.publicsafety.ohio.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 17, 2014

Contact: ODPS Communications, (614) 466-4344

Montville Township Police Department and Partners Earn Top Honors for Contributing to a Safer Ohio

(COLUMBUS) - Today, Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) Director Born honored the "Take Control" teen driving program of Medina County with the "I Contribute" award for its dedication and hard work to keeping the community safe, and ultimately contributing to a safer Ohio.

"The most common cause of accidents on the road among teen drivers is inexperience," said Montville Township Police Department Chief Terry Grice. "In an effort to provide valuable training in a controlled environment, we have a skid control apparatus that teaches teens how to deal with conditions like wet or icy roads that can make driving hazardous."

After a 2006 fatal crash that took the life of a 15-year-old Medina High School student shocked a community, the Montville Police Department decided to completely redesign the county's juvenile diversion driving program to focus on education and crash reduction in a fun and interactive environment. After the program began to see positive changes, the Montville Police Department expanded the program to include nearly every law enforcement agency in Medina County, with the support of the Medina County Juvenile Court. Chief Grice also partnered with the MStar Foundation, a foundation created by the parents of Michelle Sanderbeck, who was killed in that 2006 crash, to include driving simulators within the diversion program. This program is responsible for teaching more than 250 Medina County juvenile traffic offenders each year.

Chief Grice then developed the "Take Control" teen driver program, a free, non-offender, advanced education program for 16-19 year-old teen drivers, with the support of Ehrbar Angel's Foundation, the MStar Foundation, the Jessica Schaffer Memorial Fund, Westfield Insurance, and Bill Doraty Kia. This three-hour program is taught solely by Medina County law enforcement officers from 13 agencies, including the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Medina County Sheriff's Office and numerous township, village and city police departments. The program consists of both classroom and practical driving exercises. Classes began in June 2013 and more than 150 teen drivers from Medina and surrounding counties have been educated to date through this program.

"I applaud Chief Grice, the Montville Police Department and its partners for their efforts in both creating and maintaining a successful program," said ODPS Director John Born. "This truly is an illustrative example of what it means to contribute to a safer Ohio. The 'Take Control' program is a remarkable program and certainly deserving of the 'I Contribute' award."

The "I Contribute" award is a component of the Department's main *A Safer Ohio* initiative, and allows citizens to nominate an individual or an agency for the positive impact they are making in their community as it relates to public safety. To nominate someone for the "I Contribute" award, please visit the ODPS Web site <http://publicsafety.ohio.gov/>

###