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NASRO ANNOUNCES FIRST WINNER OF "INNOVATION IN THE CLASSROOM"

**Fargo, ND Police Officer to share \$2,000 Prize with school where he teaches;
Honored by peers and The National Road Safety Foundation**

NEW YORK, July 29, 2010 -- Officer Michael Clower, a nine-year veteran of the Fargo (ND) Police Department, is the first winner of the NASRO/National Road Safety Foundation "Innovation in the Classroom Award." The award, which will be presented at the national meeting of NASRO in Louisville next week, recognizes innovative teaching of traffic safety in schools by a school resource officer (SRO), and it carries with it a \$2,000 honorarium shared by the SRO and the school where he teaches.

Ironically, much of Officer Clower's traffic safety education in the public and private schools where he works has not been in the classroom, but outside in school parking lots and elsewhere in the community.

In his four years as an SRO, he has brought his classes outside to see demonstrations of the Rollover Simulator before Prom Season. He, along with fellow police officers he recruited, have been greeting students in the morning as they enter the school parking lot, handing them free music downloads if they have their seat belts buckled. He's gone out to area businesses to enlist their help by sponsoring give-away items like I-tune downloads and ice scrapers (a much-needed item during the North Dakota winters).

Officer Clower tries to incorporate traffic safety learning into the material his students are learning in their classes. At the start of each year he sends a memo to the teaching staff, with ideas that can dovetail with ongoing classroom work.

Last year, one of his ideas caught the interest of the math teacher and an innovative idea came to life. In math class, the students learned the formula commonly used by police when reconstructing a traffic crash. They then went out to the school parking lot where they found a staged 2-car crash. By measuring the skid marks and employing the formula they had learned in class, the students were able to calculate the speed of the cars.

"Most people assume you see skid marks only when a car is moving at a high rate of speed," Officer Clower noted. "The students were surprised at the amount of damage a relatively low-speed crash can do, and what a difference 5 or 10 miles per hour can make in whether or not there's time to stop a vehicle to avoid a crash."

The lesson is now part of the math curriculum and the crash calculations are used as part of the students' grades. "It such as easy lesson to put together and it delivers an important message to young drivers about speed," Officer Clower said. He says he enjoys being a school resource officer. "It's a fun and rewarding job. I get to make a difference in the lives of young people every day."

Officer Clower will be honored next Wednesday, Aug. 4, at the national conference of NASRO, in Louisville, KY, where some 1,500 police officers and school administrators will convene.

For more than 45 years, The National Road Safety Foundation (NRSF), a non-profit organization, has created driver education programs for free distribution to schools, police, traffic safety agencies, youth advocacy groups and others. NRSF has programs on speed and aggression, drinking and driving, and drowsy driving. Its newest program, for release later this year, will cover distracted driving. For more information, visit www.nrsf.org.

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