



NJDOT NEWS



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Contact: Jim Barry
Judith Drucker
(609) 963-1975

NJDOT announces the winners of the 2021 New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program Improving walking and biking routes is vital to public health and safety

(Trenton) – The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), in coordination with the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center at Rutgers University, and the eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) in New Jersey, announced the 2021 New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program winners.

The New Jersey Safe Routes Recognition Program (NJSRP) is a statewide initiative supported by the NJDOT that empowers schools and communities through grants and sharing best practices in policy and design to create safe environments for people to walk, bike, or travel by other wheeled devices.

"Improving safety for all, including our most vulnerable roadway users, especially our children, is a priority at NJDOT," Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti said. "A vital part of this effort is NJDOT's Safe Routes to School Program which focuses on improving areas and encouraging students to walk and bike to school where it is safe to do so to promote healthy, active lifestyles."

The NJSRP focuses on infrastructure improvements and community educational programs that promote the benefits of active lifestyles. The New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center recognizes select municipalities and schools with one of four award levels for their commitment to the Safe Routes program. To view a list of all current winners, please go to www.saferoutesnj.org/current-safe-routes-to-school-recognition-program-winners.

"By focusing on improvements to support active travel by youth, we believe that through Safe Routes to School, we can help to create conditions that are safe, healthy, equitable, and appealing for all," added NJDOT's Safe Routes to School Coordinator William Riviere.

Regional Safe Routes to School Coordinators from New Jersey's eight TMAs will recognize the achievements of the 2021 winners within their service areas. This year's winners advanced their projects with hard work and commitment to offer and expand walk and bike events and programs in their communities while facing school closures and unpredictability due to the pandemic.

Tara Shepherd, Executive Director of goHunterdon TMA and Chair of the TMA Council of New Jersey, stated that "although the program is run statewide, each TMA promotes the program locally and takes the lead in honoring winning schools and municipalities and thanking them for helping to prioritize safe walking and bicycling."

Through NJDOT's Safe Routes Recognition Program, municipalities and schools (public, private, or charter) are awarded recognition levels of First Step, Bronze, Silver or Gold, based upon their achievements to recognize their commitment to and support of NJDOT's Safe Routes to School program by enabling and encouraging walking and bicycling in their communities.

The communities that participate in the NJSRP often benefit from less traffic congestion, better air quality and fewer traffic conflicts near schools, and most importantly, healthier and more active children, according to the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center.

To learn more about NJDOT's Safe Routes to School program, and how your school or municipality can participate to make your community more walkable and bikeable, please visit www.saferoutesnj.org to find your TMA Safe Routes Coordinator.

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