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## UAB UTC Well Represented at Second Annual Distracted Driving Summit

Dr. Russ Fine, Dr. Despina Stavrinos and Ms. Crystal Franklin were invited by US DOT Secretary Ray LaHood to attend the 2010 Distracted Driving Summit held in Washington, DC in September. The Summit brought together leading transportation officials, safety advocates, law enforcement, industry representatives, researchers and victims affected by distraction-related crashes to address challenges and identify opportunities for national anti-distracted driving efforts. In 2009, Drs. Fine and Stavrinos were invited to attend Sec. LaHood's first Distracted Driving Summit. Inspired by Sec. LaHood's passion and the seriousness of the issue, the UAB UTC, in conjunction with the University Transportation Center for Alabama (UTCA), hosted the Alabama Distracted Driving Summit on December 3, 2009.

The Summit provided an excellent opportunity to learn more about anti-distracted driving efforts that have been put in place across the country since the original national Summit in 2009. In addition, it provided an environment conducive to the exploration of new partnerships thereby strengthening, further, the anti-distracted driving movement.

*“We are in this together.  
We will solve this together.  
We will not let up  
until distracted driving is  
a behavior of the past.”*

SEC. RAY LAHOOD



Ms. Crystal Franklin, Dr. Despina Stavrinos, US DOT Secretary Ray LaHood, and Dr. Russ Fine at the 2010 Distracted Driving Summit in Washington, DC.



## EDUCATION

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## Annie Artiga Garner Selected as 2010-2011 UAB UTC Student of the Year



Mrs. Annie Artiga Garner  
2010-2011 UAB UTC  
Student of the Year

UAB UTC leadership named Annie Artiga Garner, MA, as the 2010-2011 UAB UTC Student of the Year. Mrs. Garner will receive a \$1,000 award along with a trip to Washington, DC, in early January, 2011 where she will participate in the CUTC Awards Banquet honoring Students of the Year from UTCs across the country.

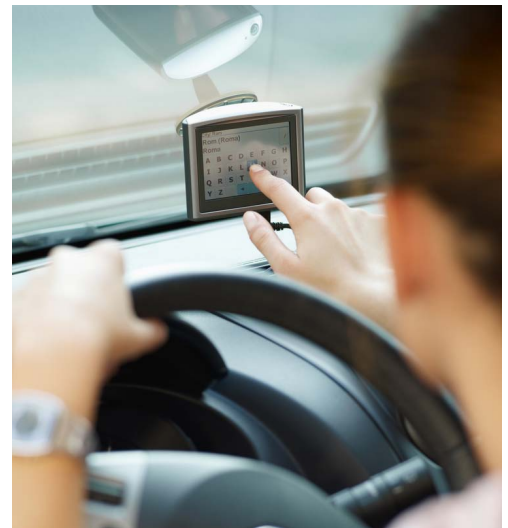
Mrs. Garner is a Graduate Assistant at the University of Alabama at Birmingham University Transportation Center and a Doctoral Candidate in Medical/Clinical Psychology. She graduated with a Bachelors of Science with Honors in Psychology in 2006. She received her MA degree in Clinical/Medical Psychology from UAB in 2009. She has published four manuscripts and has presented research findings at over a dozen scientific meetings.

In addition to her impressive academic achievements, Mrs. Garner was specifically selected to receive the Student of the Year award because of her unique contributions to the transportation field. She has been affiliated with the UAB UTC for the past two years as a Research Assistant studying the psychological aspects of distracted driving under the mentorship of Dr. Despina Stavrinou (UAB UTC Student of the Year, 2007-08). The UAB UTC, given its unique focus and setting within the RITA network of Centers, has

exposed students from a myriad of disciplines and backgrounds to the career opportunities available in transportation research. As with past Students of the Year, Mrs. Garner is no exception. She is an early career minority female from a “non-traditional” transportation discipline. The UAB UTC seeks out the best and brightest, and bringing professionals and students in from diverse fields or disciplines is the hallmark of the UAB UTC education program.

Prior to her affiliation with the UAB UTC, Mrs. Garner’s research program had focused solely on ADHD, but since starting work at UAB UTC, she has become particularly interested in risky driving behavior among adolescents with ADHD. Her UTC-driven dissertation project focuses on transportation-related issues in adolescents with ADHD. Mrs. Garner expects to receive her PhD in Medical/Clinical Psychology in 2012.

*Please join the UAB UTC in congratulating Annie Artiga Garner on her contributions to the transportation field.*



## UAB UTC Director Joins Transit Advisory Committee



Dr. Russ Fine recently accepted an at large invitation to become a member of the Metro Area Express (MAX) Transit Advisory Committee (TAC). Dr. Fine will represent the UAB UTC and provide input, guidance and assistance to the citizens' advocacy group that was created in 1971 by the Alabama Legislature.

The purpose of TAC is to serve as advisors to the Board of Directors and the Executive Director of the Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA). The TAC's overarching objective is to function as a citizen's advocacy group dedicated to improving and expanding the Birmingham metropolitan area's public transit system. This includes providing forums for public and special-needs

transportation users and stakeholders in the metropolitan area. This group is dedicated to working toward the improvement of MAX transit services and programs.



The TAC is encouraged to provide input to the BJCTA Board of Directors, to Mr. Peter Behrman, BJCTA's Executive Director, and by advising member cities on transportation issues of local, regional and statewide significance.

TAC's efforts are intended to assist BJCTA by supplying appropriate mobility and modal elements in public transportation policy. TAC work is also intended to ensure that resources available for transportation planning and delivery are leveraged to the highest extent possible to implement public transportation projects. TAC does not have independent duties or authority to take actions that will bind BJCTA's Board of Directors.

The TAC meets on the first Saturday of every month at 10:00 a.m. in the second floor board room of Central Station. The meetings are open to the public and persons interested in public transit are encouraged to attend. Central Station, 1735 Morris Ave., Birmingham, Alabama 35203.

More information about the Metro Area Express (MAX) and the Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) can be accessed at <http://www.bjcta.org>



## Alabamians Against Distracted Driving Launches Website

<http://alabamiansagainstdistracteddriving.com>

Alabamians Against Distracted Driving (AADD) is a non-profit, grassroots educational organization operating out of Birmingham, Alabama that is loosely affiliated with the UAB University Transportation Center. AADD was established in response to US Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's appeal to public-minded citizens to become involved in the "anti-distracted driving" movement.

AADD's objective is to educate drivers, young and old alike, about the dangers of texting while driving AND the danger of speaking on a cell phone while driving, even if you are using a hands free device.

The organization has gained 2,000 members since June and is part of a national movement motivated by Focus Driven and other campaigns aimed at texting and cell phone use while driving. While distractions can also include eating, applying makeup, changing the radio station or shuffling through papers, safety advocates list cell phone use, texting and operating other electronic devices as major culprits for distracted driver accidents.

Armed with a new data collecting program, the University of Alabama's Center for Advanced Public Safety found that 1,466 wrecks in Alabama over the past 13 months involved drivers distracted by cell phones and other electronic devices.

While 1,466 crashes account for only a fraction of the state's crashes, that's 1,466 accidents that may have been avoided had the driver been paying closer attention to the road.

In collaboration with the UAB UTC, AADD has provided anti-distracted driving bumper stickers to local churches, law enforcement agencies, and the community at-large. These bumper stickers are proudly displayed on all 300 Jefferson County Sheriff Department vehicles. Additionally, local churches were provided with a DVD containing distracted driving facts and a public service announcement. The DVDs were distributed to their congregations.

Dee Fine, founder of MADD in Alabama and former national vice-president of MADD, is the founder of Alabamians Against Distracted Driving. For more information about AADD, visit their new website <http://alabamiansagainstdistracteddriving.com>.



## TRIP Lab® Welcomes New Student Research Assistants



The knowledge and skills gained through experiential, hands-on learning is invaluable for the training of future transportation researchers. The Translational Research for Injury Prevention (TRIP) Laboratory, housed within the UAB UTC, realizes the importance of experience and is committed to providing career development opportunities for students from a variety of academic disciplines to learn how to conduct transportation-related research. Over a dozen student researchers worked in the TRIP Lab during the 2009-2010 academic year and twelve new student research assistants were welcomed this Fall semester.

Students from a variety of academic disciplines apply for student research positions with the TRIP Lab. This year, students from psychology, sociology, marketing, health care organization and policy, epidemiology, biology and medicine will all be learning about transportation research and how it applies to their chosen field. "One of the strengths of our lab is the diversity of the students involved. We have students with strong backgrounds in behavioral science, epidemiology, health

care organization and policy and medicine who each uniquely contribute towards achieving our ultimate goal of gaining a better understanding of teen motor vehicle crashes," says Dr. Stavrinou.

In addition to their typical research assistant duties for Dr. Stavrinou's distracted driving research projects, each student in the TRIP laboratory develops a personal project to help further develop their skills as a researcher in the field of transportation. These projects range from submitting an abstract to a conference to developing training manuals for IRB approved protocols. Each student develops their project based on their chosen discipline or career goals.

For example, Undergraduate Research Assistant, Ben McManus, is developing a training protocol that focuses on boosting productivity and work efficiency among TRIP Lab members. This project has direct relevance to his chosen career path: Industrial/Organizational Psychology and will enhance his vita as he applies for doctoral study in Fall 2011. Ashley Gentry, TRIP Lab Undergraduate Research Assistant, has developed a detailed recruitment plan that will prove to be useful for future TRIP Lab research studies and has also expanded the scope of Ashley's research skill set which may prove to be useful as she applies for graduate study in clinical psychology next Fall.

Some of the students are not only able to gain valuable experience in the transportation field but also to earn course credit while working in the lab. This unique experience is partially made possible through UAB's Department of Psychology and School of Public Health, which allow students to earn course credit for their work with actual research projects. This arrangement provides students with an excellent opportunity for experiential learning because the time for participating in research opportunities is not in competition with time for taking traditional classes – instead, the two activities are combined.

Although less than two years old, the TRIP Lab is quickly becoming an important source of transportation-related research, education and technology transfer. Its multi-disciplinary approach attracts student researchers and other collaborators from academic areas outside of the traditional transportation fields. This collaboration across fields and strong guidance from Dr. Stavrinou and the UAB UTC creates an invigorating environment fostering innovative, effective approaches to transportation issues.

For more information about the TRIP Laboratory, visit [www.triplaboratory.com](http://www.triplaboratory.com).



Now you can follow the UABTRIPLAB on Twitter!

Go to [Twitter.com](http://Twitter.com), [UABTRIPLAB](http://UABTRIPLAB) for the latest news.



### 2010 – 2011 TRIP STUDENT RESEARCHERS.

#### SEATED (L to R):

Crystal Franklin MPH, Annie Artiga Garner MA, Khushboo Jhala, Jennifer Jones.

#### STANDING (L to R):

Parul Kapoor, Sharon Welburn, Barnett Chenoweth, Kathleen Hamrick, Ben McManus, Dr. Despina Stavrinou, Dr. Meetesh Mahajan, Ashley Gentry.

(not photographed: Ayushi Amin, Katie Bates)

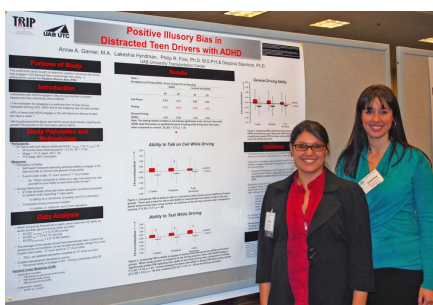


Ms. Sharon Welburn, Dr. Despina Stavrinou, Mrs. Annie Artiga Garner and Ms. Khushboo Jhala at the 2010 CHADD Annual Conference

## TRIP Lab® Researchers Present at CHADD Conference

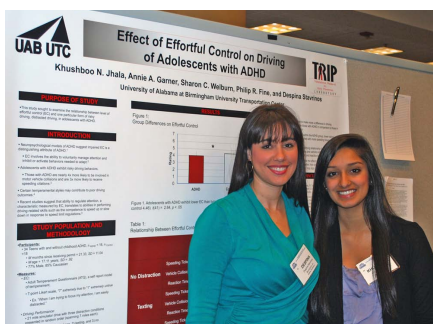
Dr. Despina Stavrinou, director of the TRIP Lab and the UAB UTC post-doctoral fellow, along with TRIP Lab research assistants Annie Garner, Khushboo Jhala and Sharon Welburn, traveled to Atlanta this past November to present the results of their UAB UTC-sponsored research at the 22nd Annual Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) International Conference on AD/HD. The Annual CHADD Conference is the major research, practice and public information conference dedicated to issues related to ADHD. The annual conference brings together researchers, clinicians, educators, parents, other caregivers and adults with ADHD.

Mrs. Garner presented a poster entitled, "Positive Illusory Bias in Distracted Teen Drivers with ADHD." Her research examined whether individuals with ADHD engage in distracted driving because they overestimate their ability to participate in distracting activities while driving. This phenomenon is known as Positive Illusory Bias. The provisional findings from this pilot study suggest that perceptions of ability to engage in distracted driving are somewhat over-inflated in teens with ADHD. Should larger studies replicate these findings, interventions focusing on reducing risky driving practices among teens with ADHD should target such misperceptions.



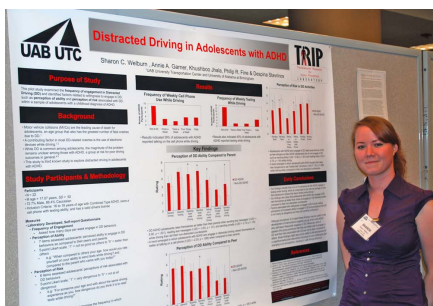
Mrs. Annie Artiga Garner and Dr. Despina Stavrinou alongside her poster "Positive Illusory Bias in Distracted Teen Drivers with ADHD"

"Effect of Effortful Control on Driving of Adolescents with ADHD" was presented by Ms. Jhala. This study examined the relationship between level of effortful control and distracted driving in adolescents with ADHD. Effortful control involves the ability to voluntarily manage attention and inhibit or activate behaviors needed to adapt. This study is the first to provide empirical data which suggests poor effortful control is related to risky driving patterns in adolescents with ADHD. Based on these results, future studies may explore ADHD pharmaceutical or behavioral interventions which may enhance effortful control to benefit young drivers.



Dr. Despina Stavrinou and Ms. Khushboo Jhala alongside her poster "Effect of Effortful Control on Driving of Adolescents with ADHD"

Ms. Welburn's poster, "Distracted Driving in Adolescents with ADHD," presented research that described the frequency of engagement in distracted driving and identified factors related to willingness to engage in distracted driving within a sample of adolescents with a diagnosis of ADHD. The study's results indicate that 4 out of 10 teens with ADHD text while driving. This number is comparable to the national average of all adolescent drivers who text while driving. However, adolescents with ADHD who engage in distracted driving rate themselves as better than others at engaging in distracted driving behaviors when compared to their non-distracted counterparts. Furthermore, these teens also believe that distracted driving is not nearly as dangerous as many are currently portraying it. These findings will be useful in the development of interventions targeting young drivers with ADHD.



Ms. Sharon Welburn alongside her poster "Distracted Driving in Adolescents with ADHD".

Each student's research was well received at the conference. All three of the presentations were based on preliminary results from the UAB UTC-sponsored study, "A Pilot Study for Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD," under the supervision and mentorship of Dr. Stavrinou, the study's Principal Investigator. Visit [www.uab.edu/utc](http://www.uab.edu/utc) to view the posters presented at this conference.



Now you can follow the UABUTC on Twitter!

Go to [Twitter.com, UABUTC](http://Twitter.com/UABUTC) for the latest news and information from the UAB UTC.

## UAB UTC's Research in Progress Seminar Series Recap

Jeffrey Graveline, JD, MLIS



Kelsey Eliasson, BA



In conjunction the UAB Injury Control Research Center (ICRC), the University Transportation Center for Alabama (UTCA), the Southern Consortium for Injury Biomechanics (SCIB), and the Children's Hospital of Alabama, the UAB UTC conducts and co-sponsors frequent educational presentations under the organizational banner of the Research In Progress Seminar Series (RIPSS). These seminars and webinars provide a forum for research scientists and allied professionals to describe their activities, progress, problems, provisional interpretation of data as well as provisional findings and conclusions. Of equal, if not greater, importance is the fact that the forums provide opportunities for the investigators making the presentations to acquire feedback, guidance and advice from those in attendance – typically a diverse group of faculty, staff, students and other vested parties from throughout the state– whether in person or via the internet.

For more information and an up to date schedule of upcoming RIPPS please visit [www.uab.edu/utc](http://www.uab.edu/utc) or subscribe to our Twitter feed (UABUTC). To present at a future UAB UTC RIPSS please contact the UAB UTC at [uabutc@ccc.uab.edu](mailto:uabutc@ccc.uab.edu).

Adam W. Scott  
Student, UAB School  
of Medicine



Dr. Bill King,  
Director, Southeast  
Child Safety Institute



Candid photos of  
a few seminar  
attendees.



### Recent Research in Progress Seminars/Webinars include:

**DYNAMIC EVACUATION CLEARANCE TIME TOOL**  
Brock Long and Ginger Boling  
Alabama Emergency Management Agency

**RIDE SAFE- HOW INFORMATION ON SAFETY AND HEALTH IS SHARED IN AN ONLINE MOTORCYCLE COMMUNITY:**  
Preliminary Findings and Methodological Challenges  
Timothy M. Hale, MA & Kelsey Eliasson, BA  
UAB Departments of Medical Sociology and Public Health

**GRAD SCHOOL PREPARATION: PERSONAL STATEMENTS**  
Melissa McBrayer, MEd  
Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS)  
Investigator Advocate

**COPYRIGHT AND YOU: A PRIMER FOR RESEARCHERS**  
Jeffrey Graveline, JD, MLIS  
UAB Mervyn H. Sterne Library

**SMARTDRIVE SAFETY, A SMARTDRIVE BRIEFING**  
Lee Schulz, MBA  
SmartDrive Systems

**BABY SAFETY SHOWERS TO BRING SAFE MAY FLOWERS**  
Co-Sponsored by the Southeast Child Safety Initiative-Children's Hospital  
Adam W. Scott, Student  
UAB School of Medicine

## UAB UTC Researchers in Demand

The UAB UTC and its affiliated researchers are making a name for themselves in the transportation field. UAB UTC staff and researchers are frequently sought out to serve as collaborators, reviewers and expert sources for local, national and international news. A few examples include:

- Dr. Despina Stavrinos was interviewed by local news media about the UAB UTC funded research project, A Pilot Study for Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD. [CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)
- Researcher Dr. Despina Stavrinos was recently interviewed by USA Today regarding parental influence on driving. For the full article, [CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)
- Dr. Matt Trowbridge was interviewed by regional newspapers to discuss the effects of urban sprawl on pre-hospital response time. [CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)
- Local news media interviewed Dr. Despina Stavrinos regarding a controversial report released by the Highway Loss Data Institute. [CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)
- Dr. Despina Stavrinos recently served as a reviewer for Transportation Research Board (TRB) Committee ANB60/ Committee for the Safe Mobility of Older Persons. She helped select papers for presentation during the Annual TRB Meeting to be held in January 2011.
- Dr. Matt Trowbridge was recently a guest on NPR's Evening Edition to discuss urban sprawl and the reliability of ambulance response times from fatal motor vehicle crashes. [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)



## Communication Gap Between Emergency Dispatchers and Responders

The design of the modern, centralized emergency response dispatch center offers many benefits in terms of improved communication and cooperation among response agencies. However, one issue that still remains unresolved is the potential disconnect between dispatching decisions and conditions in the field. Two UAB UTC-sponsored research studies – directed by Andrew Sullivan, PE and Gerald McGwin, PhD respectively – are working together to examine the possible communication gap by surveying a large group of Alabama’s emergency dispatchers and emergency responders. The full results of the emergency responder survey have not yet been published, but based on preliminary results, the disconnect is evident.

While approximately 60% of emergency responders reported that they encounter traffic congestion during an emergency call only ‘sometimes’ or ‘rarely’, over 90% of dispatchers believed that responders encounter congestion only ‘sometimes’ or ‘rarely’. This would indicate that congestion is a more common issue than dispatchers are aware.

While half of dispatchers in urban areas and over 60% in rural areas reported that they have provided information in congestion to units in the field, only 28% of emergency responders stated that they have received congestion information from a dispatcher. This could indicate a communication problem between dispatchers and responders.

One point the two groups did agree upon was automatic crash notification systems. Similar percentages of dispatchers and responders (about 86%) felt that automatic crash notification systems such as OnStar® will help to reduce emergency response times.

The UAB UTC, through its sponsored research, is striving to help enable emergency response centers deliver fast and efficient care, thereby reducing morbidity and mortality from MVCs as well as other health emergencies. Clear communication between dispatchers and responders, detailed information about the obstacles facing the emergency units (e.g., traffic congestion), and advanced knowledge of the injuries sustained by crash victims will help emergency responders deliver the best, fastest care possible.

## UAB UTC Sponsored Research Presented to Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

In October 2010, Dr. Despina Stavrinos and UAB UTC Program Administrator Crystal Franklin traveled to Philadelphia to present the final results of the CHOP-CChIPS funded component of the distracted driving study (which specifically examined whether stimulant medications improve driving performance of those with ADHD) to their Industrial Advisory Board.

Dr. Despina Stavrinos’ UAB UTC-sponsored research project, A Pilot Study for Distracted Driving in Teens With and Without ADHD, was co-funded by the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s Center for Child Injury Prevention Studies (CHOP-CChIPS). CHOP-CChIPS unites

Children’s Hospital and University of Pennsylvania researchers with R&D leaders throughout the automotive and insurance industries to translate research findings into tangible innovations in safety technology and public education programs.

The presentation made by Dr. Stavrinos was very well received by the Advisory Board, and particularly by her CChIPS mentor, Mr. Uwe Meissner of Volkswagen of America.

## UAB UTC

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# Mark Your Calendars!

For current information  
on conferences and  
meetings please visit

[www.uab.edu/utc](http://www.uab.edu/utc)

We invite you to visit the UAB UTC  
website [www.uab.edu/utc](http://www.uab.edu/utc) for current  
information on upcoming transportation-  
related conferences and meetings.

In addition, we invite you to visit the  
website of Alabamians Against  
Distracted Driving, a private sector,  
non-profit organization to which UAB  
UTC faculty and staff provide technical  
advice and guidance  
<http://alabamiansagainstdistracteddriving.com>

## 2011 Events:

### January 22 – 23

14TH ANNUAL COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY  
TRANSPORTATION CENTERS (CUTC)  
AWARDS BANQUET AND WINTER MEETING  
Omni Shoreham Hotel. Washington, DC

### January 23 – 27

THE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD (TRB)  
90TH ANNUAL MEETING  
Marriott Wardman Park, Omni Shoreham, and  
Washington Hilton Hotels. Washington, DC

### March 30 – April 1

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)  
SCIENCE CONFERENCE – FIFTH ANNUAL UNIVERSITY  
NETWORK SUMMIT: CATASTROPHES AND COMPLEX  
SYSTEMS: TRANSPORTATION  
Renaissance Hotel. Washington, DC

### June 13 – 15

CUTC SUMMER MEETING  
Portland, OR

### October 16 – 20

18TH WORLD CONGRESS ON INTELLIGENT  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS  
Orange County Convention Center. Orlando, FL

The UAB University Transportation Center is made possible by Grant No. DTRT06-G-0048 from the US Department of Transportation, Research and Innovative Technology Administration to the UAB Injury Control Research Center.

[www.uab.edu/utc](http://www.uab.edu/utc)

THE UAB UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION CENTER **UPDATE**



## UAB University Transportation Center

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