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Florida Department of Transportation Celebrates Crossing Guard Appreciation Day

Announces 2022 Crossing Guard of the Year Award Winners

TALLAHASSEE, Fla – Today, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) highlights community safety by recognizing Florida’s school crossing guards who provide essential public safety and services to communities. Governor DeSantis signed a proclamation that declared February 3, 2023, as Crossing Guard Appreciation Day in Florida to commend the dedication and efforts of our state’s crossing guards. View the proclamation [here](#).

“Florida is home to millions of school-aged children and their safety is paramount. Our loyal school crossing guards ensure the safety of these children and their families to ensure they arrive to and depart from school safely,” **said Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E.** “School crossing guards provide steadfast service to our communities and most certainly deserve acknowledgement for their diligent efforts to protect our children and families. On behalf of the entire Department, we are so grateful for Florida’s school crossing guards and thank them for their dedication to the state and to their communities.”

Each year, the first Friday in February is an opportunity for Floridians to recognize and celebrate the essential service and unwavering dedication these admirable school crossing guards provide to protect Florida’s schoolchildren across the state. Additionally, the commendable service, responsibility, and professionalism demonstrated by school crossing guards is recognized annually through FDOT’s annual School Crossing Guard Awards. The following three individuals have been selected for the 2022 awards, with excerpts included from nominations received:

2022 Florida School Crossing Guard of the Year

David W. Peterson, *Pasco County Sheriff's Office* | "David W. Peterson is a model guard. He is dedicated, dependable, and exhibits proficiency in every aspect of his job. His service and volunteer work promoting pedestrian and bicycle education and safety at the school and in the local community, and willingness to help as needed, show his passion for giving back. David will leave a lasting impression on our youth, as an icon for safety and caring."

2022 Florida School Crossing Guard of the Year

Larry Miller, *Seminole County Sheriff's Office* | "Larry Miller has created a safer and better environment at his crossing and in his community for over ten years. Whether assisting with recruiting new crossing guards, providing children with bicycle and pedestrian safety education, or helping at homeless shelters, Larry's devotion to safety and his community is evident. Larry's enthusiasm and pride for the job, politeness, approachability, compassion, leadership, and love for everyone in the school community is commendable."

2022 Florida School Crossing Guard of the Year Extra Mile Award

Tom Bowser, *Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office* | "Tom Bowser is an exemplary guard who goes the extra mile to ensure the safety and well-being of his community's students. He provides extraordinary efforts to communicate with students and parents alike, despite language barriers, and his initiative to provide students who are in need with warm coats is a selfless act of service. Tom's efforts have expanded beyond his assigned crossing and have set forth an entire agency philanthropic program. His safety-first philosophy and sincere concern for every student has made his community a better place."

Florida prioritizes public safety and the significant role of education to ensure the protection of schoolchildren and their families, and the crossing guards who assist them. The *Ramon Turnquest School Crossing Guard Act*, passed by the Florida Legislature in 1992, requires school crossing guard programs to train their guards according to guidelines developed by FDOT. Florida is a national leader in development of crossing guard uniform training guidelines and curriculum, with FDOT's train-the-trainer program used to educate trainers on safe and effective techniques and procedures for school crossing guards. Additionally, FDOT coordinates with local law enforcement agencies and partners throughout the state to provide uniform training for consistent, safe operation of school crossings. View more about the [Florida School Crossing Guard Training Program](#).

FDOT's mission is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances economic prosperity, and preserves the quality of the state's environment and communities. Together with our communities and partners, FDOT strives to

ensure Floridians are proud that the Sunshine State is the best place to live, learn, work, and play. For more information, visit FDOT.gov.

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The Florida Department of Transportation's mission is to provide a safe transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances economic prosperity and preserves the quality of the state's environment and communities. The department is committed to building a transportation system that not only fits the current needs of Florida's residents and visitors but also enhances mobility throughout the state to accommodate its consistent and rapid growth. The unique nature of the Sunshine State and its year-round warm climate provides numerous opportunities to achieve the department's mission through multiple transportation modes including highways/streets, air, rail, sea, spaceports, transit, and the ever-expanding deployment of bicycle & pedestrian facilities.