

# VISION ZERO

Zero fatalities. Zero excuses.

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## Traffic Safety Advocates Recognized at Partner Conference

*Bismarck, ND* – Representatives of law enforcement, transportation, engineering, public health and other partners from across the state gathered virtually today to discuss traffic safety during the North Dakota Department of Transportation's Vision Zero Partner Conference.

Topics today included presentations on seat belt use, infrastructure updates, Vision Zero partners, road safety and emergency medical response. Tomorrow's agenda will focus on law enforcement and the dangers of distracted driving, as well as a networking session for Vision Zero partners to coordinate efforts to further advance North Dakota's Vision Zero initiative.

The Vision Zero Partner Conference holds an awards ceremony for those who showed outstanding service and dedication to accomplish the overall goal of Vision Zero, to eliminate motor vehicle crash fatalities and serious injuries on North Dakota roads.

The Bismarck region winners are in the following categories:

- **2021 Beyond the Traffic Stop Award** – This award honors officers who used outstanding investigative skills that led to multiple arrests for narcotics, stolen property, and outstanding warrants from a single routine traffic stop.
  - Officer Benjamin Friedt – Bismarck Police Department
    - During an initial traffic stop for speeding, Officer Friedt located 196 grams of methamphetamine, 1 amphetamine pill, 2 Adderall pills, a digital scale with residue, and several pieces of methamphetamine paraphernalia.
  - Officer Joseph Gebhardt and Officer Joseph Benke – Bismarck Police Department
    - Officer Gebhardt conducted a traffic stop in Bismarck for a minor traffic violation. He asked for consent to search the vehicle but the request was denied. Officer Gebhardt contacted Bismarck Police K-9 handler, Officer Benke. The officers located 2.25 pounds of marijuana, an ounce of THC Wax and \$12,430.
- **2021 Honor Roll Award** – This award recognizes outstanding service to the community, information technology, safety, public affairs and consumer education programs throughout the state of North Dakota in the area of traffic safety.
  - Trooper Steve Clark – North Dakota Highway Patrol
    - Trooper Clark actively works alcohol and underage drinking overtime, is one of the highest producing traffic troopers in the southwest region, manages K-9 training and is quick to offer help to other agencies.

- Trooper Grant Lonski - North Dakota Highway Patrol
  - Trooper Lonski is a self-motivated and high performing traffic trooper stationed in Bismarck. He leads the southwest in various categories of traffic enforcement and actively works alcohol and underage drinking overtime.
- **2021 Traffic Safety Media Award** – This award is for the reporter/news organization that has been fair, balanced, and informative in reporting transportation/traffic-related issues on radio, television, newspaper, or internet/social media.
  - Bismarck Tribune
    - The Bismarck Tribune continues to publish editorials that are in support of Vision Zero programs and initiatives. Of the 25 stories the Tribune printed in 2020-2021 related to traffic safety, 17 were news releases from Vision Zero.
- **2021 Civil Servant Award** – This award is for individuals who have gone above and beyond to assist or provide information to law enforcement to remove a reckless or impaired driver from the roadway.
  - Julie Kramer
    - On August 22, 2020, Kramer called 911 to report a suspected impaired driver traveling on I-94 near Bismarck. Kramer relayed her location information to dispatch, which allowed the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department to respond and locate the driver. The driver was arrested for DUI of alcohol and his three-year-old child was present in the vehicle.

The Vision Zero Partner Conference is made possible thanks to Hess Corporation, AAA – The Auto Club Group, and Puklich Chevrolet.

Join the mission of Vision Zero to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes in North Dakota by becoming part of the [Vision Zero Partner Network](#).

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