



## Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Monthly Progress Report November 2013

Please see the attached document for a complete list of our 436 Partner Schools. Four schools partnered with the Resource Center during November. School Outreach staff gave three presentations and held 90 meetings with stakeholders and schools throughout the state.

The team also focused on promoting Travel Plan Assistance and encouraging schools to apply. The deadline for Travel Plan Assistance applications was November 25<sup>th</sup>. The Resource Center received ten applications. Two schools will be chosen to receive the assistance.

### Territory Outreach Highlights

#### Metro Atlanta Territory

**Nichole Hollis, School Outreach Coordinator**

Nichole signed on two new partners (**Whiteford Elementary School** in Atlanta and **Hembree Springs Elementary School** in Roswell). The Metro Atlanta Territory has 131 Partner schools.

Nichole met with **Georgia Tech's School of Public Policy's Social Justice Class** and presented information on SRTS. The class is interested in supporting efforts in the West Atlanta area by helping to jump-start programs at socioeconomically disadvantaged schools. Their focus is to create a comparison study between schools in West Atlanta with fewer resources to schools in City of Decatur with more advantages. In an effort to create sustainable programs at these schools, professors are making the project an on-going initiative for this class every year.

School Champion, Andrea Sharma, at **Sagamore Hills Elementary school** informed SRTS of the possibility of the United States Public Health Commissioned Corps officers volunteering on Georgia Walk to School Day. She is a commissioned corps officer and has 20-40 volunteers that are interested in supporting efforts on this day. They want to create awareness of their organization in 10 Metro Atlanta schools and spotlight the program through their local and national newsletter with the commissioned officers association. They are willing to help with the event as part of the Every Body Walk! Initiative. Andrea is willing to coordinate with officers interested in volunteering with each of the school champions. Nichole and Andrea will be working together leading up to the event to recruit volunteers and identify schools.

**Whiteford Elementary school** in the Atlanta Public School System started their program with efforts from **Families First Organization** in Atlanta. The organization is using SRTS as a vehicle to get more parents involved and active in the school and neighborhood. They formed a parent action group that meets monthly to discuss tasks and duties. There are currently 13 parents that serve as corner captains every week in the morning and afternoon. They are in the process of creating an official kick-off event to get the students more excited about SRTS.

In December, Nichole will be meeting with Parent liaison cluster groups in Clayton County to inform them of SRTS and recruit school champions.

### **North Georgia Territory**

**Alicia Hatcher, Senior School Outreach Coordinator**

The North Region has 102 Partner Schools participating in the Resource Center programs.

Alicia presented at the **Bartow Healthy Living** meeting on November 13 after being invited by Lisa Greeby with the Northwest Georgia Public Health Department. The group wanted to learn more about Safe Routes to School and how the Cartersville community can get involved and encourage more students to walk. Ms. Greeby has contacts at Cartersville Primary School and Cartersville Elementary School and will connect Alicia with them to hopefully get the schools signed on as new Partners. Also, Bartow Healthy Living is now a Friend of the Resource Center.

Alicia attended the **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission** Bike-Ped meeting on November 20. Alicia was able to give an update from the Resource Center including a summary of International Walk to School Day and plans for a conference call for all regional commissions in December. Also, John Devine with the Regional Commission will be meeting with a new School Champion at Chase Street Elementary and include Alicia in the meeting.

### **East Central Territory**

**Taki Gartrell Smith, School Outreach Coordinator**

Taki maintains 93 Partners in the East Central Territory. **North Columbia Elementary School** in Columbia County, signed on as a new Partner. Four schools in the East Central Territory opted to no longer participate in the SRTS Partner Program. They provided no reason. However, the Resource Center postulates that it's just not feasible. . Taki traveled to Henry and Newton County to meet and follow up with several Partners. She also met with potential schools in the Columbia County area that expressed interest in the SRTS Partner Program and attended meetings with Friends of the SRTS Resource Center.

Taki assisted **Live Healthy Baldwin**, a Friend of the Resource Center; complete the "Bicycle Friendly Community" application provided by The League of American Bicyclist. She was able to work with Dr. Jim Lidstone, Live Healthy Baldwin Coordinator and assist in providing SRTS background information and IWalk data for the active SRTS Partners in the Milledgeville/ Baldwin County areas. The application is used to provide a roadmap to improve conditions for bicycling and the guidance to make a community bicycle friendly.

Taki presented the **NTHSA Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum Presentation** on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Middle Georgia RESA Curriculum Directors Meeting in Macon, GA. In attendance there were over 10 directors from surrounding counties in Macon, GA. Taki also provided the directors information on the Travel Plan Assistance Application and encouraged the directors to inform their schools about the benefits of becoming a SRTS Partner.

Taki attended the **Safe Kids Toombs County** monthly meeting in Vidalia. She networked with the Toombs Family Connections after school program coordinator and scheduled a meeting to sign the organization up as a Friend. In the Augusta area, Taki also met with Dr. Carol Rountree, the Superintendent of Student Services at the **Richmond County Board of Education**, a Friend of the Resource Center. Dr. Rountree provided Taki with a list of potential schools in the Richmond County that would benefit from the SRTS program. Taki will follow-up with those schools during December and continue to reach out to inactive Partner schools.

### **Southwest Territory**

**Chelsea Carter, School Outreach Coordinator**

Chelsea traveled to schools and stakeholders in Atkinson, Cook, Lanier, Mitchell, Colquitt, Dougherty, Worth, Tift, Wayne and Lowndes counties during this period. She created a small 'incentive bag' to take to meetings in all of the counties to introduce SRTS at the schools that she had never visited and to reintroduce SRTS at inactive Partners. It includes information about the program as well as incentive samples. One school signed on as a new partner while three opted to not participate this school year. The Southwest Territory has 68 Partners.

Chelsea assisted schools with data collection and informed the Partners about Travel Plan Assistance. **North Mitchell County Elementary** signed up as a new Partner and applied for the Travel Plan Assistance. This Mitchell County school is very proactive in the health of their students by having a small fitness room with equipment as well as their own school garden where students not only learn about healthy fruits and vegetables, but learn responsibility in taking care of the garden.

At Valdosta's new school, **Pinevale Elementary**, Chelsea met with school staff and assisted in a spontaneous walk audit around the school in order to help them survey the area from a pedestrian's point of view. Pinevale is expected to Partner, and Chelsea will follow up with the school in December.

### **Coastal Georgia Territory**

**Patti Sistrunk, Project Manager and Senior School Outreach Coordinator**

There are 39 Partners in the Coastal Region.

The state's bicycle advocacy group, **Georgia Bikes!**, hosted a Complete Streets workshop in Savannah on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Patti, along with planners, engineers, and other stakeholders from the Coastal area attended the event. Georgia Bikes! received a grant to fund the speakers and a bus ride around Savannah to see existing, future, and needed complete streets projects. One stop on the tour was **Largo Tibet Elementary School**, a Partner and infrastructure project awardee. The school is located on Largo Road, which is, according to the Complete Streets workshop leaders, an ideal candidate for a road diet. Patti explained the infrastructure project plans to the group. Infrastructure is expected to begin in 2014, and City of Savannah representatives at the workshop planned to look into addressing some of the Complete Streets ideas that included re-striping the road for bike lanes.

Patti met with representatives from the School Council at Todd Grant Elementary School in Darien. Located near **Oak Grove Intermediate**, the school is very interested in pedestrian education and safer routes for students to and from the school. One of the parents in attendance is also the Downtown Development Director of the City of Darien and is interested in ways to connect the east and west parts of Darien. The town is divided by US Highway 17, with Todd Grant Elementary on the west side and Oak Grove Intermediate and the county's middle school on the east. Patti is scheduled to present at the Todd Grant Elementary School Council meeting on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, to outline the Partnership program, explain the benefits of SRTS, and to encourage the school principal to sign up.

The **Coastal Regional Commission (CRC)** staff organized the meeting with Todd Grant School's parents and then met with Patti to discuss how the CRC and the Resource Center can collaborate on SRTS. Currently, the CRC is working to finish the School Travel Plan for **Liberty Elementary School** in Midway. The plan was started in 2011 by a former employee of the CRC, but was unfinished when he left in 2012. Patti has provided noninfrastructure information, facilitated meetings with the school and stakeholders, and contributed to the editing process. She'll continue to work with the CRC to finalize the plan by February 2014. Additionally, Patti and Beatrice Soler, a planner with the CRC, discussed additional partnership opportunities with schools in the Coastal Region's ten counties.

### **Marketing**

#### **Website updates and activities**

The website was updated and maintained. Travel Plan assistance pages were added. The Travel Plan application was promoted, and the Resource Center monitored applicants.

## Resource Development

### **SRTS Pop-up Event Toolkit**

Pop-up events are a great way to test out changes to the way people use streets, sidewalks and other public spaces. These small, temporary changes are used to increase momentum and excitement for improving a community's pedestrian and bicycle network. SRTS Pop-up events are especially useful for showing a school community how small changes can make a big difference everyone who travel to and from school. The Toolkit will provide step-by-step instructions on hosting a SRTS Pop-up Event and templates for temporary signs. The final toolkit is expected to be ready for the SOC January 2014 training.

### **Poster Calendar**

This new poster calendar features months from January 2014 through June 2015. The 2-sided calendar highlights six outstanding Partners, important dates for SRTS programs, and Georgia SRTS Resource Center marketing resources. The calendars will be delivered to each SOC by December 5<sup>th</sup>, after which the SOCs will deliver them to schools, Friends, and other Resource Center stakeholders.

### **Event Signs**

These 11" x 17" signs are a visual resource for SOCs to provide to schools when holding SRTS events. The signs are being designed specifically to prompt photo opportunities that promote basic SRTS messages and are highly visible. A first draft of the signs was designed; the final set is expected to be ready in January 2014 and distributed to SOCs.

### **Thirty-day "Look Ahead" Period**

The Resource Center closed the Travel Plan Assistance application call on November 25<sup>th</sup>. In December, the team will consider all applicants and supporting documents. Carol and Patti will recommend two schools for Travel Plan Assistance to Georgia Department of Transportation. With GDOT approval, those schools will be notified, and planning will begin. The School Profile, timeline for assistance, and data collection will begin in December.

The Calendar will be printed and shipped to each SOC. Upon receipt, the SOCs will begin distributing the calendar to stakeholders.

The Resource Center will coordinate and host a SRTS-themed web conference for the Regional Commissions' SRTS contacts in mid-December. The web conference's purpose is to inform Regional Commission contacts about the Resource Center programs and to provide a forum for sharing and discussing SRTS ideas.

Georgia Walk to School Day (gWalk) is March 5<sup>th</sup>. The Resource Center marketing team will begin researching and ordering incentives for gWalk, planning the marketing plan, and prepare the online event registration form, which will be launched the first week of January.

The outreach team will continue to collect student travel information, promote SRTS strategies, schedule and deliver SRTS presentations, and develop sustainable SRTS programs at schools and in communities throughout Georgia.

