



## Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Monthly Progress Report April 2014

### Highlights

During April, one school partnered with the Resource Center; the attached list provides the names of our 415 Partner Schools. Outreach staff gave 14 presentations and held 104 meetings with stakeholders and schools. The team supported 12 events around the state including walk and bike to school days, bicycle rodeos, and safety assemblies. The team continued providing assistance for two School Travel Plans. Additionally, the Resource Center held its spring quarter team meeting in Atlanta in mid-April for training and project planning.

### Outreach Summaries

#### Metro Atlanta Territory – Nichole Hollis, School Outreach Coordinator

Nichole currently has 129 Partners in Metro Atlanta. In April, Nichole focused on supporting and attending health-related events in her territory, meeting with local stakeholders, providing technical assistance for upcoming bike to school day events, implementing plans for schools for the current year and next year, and providing travel plan assistance to **Inman Middle School** and **Springdale Park Elementary School**.

On April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, Nichole attended a two-day Pedestrian Safety Taskforce meeting at **Inman Middle School** that was conducted by **Safe Kids Georgia**. The meetings focused on creating an environmental modification plan in order to facilitate permanent infrastructure improvements and ways to educate children on safe pedestrian behaviors. Nichole was able to collaborate with **Safe Kids Fulton** and **Safe Kids Georgia** to develop an on-going communications plan that would help to fulfill the education piece involved with the 5 E's. She was also able to give a presentation on the ways that the Resource Center can add to the current project.

Nichole supported health-related events during April.

- At **Drew Charter Elementary School's Healthy You, Healthy Drew Event**, she talked with current and future parents and children about the benefits of walking and biking to school. She also provided educational materials related to bike safety and listened to concerns parents currently have about their students walking to school.
- Nichole was also able to attend **Morehouse School of Medicine's Field Day** event planned for children in the local community. Nichole was introduced by former Metro Atlanta School Outreach Coordinator and current Doctor of Medicine student, **Nykia Burke**. Nichole presented information to parents and students about how a SRTS program can be started at their school. At the event, a child was awarded a new bike and helmet for attending.



Nichole met with **Safe Kids Fulton** for the first time and had the opportunity to discuss current goals and was able to have them support an upcoming walking event in May for **Gideon's Elementary School** and the **Pittman Park Recreation Center**.

Nichole also conducted one more presentation at **Parkside Elementary School** where she gave an overview of the SRTS program and also congratulated statewide third place winner and Parkside fifth grader, **Kayla Grant** with the **Saris Poster Contest**.

In April, Nichole also finished the final meeting for **Springdale Park Elementary School's** Travel Plan. She will continue working with the taskforce members to implement a sustainable program at the school and develop plans over the summer with the school's parent organization. The plan is currently with GDOT for review and approval.

In May, Nichole is coordinating a **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum presentation to Marta employees** interested in child pedestrian safety. She will also continue promoting Bike to School Day and meeting with schools to assess their overall progress for the school year. Nichole will also focus on planning outreach efforts to local community organization including the **Boys and Girls Club**.

### **North Georgia Territory - Alicia Hatcher, Senior School Outreach Coordinator**

**Hilsman Middle School** in Athens is the newest Partner in North Georgia. Alicia met with Assistant Principal Robert Ezekiel to discuss the program and learn more about the school. Hilsman Middle is an infrastructure winner and has approximately 50 walkers and five bikers each day. Mr. Ezekiel would like to increase the number of walkers who live within a mile of the school. Alicia will work with the PE teachers to develop their program beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Alicia has 104 Partners in the North territory.

Alicia attended and did a brief presentation at the **Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia** monthly meeting on April 10, 2014. Charlie Jones is the new contact at the **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission** and will be leading this group and their bike and pedestrian efforts along with Julie Smith. Alicia shared the latest updates from the Resource Center with the group and made new contacts with potential new School Partners in Chatsworth. Alicia and Mr. Jones discussed ideas for collaboration with schools in the region after the Regional Commission gets their new contract in July 2014.

Alicia planned the second quarterly Regional Commission webinar on April 30<sup>th</sup>. The web conference was attended by eight Regional Commission representatives as well as the Resource Center team and **Emmanuella Myrthil of GDOT**. **John Devine** of the **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission** presented information about SRTS efforts in his area including development of Travel Plans. Of note was the suggestion of each Regional Commission hosting a regional forum or stakeholders' meeting. The Resource Center staff would help support these meetings. Alicia provided follow-up notes after the call.

### **East Central Territory - Taki Smith, School Outreach Coordinator**

Taki currently maintains 79 Partners in the East Central Territory. In April, two schools opted not to continue participating in the SRTS Partner Program due to limited involvement from parents and administrative turnover. During the month of April, Taki presented to friend organizations, attended SRTS meetings, composed the SRTS Wayfinding April Newsletter edition, updated the Resource Center Facebook page, promoted Bike to School Day, and planned for the statewide SRTS forum.



*River Ridge Elementary School*

**River Ridge Elementary School**, a School Partner, located in Columbia Co. won first place in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Saris Bicycle Poster Contest for the state of Georgia with over 145 Facebook votes. The contest winner, Katelyn Surrao will be presented with a bicycle, helmet, and bike light at an awards ceremony on May 15, 2014 at her school. Her poster placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the National contest!



*McKibben Elementary School*

**McKibben Elementary School**, a School Partner, located in Bibb Co. won second place in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Saris Bicycle Poster Contest. The contest winner, Courtney Morgan will be awarded a helmet and bike light.

**Eagle Ridge Elementary School**, located in Baldwin Co. received 15 new helmets for their annual "Bikes Over Eagle Ridge" Bike Rodeo on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The helmets were donated by the **Safe Kids Coalition-Greater Augusta**, a Friend of the Resource Center and the donation was arranged by Taki.



Taki conducted four presentations to Friends and Community Stakeholders throughout her territory. As a result of the meetings and presentations, two organizations, **MACH (Math, Academics, Computers and Healthy Recreation) Academy** and **Peach State Health-East Central** agreed to collaborate with SRTS and became Friends of the Resource Center.

#### April Presentations:

- **Safe Kids Coalition-Greater Augusta**-Taki presented the SRTS NTHSA Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the monthly Safe Kids meeting in Augusta, GA, and encouraged everyone to attend the NTHSA Train-the-Trainer session on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Taki also updated the attendees about the Saris Poster Contest winner and informed them of the upcoming Bike to School Day event in May.
- **Heart of Georgia Healthy Start Coalition**- On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Taki was the guest speaker at the Healthy Start Coalition meeting in Dublin, GA. At the meeting, Taki introduced the SRTS program, discussed benefits of the program, and she also provided examples of how SRTS collaborates with other community organizations.
- **MACH Academy** -On April 10<sup>th</sup>, Taki conducted two presentations for the MACH Academy-Master Camp participants in Augusta. The Master Camp was comprised of students from the ages of 3-18. Taki presented the NTHSA Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum to age group 3-5 and also to age group 6-8. During the presentation, Taki focused on reading pedestrian friendly books to the younger age group, and she also taught them how to cross the street with an adult. Those books were Duck on a Bike by David Shannon and Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey. For the older age group, Taki focused on the pedestrian safety lessons in the curriculum and had the students take the Child Pedestrian Safety Pre/Post Assessment and memorize the 5 Steps for Crossing the Street Safely by tracing their hand print and writing the steps. Once the lessons were complete, each student received a SRTS pencil and bookmark for their participation.

In May, Taki will focus on encouraging schools to participate in Bike to School Day, assist with planning the statewide forum, travel to different counties throughout her territory to meet with schools, collect Student Travel Tallies, present SRTS to community stakeholders, and keep schools abreast of upcoming SRTS events and program offerings.

## **Southwest Territory - Chelsea Carter, School Outreach Coordinator**

April was a full and busy month for the Southwest Territory. Chelsea divided efforts to inactive schools with infrastructure grants, gaining prospective schools to approach, and participating in events in the area.

Chelsea worked closely with schools that had been provided GDOT infrastructure projects and inactive schools.

- **C.A. Gray Junior High School**, located in Colquitt County, had decided to no longer participate in the partnership program. However, Chelsea presented to the school's administration, the district superintendent, as well as city worker for the sidewalk construction, in order to inform them of the status of the infrastructure project as well as bridge the gap in communication. C. A. Gray is now a participating partner and plans to be even more active next year.
- **Newnan Crossing Elementary School**, in Coweta County, also received funded project from GDOT for sidewalk, which has been completed. Chelsea held meetings with the Principal and Assistant Principal who have agreed to be more active in the program in collecting data and hosting future events.
- **Welch Elementary School**, in Coweta County as well, did not have an infrastructure grant but has agreed to change their decision on withdrawing from the program and continue Safe Routes to School into the next school year.

Chelsea is maintaining 65 partners. Marshall Middle School in Muscogee County is closing, so the school removed itself from the partnership program. By the end of April, Chelsea has 10% of her Travel Tallies completed for spring and will continue to collect tallies. While meeting with a new contact in the **Three River Regional Commission Office**, Paul Jarrell, learned of eight new prospective schools with which to partner.

Chelsea recently met the **Safe Kids Lowndes County** and participated in their Bike Safety Day. At this bike rodeo, Safe Kids partnered with Kohls Cares and the South Georgia Medical Center Foundation to coordinate a safety event. Students watched a safety video then listened to safety instructions by Sgt. Jim Griffin. Afterwards they were fitted for helmets. The bike maze was set in the parking lot with chalk lines, signage, and a stop light. Bikes and bike racks were raffled away at the end to a lucky boy and girl of each age group.

In May, Chelsea will attend another Bike Rodeo hosted by **Safe Kids Columbus. Hand-in-Hand Primary School** will host a Trike Event for their students and many of the Southwest School will be teaching on bike safety education. Chelsea has one NHTSA presentation scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup>, and a tentative NHTSA presentation for May 13<sup>th</sup>. Chelsea will continue to collect Student Travel Tallies, and promote Bike to School Day as well as the Safe Routes to School Forum.

## **Coastal Georgia Territory - Patti Sistrunk, Project Manager**

The Coastal Region has 38 Partner schools.

The **Charles Ellis Montessori Academy (CEMA)** Safe Routes Travel Plan team met in mid-April for the final planning process meeting. Carol Kachadoorian was on-hand to support the meeting. She walked the team through the proposed recommendations. In May, the team will review the plan one final time and will provide feedback prior to it being submitted to GDOT.

**Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)** students continued work on the CEMA Bicycle Rack project. The SCAD Industrial Design Research Classes have taken on the challenge of finding a bike rack solution for the school. The school has limited square footage for a bicycle rack, but would like to encourage more riding. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Patti and Carol fielded questions about Safe Routes and the CEMA Travel Plan at the two classes. The professor has been asked to present at the Forum in June.

**Jacob G. Smith Elementary School and CEMA** participated in a Bike to School event on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 50 people participated, and incentives were provided. Students from SCAD volunteered at the event and rode with the students, interviewed the parents, and observed the bicycle storage challenges at CEMA.



*Charles Ellis Montessori students, parents and staff bike to school on April 17<sup>th</sup>.*

Patti met with Margaret Brown from the **Memorial Health Ochsner Institute for Injury Research and Prevention** in April to discuss collaborating on pedestrian safety education. Ms. Brown utilizes the Walk Safe curriculum which was one of the inspiration resources for the NHTSA Curriculum. Ms. Brown, with the Resource Center's help, would like to have child pedestrian safety in every elementary school in Chatham County. After discussing county-wide implementation, Patti and Ms. Brown met with staff at **East Broad Street K-8 School** in Savannah to plan pedestrian safety education assemblies for students on May 1<sup>st</sup>. As part of a new pedestrian safety effort, East Broad School will also host a Walk Audit and Dismissal Observation in mid-May.

## Marketing

The Resource Center issued an April Newsletter mid-month. The Wayfinding newsletter was drafted by Taki and edited by Carol and Alicia. It notified recipients about National Bike to School Day registration, the Forum, and other events.

The team developed a communications plan for the Statewide Forum and worked with graphic design staff to develop a logo and materials. The website was updated to include Forum registration and details.



Also, Bike to School Day registration announcements were added to the website, and the Facebook page was updated to include information about the event.

## Thirty-day "Look Ahead" Period

May is National Bike Month, and May 7<sup>th</sup> is National Bike to School Day. The Resource Center is promoting participation throughout the state and supporting events. As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, there were 30 events registered for Bike to School Day at [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org). The team will continue to promote participation throughout May.

The team is conferencing via phone two times each week to plan for the Statewide GA SRTS Forum. The date has been set for June 6<sup>th</sup>, and presenters are being invited to provide educational and inspirational sessions. Registration is open. As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 26 people were registered for the event. The SOCs will continue to promote the Forum to all SRTS stakeholders. Additionally, the team will confirm speakers and make all arrangements for the Forum in May.

The Resource Center will finalize the Travel Plans in May. Those plans will be submitted to GDOT for final approval.

A May Newsletter will promote the Forum, remind stakeholders about SRTS Partnership responsibilities, and encourage student travel tally completion in May.

The project year ends on June 17<sup>th</sup>.