



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration

# NHTSA NOW

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## NHTSA Honors Tuskegee Airmen During African American History Month

**February 23, 2000. Washington, DC.** NHTSA's observance and celebration of National African American History Month 2000 honored the Tuskegee Airmen, the U.S. Army Air Corps's first unit of African American combat pilots.

Due to a rigid pattern of racial segregation that prevailed in the United States during World War II, approximately 992 aviators were trained at the Tuskegee Institute and also at an isolated training complex near Tuskegee, Alabama.

Two Tuskegee airmen and Brigadier General Elmer Brooks, assistant deputy undersecretary of defense for strategic and theater nuclear forces in Washington, DC joined NHTSA on February 23, 2000 to share their experiences 60 years ago. Mr. Ira James O'Neal, Jr., the keynote speaker, was one of the original "Tuskegee Airmen" (1943-1946). Mr. O'Neal served in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Colonel Charles McGee was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in June 1943 as a graduating member of class 43-F, Tuskegee Army Air Field, S.E, flying training command.

NHTSA's program began with a reception for the honored guests, followed by the program, which included the Presentation of Colors and the National Anthem by the USCG Honor Guard, and welcoming remarks by Eugene Peterson, Special Assistant to the Director, Office of Research and Traffic Records.

Office of Contract and Procurement's Minister Richard Dixon led the audience in prayer, and George Quick, Director of the Office of Civil Rights delivered introductory remarks, followed by remarks by NHTSA Acting Administrator Rosalyn Millman.

A short film, narrated by former President Ronald Reagan was shown to familiar the audience with the history and mission of the Tuskegee Airmen. From the first graduating class on March 7, 1942, through the last class which graduated

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**Guest Speaker Ira O'Neal, Jr. entertains the standing-room only audience at NHTSA's observance of African American History Month.**

## New Brochure Assists People with Disabilities to Meet their Mobility Needs

**by Rhonda Dinello,  
Consumer Automotive Safety Information  
Division**

NHTSA has unveiled its first-ever consumer brochure to help guide persons with disabilities through the time consuming and often frustrating process of purchasing or modifying a vehicle with adaptive equipment, thus enabling them to take advantage of new technology to increase mobility. This brochure, *Adapting Motor Vehicles For*

*Persons With Disabilities*, was first released on February 3, 2000 in Reno, Nevada at the ninth annual conference of the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA).

Acting Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards, Stephen R. Kratzke, in the keynote speech said, "We in the Department of Transportation have come to understand the roadblocks that so many people with disabilities face; they shouldn't be required to grope for solutions to their

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# NHTSA Honors Tuskegee Airmen During African American History Month

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June 29, 1946, a total of 926 pilots earned their wings. Of these graduates, approximately 450 pilots went overseas to fly P-39, P-40, P-47 and P-51 fighter aircraft in combat. The gallant men flew 15,553 sorties and completed 1,578 missions in the 12th Tactical and 15th U.S. Army Air Force. During World War II, 66 pilots were killed in action and another 32 became prisoners of war.

1st Lt. Ira James O'Neal, Jr., speaking of the tremendous difficulties the men had to overcome at the time, said, "Dreams come true. Let no one stop your dreams. You must be prepared for the opportunities that can, and do come."

Those opportunities did come for the Tuskegee Airmen, who won the right to fly, and were ultimately awarded 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals and Clusters, 992 Silver Wings, a Silver Star and a Legion of Merit, the Red Star of Yugoslavia, eight Purple Hearts and three Presidential Unit citations.

Compliments and commendations to all involved in planning and executing this year's observance of African American History Month. It was an event of reflection, honor, inspiration and hope. ■



**Pictured left to right: NHTSA Acting Administrator Rosalyn Millman, Eugene Peterson, Office of Research and Traffic Records; BGen Elmer T. Brooks, USAF Retired, and Ira O'Neal.**

## Go Speed Racer, Go!

by Gene Luke, Program Analyst, ODI

**February 9, 2000. Chicago.** NHTSA teamed up with Child Safety Network and Speed Racer at the 92nd Chicago Auto Show in an alliance to promote their respective safety messages. The Chicago Auto Show, held in the 840,000 square foot McCormick Place South, is the nation's largest auto show, with attendance that exceeded 1.2 million visitors. A "sneak peek" press conference for Speed Racer's incomparable racecar, the Mach 5, took place on Wednesday Feb 9th at McCormick Place. Ward Leber, the CEO of Child Safety Network, and Jim Downey of NHTSA's Region V gave opening remarks at the press conference, as Speed Racer's Mach 5 was unveiled.

Community Benefit Alliance, LLC, built the real Mach 5 for the Child Safety Network at a cost of over \$200,000. The animated Mach 5 boasted 50,000 horsepower, could fly through the air, drive under water and jump great distances. The Real Mach 5 is only a bit more limited by physics. Mark Towle, Chief Engineer of the Mach 5 says: "The Real Mach 5 has a lot of creative automotive engineering. It has a top speed of 185, saw-blade cutters in front, a special hydraulic system for jumping and interactive voice responses to buttons on the steering wheel. This legendary icon not

only appeals to children, but to mothers and fathers who grew up with 'Speed Racer.' It will be a big help in spreading awareness of automotive, roadway and pedestrian safety to millions of families."

Child Safety Network, located in San Diego, is a charitable trust dedicated to the safety and protection of children. Their past



**NHTSA Region V Associate Administrator Jim Downey and Ward Leber, Ceo of Child Safety Network.**

focus has been to reduce the likelihood of children becoming abused, abducted, or injured. CSN distributes Child Safety Info Packs to parents to assist them in protecting their children. The Child Safety Info Packs contain information on home safety, fire prevention, first aid, stranger danger, how to choose a child care provider and baby sitter, disaster preparedness, gun safety, bicycle

safety, water safety, pediatric trauma prevention and more. NHTSA is working with CSN to expand the info packs to include many of NHTSA's issues including vehicle and child safety equipment defects, buying a safer car, child safety seats, and Buckle Up America.

NHTSA plans to work with Child Safety Network to distribute safety literature on stops during the 200-city tour and to increase public awareness of NHTSA's safety messages. More than 170 U.S. representatives including the office of the President have written letters of endorsement for CSN's decade of community service.

"Speed Racer, created in 1967, has an estimated worldwide fan base of over 50 million people. By name recognition alone, the Mach 5 is the most famous racecar in the world. More people can tell you the name of Speed Racer's car than any other racecar in the world," said Jim Rocknowski of Speed Racer Enterprises (the company that licenses Speed Racer properties).

Ward Leber said he hopes the time-honored interest in the Mach 5 will help Child Safety Network gain sponsorship to distribute more than 10 million Child Safety Info Packs during the National Child Safety Tour. The Info Pack is a very important safety tool for the parents. Each info pack has a place to store the child's updated photographs, a complete medical and dental record, emergency contact list, immunization record and an authorization

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# New Brochure Assists People with Disabilities to Meet their Mobility Needs

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mobility needs. We hope this brochure will guide people in choosing the right vehicle, equipment and resources to assist them, and help to avoid costly mistakes.”

Safety Performance Standards and Safety Assurance presented workshops on development and enforcement of FMVSS, regulations, research and distribution of the new brochure. Presenters included Gayle Dalrymple, Office of Crash Avoidance Standards, George Stevens, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, Greg Shaw, University of Virginia, and Rhonda Dinello, Office of Planning and Consumer Programs, Consumer Automotive Safety Information Division (CASID). CASID also exhibited, and won the Exhibitor’s Service Award.



The information in this brochure is based on the experience of driver rehabilitation specialists and other professionals who work with individuals who require adaptive devices for their motor vehicles. It provides a step-by-step process to help consumers evaluate their needs, select the right vehicle, and choose a qualified dealer to modify the vehicle. It also assists those who need training to use and maintain an adapted vehicle. In addition, general information is included on cost

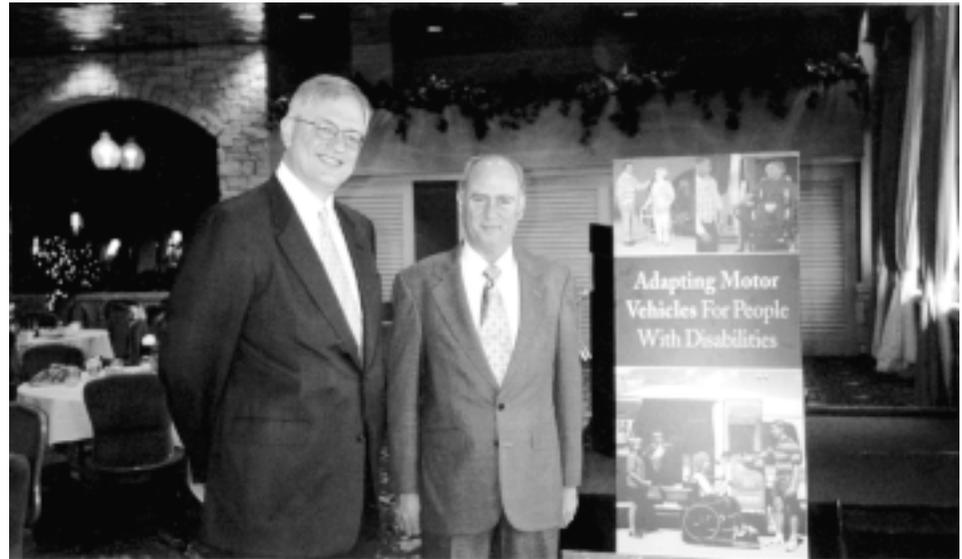
savings, licensing requirements and organizations to contact for help. While the brochure focuses on drivers of modified vehicles, each section also contains suggestions for those who transport passengers with disabilities.

The Office of Planning and Consumer Programs coordinated internally with DEAF DOT, DOT/ADA, DOT’s Civil Rights Office as well as with other offices within NHTSA, and externally with NMEDA, the Association of Driver Rehabilitation Specialists, AAA, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Paralyzed Veterans Association, and automobile

manufacturers to produce and distribute this publication. 35,000 copies of the brochure were printed, and almost 20,000 have already been distributed. The brochure is available on NHTSA’s website, and consumers will soon be able to access other information for people with disabilities from the NHTSA Homepage.

*Adapting Motor Vehicles For Persons With Disabilities* has received publicity from the *Washington Post*, *Detroit News*, and the *New York Post* as well as the AAA, *In Sync* (Erie Insurance), *Circuit Breaker* (NMEDA), *Woman Motorist* and *Exceptional Parent* magazines.

CASID will also be part of a workshop panel and will exhibit at the Lifesavers conference in Atlanta, GA on March 13, 2000 to promote the brochure and its proven process for gaining freedom on the road. ■



Pictured from left to right: Stephen R. Kratzke, Acting Associate Administrator, Safety Performance Standards; and Martin Smith, Past-President, National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA)

# NHTSA Web Site Continues to Grow in Popularity

By Ted Pasek, Administration, OTIM



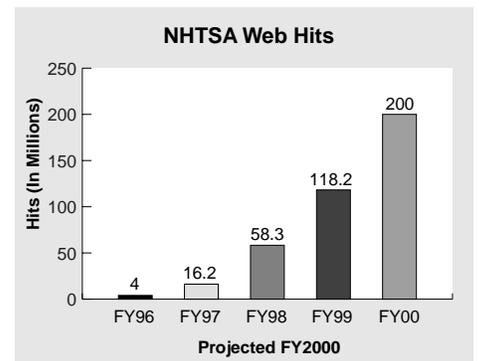
The NHTSA Web site averaged 10 million hits a month during FY 1999. The average in the first four

months of FY 2000 exceeds 14 million hits a month, quite often over 4 million hits a week. Why the sudden increase?

We believe the increase is a combination of the ever expanding growth of the Internet, more awareness and interest by the public in safety information, and the technology upgrades allowing more visitors to access the system. There are over 57,000 documents on

the web site now, thanks to all the program offices’ contributions.

The Administration’s Office of Technology and Information Management (OTIM) has upgraded the Web servers and moved them outside the NHTSA network area. To handle the increasing demand on the servers, the need for faster access, and to plan for the continually increasing volume of visitors to the web site, we upgraded to the Dell Xeon Server technology, providing faster processing, increased memory, and additional storage. We have redundant web servers with load balancing between the two servers and redundancy of the database servers. For security reasons these servers are disconnected from the



NHTSA network and are accessible only in a segregated area, with appropriate security firewalls of course.

The chart shows how the Web has grown since inception October 1, 1995. The number of site visits doubled from FY 1998 to FY 1999. Conservatively estimating, we expect another 50 percent growth in FY 2000. ■



## Recent People Saving People/Teamwork Leadership Challenge Awards

Phyllis Alston  
Earleen Hughes  
Heidi Coleman  
Christopher Cook

NOA  
NOA  
NCC  
NCC

Sami Richie Region II  
For working above and beyond expectations to ensure the success of Region II's recent Secretarial Community Building Forum in Queens County, NY.

Roger Kurrus NPS  
Rhonda Dinello NPS  
Cecilia Davis NPS  
Mary Versailles NPS

In recognition for the efficient and expeditious investigation and adjudication of seven multi-issue Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complaints in a four-month time frame.

Gary Butler Region IV  
For being instrumental in the planning, organizing, and implementation of the "Ride Like A Pro" bicycle helmet safety event as part of the pre-Super Bowl activities in Atlanta.

For their outstanding teamwork producing the "Buying A Safer Car 2000" brochure. They conceptualized a new, exported format that provided consumers with the most extensive vehicle safety information ever produced by the agency.

Lori Millen NTS  
For her leadership and timeliness in organizing NHTSA's *Walk Our Children to School Day* activities.

Belinda Jackson Region IV  
For serving as a key instructor in NHTSA's Safe Community Course for Kentucky highway safety officials.

Marie Walz NPP  
In recognition for building a Web page that gives the public convenient access to the findings of their evaluations.

Ann Mitchell NTS  
Shirley Peterson Barton NTS  
Barbara Sauers NTS  
Cheryl Neverman NTS

Erick Moran Region IV  
For coordinating and developing the agenda for the Region IV Regional Traffic Records and Data Conference held on November 30 and December 1.

### Administration

Linda Boor  
Janice Fleming  
Mark Kromer  
Anita Barber  
Margaret Bryant  
Joseph Comella  
Richard Dixon  
George-Anne Moses  
Henrietta Mosley  
Lamont Norwood  
Amy Poling  
S. Pete Shultz  
Rosetta Watson

For their hard work and dedication in planning and conducting a day-long meeting of the recipients of the "Buckle Up America Action Grants."

Joseph Jeffrey Region IV  
For assisting in the planning, organizing and implementation of the Region IV Traffic Records and Data Conference.

In recognition for the extraordinary efforts made toward obligating NHTSA's FY 1999 contract program funds.

Craig Killgo NTS, Leader  
Helen Noe NTS  
Robert Hohn  
Esther Wagner

William Kootsikis Region IV  
For his outstanding efforts in teaching the Program Management Course at Traffic Safety Institute (TSI). He had the sole responsibility for covering the TEA-21 requirements as well as addressing all of the 402 grant regulations and procedures.

For their hard work on the 2000 Combined Federal Campaign which resulted in Traffic Safety Programs surpassing both last year's goal and leading NHTSA in total contributions.

Judy Craig Region VII  
In recognition for taking the lead on the coordination and management of Region VII's relocation to their new ONEDOT worksite.

Edward Milton NTS  
In recognition for his contribution in making the Region IV Traffic Records and Data Conference held in Atlanta on November 30 and December 1, a success.

### Certificate of Appreciation

Scott Chapman NSC  
For his assistance in enabling State and Community Services to maintain a high level of service to the states for the Grants Tracking System.

Linda Dodge Region VIII  
Phil Weiser Region VIII  
For their innovative idea and performance of introducing a PowerPoint presentation into the Region VIII Community Forum.

Louise Belliveau Region I  
For working over and above her assigned duties in ensuring Region I had a successful press conference with the ABC Safety Campaign.

Lorie J. Dankers Region X  
In recognition of her outstanding work in organizing and managing the Region X Community Building Forum.

Mario J. Damiata Region I  
For assisting in coordination of the ABC Safety Campaign press conference.

John Finneran NSA  
For his initiative in organizing and implementing a program of field inspection of recreational conversion vans for assessment of second stage manufacturer compliance with certification requirements.

## Go Speed Racer, Go!

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for emergency treatment. These items are extremely helpful if the child is ever injured or missing. Leber said that he is very happy to be working with NHTSA as their safety programs are an important addition to the safety packs, making them an even more valuable tool that assists parents with child and highway safety.

Chicago's popular radio station WLUP 97.9 broadcast continuously from the Speed Racer booth helping to attract large crowds both to the show and to the Speed Racer exhibit. Exit polls revealed that Speed Racer was the most popular exhibit at the show. ■

NHTSA Now is an official publication of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Public and Consumer Affairs.

Kathryn Henry  
Editor

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### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success."

— Napoleon Hill