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Halls High School Students Claim Top Prize in TDOT Project Orange Video Contest *Student Video to Air on TV Stations Across State during Work Zone Awareness Week*

NASHVILLE – Students at Halls High School in Lauderdale County gathered this morning for a special assembly to congratulate 18 Halls High students for winning top prize in the Tennessee Department of Transportation's first ever Project Orange Video Contest. The teens' 25 second winning video entitled "Halls High Safety Video: Between the Barrels Video Contest" was chosen from among 76 video entries by students across the state. The video shows the tragedy that can unfold when a group of teenagers makes a bad decision while traveling through a work zone. The video began airing today on television stations across the state to spotlight the importance of safe driving in work zones during Work Zone Awareness Week, April 6 – 10.

TDOT worked with the principal of Halls High to organize a surprise assembly in the gymnasium of the school at 10 a.m. Monday, April 6 to announce the winning video and honor the students involved in the project.

"We are so proud of these students for their tremendous efforts creating this safety video," said Halls High School Principal Andy Pugh. "These teens worked very hard and I hope their message helps educate and save the lives of not only their friends here in Halls but also other teens across Tennessee."

The students were also invited to travel to Memphis to re-record the audio from the PSA in a professional studio last week. WREG in Memphis partnered with TDOT on the Project Orange video contest and gave the students a tour of their studios before recording the final audio for the public service announcement. **To view the final video visit <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/wzsafety/>**

The Halls High Safety Video won the Memphis Regional Competition on March 16 and went on to beat out four other regional winners from the Tri-Cities, Knoxville, Chattanooga and Nashville. Representatives from the Tennessee Road Builders Association presented \$2,500 in gift cards to Best Buy to the winning teens. Representatives from Bridgestone were also on hand to award certificates for five sets of Bridgestone tires to the winning group. Bridgestone reps also encouraged the teens to enter their video in the company's national teen safety video contest.

"The best way to educate teens on the importance of safe driving is to engage them in the process," said TDOT Between the Barrels Statewide Coordinator Christin Hayes. "We received a tremendous response to this contest and our hope is that the Project Orange Video Contest not only helps engage Tennessee teens but also educates them on responsible driving and the consequences of bad decisions behind the wheel."

The mission of the "Between the Barrels" program is to increase teen-age awareness of the importance of safety on the roadways, particularly in work zones.

(MORE)

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Since it was first launched in 2006, the “Between the Barrels” Program has been presented to nearly 100,000 students in more than 200 schools across the state. TDOT and THP volunteer instructors travel to high schools and present the program at no cost to schools, during one class period, in an assembly-type setting. The presentations include a power point, participation prizes, interactive activities including a remote-control work zone simulation, and two very powerful work zone safety videos produced specific to Tennessee.

The Between the Barrels Project Orange Video Contest is sponsored by TDOT’s Governor’s Highway Safety Office, Bridgestone Americas, The Tennessee Road Builders Association, Regal Cinemas and WCYB, WBIR, WTVC, WTVF and WREG television stations.

“What a great way to kick off this important safety week in Tennessee by announcing our first ever teen safe driving video contest winner,” said GHSO Director Kendell Poole. “This has been a great experience, a wonderful educational tool and we have a number of creative videos from teens across the state that we hope to feature on our Between the Barrels web site and Facebook page in the months to come.”

Teens may also visit the Between the Barrels Project Orange Facebook and MySpace pages and become a fan or add us as a friend (Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/pages/Nashville-TN/Between-the-Barrels/111080125513?ref=mf>; MySpace: <http://www.myspace.com/betweenthebarrels>).

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