



For Immediate Release

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**TEAM Georgia wins GOHS Grant to continue campaign to combat drunk driving at Atlanta's blockbuster venues
New funds to target Latino community; enhance communications**

TEAM Georgia has been selected by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety as the recipient of the Innovative Grant. TEAM Georgia is a safe and sober transportation coalition, comprised of corporate leaders, civic activists, law enforcement, Atlanta pro sports teams and venues and public safety officials. GOHS, in fact, has long partnered with TEAM Georgia for its work, which includes a range of public education efforts for safe and sober transportation.

Its flagship initiative is the Designated Driver Booth program, for which TEAM Georgia received the competitive grant. Located at Atlanta's major sporting and entertainment venues, the DDB program hinges on a "team" effort: volunteers who urge patrons to designate a driver in their party for a safe ride home, "spokesplayers" who remind fans to visit the DDB and incentives, like a voucher for an on-site non-alcoholic beverage for the Designated Driver, courtesy of Atlanta Beverage.

"Based on the data that impaired driving occurs most often in urban areas, on nights and weekends and among young drivers, the DDB program is well positioned to reach those most vulnerable to the deadly mix of drinking and driving," said Harris Blackwood, director of GOHS. TEAM Georgia's work not only reaches the stadium-sized audiences at Atlanta venues, but its work with volunteers, throughout corporate engagement and service programs, extends its message to the community. We know of no other program with that kind of broad-based reach and proven influence."

Since the DDB program's inception, more than 300,000 designated driver pledges have been recorded by some 4,500 volunteers. The first booth opened in 1993 at the Georgia Dome and has since expanded to include Philips Arena, Turner Field and the Arena at Gwinnett Center with the active support of the Atlanta Hawks, Falcons, Braves, WNBA Dream and Gwinnett Gladiators.

TEAM Georgia will be using the additional funds to enhance its program by translating educational material into Spanish for the burgeoning Latino community in metro Atlanta. Funds will also go towards newsletters and email campaigns and provide ongoing educational resources.

"TEAM Georgia has worked tirelessly to spread the word about the dangers of drunk driving with limited resources," said Ron Fennel, chairman of TEAM Georgia. "This GOHS grant will enable us to create and maintain relationships with hundreds more Georgians so we can achieve our bottom line: eradicating, once and for all, the tragedy of impaired driving."

Unfortunately, the public continues to need such a public education campaign. The Georgia State Patrol reports increasing numbers of DUI arrests in recent years, with 14,629 arrests made in 2009, up from 11,812 in 2008 and 1,278 in 2007.

Crashes involving impaired driving are six times more likely to be fatal than those that do not involve alcohol and other drugs, according to GOHS, which says that one out of three fatal crashes in Georgia over the last decade involved impaired drivers.

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