

2025 MODSEA

Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award

DE TSA Recipients

Mark Box

Mark Box, driving instructor for the Alliance of Southwest Missouri, is a 2025 recipient of the MODSEA Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award—a recognition that reflects his profound and lasting contributions to roadway safety at the school, community, and statewide levels.

Mark's passion for traffic safety is deeply personal. After the tragic loss of his son in a motor vehicle crash, he committed himself to ensuring that other families do not experience the same heartbreak. That personal experience has shaped him into an exceptionally dedicated and compassionate educator who consistently emphasizes safe driving behaviors, including seatbelt use, distraction-free driving, and responsible decision-making behind the wheel. His authenticity and sense of purpose resonate strongly with students of all ages.

A strong supporter of the MODSEA mission and vision, Mark is an outspoken advocate for the advancement of driver and traffic safety education. His instruction is practical, evidence-based, and consistently focused on long-term safety outcomes. His leadership extends well beyond traditional driver education: through his Coaching the Van Driver course, he prepares college students who will transport passengers and tow trailers across the country while working for summer camps and outreach programs. He also offers this course to nonprofit organizations that routinely transport children, ensuring the safety of some of the most vulnerable passengers on Missouri's roads.

Mark developed and teaches a Missouri Permit Class designed to help future drivers understand state motor vehicle laws and successfully pass the Missouri Driver Permit Test—strengthening foundational knowledge and promoting confidence, responsibility, and legal compliance among new drivers. He has also demonstrated exceptional collaboration with law enforcement and public safety partners throughout his career.

His commitment to safety education extends to the youngest learners. Through Safety Town, Mark teaches school-aged children how to safely ride non-motorized vehicles, navigate roadways, use crosswalks and stoplights, and safely cross railroad crossings. He is also a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician, ensuring children are properly secured in the correct car seats and that seats are correctly installed—a testament to his comprehensive, life-saving approach to traffic safety.

Mark Box is a knowledgeable, skilled, and compassionate leader who consistently promotes driver and traffic safety within his school and community. His proven record of effectiveness, his dedication to education at every stage of life, and his unwavering advocacy for safer roadways make him a most deserving recipient of this award.

Trevor Grimshaw

Trevor Grimshaw is a 2025 recipient of the MODSEA Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award, honored for more than 20 years of exceptional contributions to the profession of driver and traffic safety education—many of which have been dedicated entirely to driver education.

Throughout his distinguished career, Trevor has helped countless students become confident, capable drivers while providing reassurance and support to the parents navigating those milestone moments alongside them. His deep commitment to student safety, skill development, and responsible decision-making has left a lasting mark on every learner he has taught.

Trevor consistently advocates for driver education within his district, schools, and the wider community. He actively promotes the importance of high-quality driver training to families and students, ensuring the program remains valued and accessible. His exceptional teaching is marked by clear communication, engaging instruction, and a genuine ability to connect with students of all backgrounds and skill levels.

Collaboration is another hallmark of Trevor's leadership. He works closely with fellow educators to share best practices, develop curriculum, and mentor newer teachers entering the field. His dedication to continued professional learning—through workshops, conferences, and ongoing training—ensures that his instruction reflects current research, safety standards, and effective teaching methods.

Above all, Trevor truly loves teaching driver and traffic safety education. His passion is unmistakable and inspires both students and colleagues alike. This authentic enthusiasm, paired with decades of expertise and an unwavering commitment to student safety, is what makes Trevor not just a strong educator, but a genuine leader in the field. He not only advances the profession—he elevates it.

Alicia Ozenberger

Alicia Ozenberger, Executive Director of Act Missouri, is a 2025 recipient of the MODSEA Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award. Nominated by Chris Dzurick, Alicia is recognized for her deep and unwavering commitment to youth health and safety—a commitment that has grown to encompass significant and meaningful contributions to traffic safety education across the state of Missouri.

Under Alicia's leadership, Act Missouri has maintained a long-standing partnership with the Missouri Department of Transportation, receiving funding for nearly ten years to design and deliver traffic safety programming and campaigns statewide. This work includes leading Missouri's Students Against Destructive Decisions initiative, developing youth-centered education programs, and creating media campaigns focused on behavior change. Through these efforts, Act Missouri has built deep expertise in traffic safety education, youth engagement, and prevention messaging—and Alicia has been at the center of that growth every step of the way.

What sets Alicia apart is how she approaches her work. She does not pursue grants simply for the sake of funding. She champions opportunities because she understands the real impact they can have on communities—especially on young people. She encourages her team to take on complex, long-term traffic safety initiatives because she believes prevention work matters, even when results are slow to emerge. A clear example of this resolve is her long-standing effort to secure a driver distraction and impairment simulator for Act Missouri. Recognizing early on the power of hands-on learning to help young drivers truly understand the consequences of distracted and impaired driving, she continued to advocate for this resource even when the path was difficult. That persistence ultimately expanded Act Missouri's ability to bring meaningful, experiential traffic safety education directly into schools and communities.

Alicia's commitment does not stop at the statewide level. She is equally invested in her local community, regularly promoting youth health and safety programs in area schools on her own time and volunteering with the YMCA. For Alicia, youth health and safety is not simply a professional responsibility—it is personal, and it is her passion. She brings empathy, integrity, and a strong sense of purpose to everything she does.

Alicia Ozenberger has made a meaningful and lasting impact on youth health and safety in Missouri, advancing traffic safety education in ways that are thoughtful, effective, and deeply rooted in community needs. She is a most deserving recipient of this honor.

Sutton Smith

Sutton Smith, Officer with the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, is a 2025 recipient of the MODSEA Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award. Nominated by Debra Huwar and Allyn Workman of KC-MoDOT and MODSEA, Officer Smith is recognized for nearly two decades of distinguished service to driver and traffic safety—work that is deeply personal, professionally exemplary, and profoundly impactful.

Officer Smith has served with the KCPD since August 2007, bringing a breadth of experience across the Traffic Division's Accident Investigation Unit, the Community Engagement Division's Youth and Social Services Unit, D.A.R.E., and the East Patrol Division. Prior to her law enforcement career, she served as a probation and parole officer in Missouri, giving her a uniquely comprehensive understanding of how traffic safety, criminal justice, and community well-being intersect.

Her commitment to traffic safety is rooted in personal experience. Having lost a parent in a preventable motor vehicle crash, Officer Smith has channeled that grief into purpose—regularly delivering public speeches and victim impact statements for probation and parole proceedings, ensuring that the human cost of unsafe driving is never abstract or distant for those who need to hear it most. Her voice carries the weight of lived experience, and her willingness to share that experience makes her one of the most effective advocates for traffic safety in the Kansas City region.

Officer Smith's record of service reflects the highest standards of her profession. She ranked first on the KCPD Sergeant's Promotional Exam in 2025 and has earned over 20 Supervisory Notices, 26 Division Letters, 24 Chief's Letters of Commendation, and 6 Letters of Appreciation—honors that speak to a career defined by excellence, dedication, and impact.

Sutton Smith embodies the spirit of the MODSEA Distinguished Excellence in Traffic Safety Award: a leader who has gone far beyond the boundaries of her formal role to advance traffic safety, protect her community, and honor the lives affected by preventable tragedies on Missouri's roads.