

June 2015

The Midwest Transportation Center (MTC)—the U.S. DOT's Region 7 University Transportation Center (UTC) serving Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska—is in the third year of its **multi-million dollar** UTC award through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology. Housed and administered at **Iowa State University's Institute for Transportation**, the MTC is a consortium including the University of Missouri–Columbia, University of Missouri–St. Louis, Wichita State University, Creighton University (Omaha, NE), and Harris-Stowe State University (St. Louis, MO), a historically black university.

Since the UTC program was initiated in 1987, Iowa State University–led consortia have won four of six regional UTC competitions and one UTC Tier-1 competition.

The MTC's theme is **Data Driven Performance Measures for Enhanced Infrastructure Condition, Safety, and Project Delivery**. The MTC addresses regional issues related to the theme through a strategically focused program that is synergistic with U.S. DOT priorities and MAP-21 goals, with State of Good Repair as the ultimate objective.



**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Institute for Transportation

## Making a Real Difference

# Midwest Transportation Center

*... in Iowa and Beyond*

### Go! Further Workshop for High School Students

"I have really **learned to self-advocate** and **be okay with myself**. I can be what I want to be, and **I'm a leader**. I also have realized how I handle myself and what I still need to work on."

– Seth Bolen, Clinton High School

#### Goal

To help participating students gain a better understanding of the professional world of transportation engineering.

#### Objective

To provide the participants with hands-on leadership training and education on how to effectively work in teams.

#### Field trips

The program also included various hands-on activities and field trips, such as visiting a **buttonbush wetland mitigation site**, giving back at a local area **food pantry**, and traversing the **ropes course** in Marshalltown, Iowa.

#### About

The weeklong program was facilitated by Maureen Griffin, the STEM Academy director at Hoover High School in Des Moines, Iowa. It included **presentations from Iowa State University's (ISU's) Institute for Transportation (InTrans) and Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) engineers and educators:**

- Shauna Hallmark (Director, Institute for Transportation, ISU)
- Neal Hawkins (Director, CTRE, Institute for Transportation, ISU)
- Sandra Larson (Director, Systems Operations Bureau, Iowa DOT)
- James Nelson (Engineer, Dept. Bridges and Structures, Iowa DOT)
- Kevin Jones (Engineer, Dept. Construction and Materials, Iowa DOT)
- Allison Smyth (Technician, Iowa DOT)
- Mary Kay Solberg (Specialist, Dept. Location and Environment, Iowa DOT)
- As well as Clint Stephens and Luke Lefebvre who provided leadership training



Go! Further Workshop students pose in front of driving simulator at end of workshop



Student “test drives” driving simulator housed at InTrans



Group of students learning trust and problem solving skills



CTRE Director Neal Hawkins speaks inside Traffic Operations Laboratory



The ropes course located in Marshalltown, Iowa

## Participation

Nineteen students from around central Iowa attended the **Go! Further Workshop**. It was made up of 2 sophomores, 16 juniors, and 1 senior.

Participating high school students came from nine school districts:

- Des Moines Community School District (7 students)
- Ames Community School District (2 students)
- Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District (2 students)
- Gilbert Community School District (2 students)
- Marshalltown Community School District (2 students)
- Southeast Polk Community School District (1 student)
- Clinton Community School District (1 student)
- Boone Community School District (1 student)
- Ballard Community School District (1 student)

## Participant Quotes

“We involved the students in a variety of activities aimed at improving **self-efficacy**, increasing **self-reliance**, improving **teamwork skills**, developing **leadership skills**, improving **communication** and **trust**, as well as developing successful **risk-taking**, **cooperation**, **compassion**, and **respect** for others — all while having a whole lot of fun.”  
 – Maureen Griffin, Lead Facilitator

“Some **qualities I developed** were mainly **problem solving**. Not a lot of situations came up, but when they did **as a team** we found ways to fix them.”  
 – Jasmine Moreno, North High School