

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2, 2020

Claire Jeffrey, Communications & Multimedia Manager, AAMVA

703-944-1500

communications@aamva.org

Southeastern Motor Vehicle and Law Enforcement Agencies Receive Prestigious Awards

Arlington, VA – The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) presented the following awards:

Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV)

Public Affairs and Consumer Education (PACE) Award Category 4A - Media Event/Press Day for their *Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Rosario's Return to Duty Ceremony*. Trooper Carlos Rosario was conducting a speed enforcement detail when he was struck and nearly killed by a motorist who was texting while driving. Almost two years later, after making a full recovery, he joined the Florida Highway Patrol, his family, members of the South Florida law enforcement and fire rescue community, and all those that supported his healing journey in celebrating his return to duty and miraculous recovery. This event has also won the **PACE Overall Division Award in Division 4, Special Events**.

PACE Award Category 4B – Non-Media Event, for *Behind the Drive: FLHSMV 50th Anniversary and FHP 80th Anniversary Exhibit*. The department presented a public exhibition showcasing the rich history of FLHSMV and FHP and their profound effect on the lives of Floridians at the Florida Capitol. To convey the department's story, the exhibit blended historical images and artifacts with an educational narrative.

PACE Award Category 6D - Story Placement in a Publication for their *"Trooper Barbara Ehrhart, Longest Serving Female Trooper" Article*. Trooper Barbara Ehrhart retired on July 30, 2019. To honor her 36 years of outstanding service, Lieutenant Greg Bueno, the Public Affairs Officer for Troop F in Ft. Myers, Florida, compiled a career highlight biography of Ehrhart, directly contacted several local reporters to promote her story, and video recorded her final radio call log off. The team worked with national news organizations to push the story to the public and attain a larger reach.

Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS)

Community Service Recognition for their *Bahama Relief Effort*. Georgia DDS partnered with the Bahamas Consulate General to aid the Bahama Relief Effort as a result of the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian. They collected 11 large packed boxes plus 2 large boxes of diapers for relief.

Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR)

Excellence in Government Partnership Award for their *DRIVES Project Partnership With FAST*. The Georgia Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System – or DRIVES - is a multi-year technology upgrade effort between the Department of Revenue and Department of Driver Services to modernize and combine into one application two of Georgia's largest and most complex legacy software systems.

Community Service Recognition for their *Hurricane Dorian Emergency Relief Donation Campaign*. Georgia Department of Revenue employees and managers responded to the call for donations of emergency supplies for the people of the Bahamas affected by Hurricane Dorian. The DOR coordinated with the Bahamian consulate general to collect and deliver the relief supplies donated at the agency's Atlanta offices.

South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (SCDMV)

Fraud Prevention and Detection Award - Motor Vehicle Individual for *Edward Moore, John Odum, and Erin Boland*. In spring of 2019, Lead Agent Moore and Agent Odum were contacted by one of the SCDMV's branch managers to investigate a dealership following verbal complaints and inconsistent paperwork presented to her over the counter. During the inspection, the agents told the dealer they found fraudulent records pertaining to vehicle sales amounts and Infrastructure Maintenance Fee (IMF) payments. While the dealer said he was unaware, the agents were able to confirm that the dealer owed more than \$35,000 to the State of South Carolina and did not properly title or register 78 vehicles within the 45 day time period prescribed by law. Upon completion of the audit, the dealer was sanctioned for the fraudulent records.

Community Service Recognition for their *Moncks Corner Staff Response to Destroyed Office*. On July 4, 2019, the SCDMV's Moncks Corner branch was severely damaged by a microburst from a thunderstorm. While SCDMV offices across South Carolina were closed due to the holiday, when the branch office staff learned of the event, employees and even their family members immediately went to the office even on their day off in hopes of securing any needed information and trying to save anything they could.

Tennessee Department of Safety & Homeland Security

PACE Award Category 3A - TV Commercial or PSA, Externally-Produced for their *REAL ID Media Campaign*. Tennessee Titans legendary running back and Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George and his wife singer Taj (known best for her role in the R&B singing group Sisters with Voices) agreed to record a commercial for the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security to advertise the roll out of REAL ID in Tennessee.

PACE Award 3B - TV Commercial or PSA, Internally-Produced for their *Tennessee Highway Patrol 90th Anniversary Video*. To mark the 90th anniversary of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, this video honors the troopers that laid the foundation of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, those currently working for the Highway Patrol, and at the same time reaches out to those who are not yet part of the Highway Patrol.

Customer Service Recognition for *Connecting With the Community*. The Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security has two mobile units that are used throughout the state to assist citizens. By taking the units on the road, they are able to keep individuals from having to visit a Driver Services Center and reach people who may not have the ability to get to a center.

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Improvement through Efficiencies Award for their *Recruiting Open Houses*. The Texas Department of Public Safety received funding during the legislative session for an additional 713

employees to work in driver license offices. Texas DPS created the concept of the “open house” in order to speed up the hiring process and make an impact to customer service.

Fraud Prevention and Detection Award - Law Enforcement Individual for *Desiree Tanguma, Driver License Office Supervisor*. Ms. Tanguma discovered that one of her employees was committing fraud by selling commercial driver licenses. Because of her extensive knowledge of CDL requirements, she was able to identify the loophole in the process and gather the documentation that was needed to file charges against the employee. The investigation uncovered that over 200 CDLs had been fraudulently issued, which put the public at risk by allowing unsafe drivers on the roads. Her work led to a halt of the fraud and her practices were shared statewide in order for all offices to ensure CDL transactions are performed within the law.

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

PACE Award Category 2D - Digital Graphics for their *REAL ID Airport Graphics*. Designed by the DMV Communications Office with a clean, clear, and compelling look and text, these ads have greeted millions of travelers at Virginia airports since they began appearing in late 2018. The graphics are an integral part of a highly successful overall campaign to promote REAL ID in Virginia.

Customer Convenience Award for their *Mobile Operations Optimization Strategy for Superior REAL ID Service*. Virginia DMV strategically optimized its successful mobile operations program and leveraged community partnerships to provide even more convenient service options to Virginians without acquiring real estate.

Innovative Use of Technology Award for their *Start Anywhere REAL ID*. Virginia DMV's REAL ID driver's license renewal service allows customers to start the REAL ID transaction online, anywhere at any time, and then receive expedited service to complete the in-person transaction at one of the agency's customer service centers or mobile offices, saving the customer and the Commonwealth time and money.

Community Service Recognition for their *Military and Veteran Support*. In a multi-faceted year-long program, Virginia DMV employees participate in fundraising activities, volunteer opportunities, and strategic customer service initiatives directly benefitting Virginia's active duty military and veteran population.

The International Driver Examiner Certification (IDEC) Board and AAMVA recognize outstanding examiners through the IDEC Examiner of the Year award. Each member jurisdiction nominates one examiner for outstanding performance as a driver's license examiner. Examiners are selected for their excellence in adhering to the principles and recommended practices of driver examination (the Examiner's Code of Ethics) and for their high level of conduct in their profession. **IDEC Examiner of the Year Awards were presented to:**

- John Mathieu, Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles
- Debra Tharpe, Georgia Department of Driver Services
- Karen Williams, Kentucky State Police
- Sharon Feliciano, South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles
- Jim Campbell, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
- Beth Jenkins, West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles

AAMVA's awards foster a tradition of excellence in the motor vehicle and law enforcement community. The awards allow AAMVA to honor individuals, teams, and organizations who have committed their time and resources to safety initiatives, outstanding customer service, and public affairs and consumer education programs throughout North America. Awards are presented in the following categories:

- Service
- Safety
- Security
- Public Affairs and Consumer Education

"AAMVA is always so proud to recognize the excellent work our members do for the communities they serve," said AAMVA President & CEO Anne Ferro. "Through their efforts, DMVs and law enforcement agencies make drivers and vehicles safer, identities secure, and ultimately, save lives."

Founded in 1933, AAMVA serves North American motor vehicle and law enforcement agencies to accomplish their missions. The Association's vision of *Safe Drivers, Safe Vehicles, Secure Identities, Saving Lives* guides AAMVA's activities, resources, and programs in driver licensing, vehicle titling/registration, motor carrier services, identity management, and technology solutions.

AAMVA Awards are traditionally presented at our Regional Conferences and Annual International Conference. These conferences were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic; we have recorded video presentations for each of the Regions and for our International winners. You can learn more about the Region 2 award winners [in this video](#). For more information visit www.aamva.org.

****AAMVA****