

Organizations join to launch safe driving program for teens

DEARBORN

In an effort designed to reduce teen crashes and fatalities in Michigan, the Ford Motor Co. Fund (Ford Fund) and the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) are asking Dearborn high school teens to promote safety to their peers as part of the national, award-winning "Driving Skills for Life" (DSFL) program.

The schools — Dearborn High, Edsel Ford and Fordson — will compete against each other to create the most creative and effective safe driving public service announcement, posters and all-school assembly.

"The program exemplifies a commitment to safety, not only by Ford Motor Co., but by an entire community," said Jim Graham, community relations manager of the Ford Motor Company Fund. "This type of competition, along with the many additional Driving Skills for Life components, has made a significant impact on teen safety, and we strongly believe it's the best and most complete teen driver safety program available."

The DSFL competition combines fun with the spirit of competition, and a serious focus on driver safety as Dearborn, Fordson and Edsel Ford compete to see which school will be named the overall winner. Schools are required to use the DSFL curriculum as a basis for the competition components. The competition is a team-building exercise that fosters creativity and teamwork, while at the same time providing real life work experience and driver safety education.

The program, also sponsored by Westfield

Insurance and in cooperation with the city of Dearborn, the Dearborn Public School District, Dearborn Police Department and the American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee, runs through April 4.

Each team will receive a budget of \$2,000 provided by the Ford Motor Co. Fund to implement their projects. In early April, a panel consisting of representatives from Ford Fund, GHSA, Westfield Insurance, Dearborn Community Officials, Dearborn Police Department and American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee will judge each school presentation.

Selection of the "winning" school will be based on creativity, effectiveness and strength of the PSA, poster and assembly. All Dearborn public high schools will be awarded

additional monetary funds, based on a first- through third-place prize structure, to continue teen driver safety activities at their schools.

In addition to cash prizes, the program will conclude with teens from each of the competing schools participating in one of four half-day sessions at a DSFL hands-on training event at the Ford Motor Co. Dearborn Development Center on April 10 or 11.

Students will hone their skills in specially equipped vehicles on challenging driving courses while under the supervision of a team of professional instructors from across the United States. The focus will be on improving skills that are factors in 60 percent of teen vehicles crashes: Hazard Recognition, Vehicle Handling, Speed Management and Space Management.

Watch video of sugar bush



Photo by Millard Berry

Volunteers listen as Rick Simek, University of Michigan-Dearborn Environmental Interpretive Center Program Supervisor, explains the process of boiling maple sap into syrup March 15 before they tramped into the woods to collect the sap from the trees in the sugar bush. Video of the process is on the Press & Guide Web site: PressAndGuide.com.

