



## 2007 Instructor of the Year category winners – Round 1

**D**efensive Driving Course Instructors who go above and beyond course training responsibilities to demonstrate leadership, dedication and a desire to impact the lives of students will be honored at the DDC Awards Banquet Sept. 20 during the National Safety Council's 2008 Congress & Expo in Anaheim, CA. Eight winners from seven standard Instructor-certified programs and 11 state-specific certified programs will be featured in this issue and the September/October issue of *Driver Trainer* newsletter. The United States alone has more than 7,000 certified DDC Instructors. DDC congratulates the winners.

### **DDC-Professional Truck Driver Roger Ecker**

Roger Ecker is an Instructor for DDC-Professional Truck Driver. It is his commitment to safety both on the job and in his civic involvement that made him a standout among his peers.

He is the northern safety training manager of Towne Air Freight – a full-service trucking company based in South Bend, IN. For

Through his personal experience as a volunteer firefighter and an EMT, Ecker said he is able to share stories that will impact his students on a deeper level.

the past 10 years he has taught DDC courses for the National Safety Council, and in the last two years has taught DDC for emergency services. He has been a volunteer firefighter since 1989, and during that time served in several capacities includ-

ing instructor and fire chief. He has been an emergency medical technician for 14 years.

Through his personal experience as a volunteer firefighter and an EMT, Ecker said he is able to share stories that will impact his students on a deeper level. "Through the fire side, you really see the need for safety of real people accelerated," he said.

Ecker's introduction to the safety world began while he worked as a mechanic for Towne Air Freight, his employer of 14 years

now. While still driving commercial motor vehicles and working as a mechanic, Ecker took on the safety role to train other drivers.

Ecker said he likes to investigate vehicular crashes in a way that will help others see what can be done to prevent one from happening again. Drivers need to know their lives can be changed forever in a crash, he said.

"The bottom line is somebody's life – sometimes some people's lives – won't ever be the same," he said. "If we don't critique ourselves as drivers and critique ourselves every day, we're setting ourselves up for failure."

DDC 2006 Instructor of the Year John Pinckney said Ecker "has dedicated his livelihood to assisting people within the community and the country." This dedication includes more than 1,600 hours of instructing, guiding, and leading students in safe driving practices of commercial motor vehicles with the National Safety Council's DDC-Professional Truck Driver. "This dedication has not only improved the lives of the students instructed, but each person with whom each of his students has shared the roadways," Pinckney said.

### **DDC-8 Jack Hansen**

Jack Hansen has more than 30 years of experience in safety instruction teaching at every level, from high school students to large corporations.

Hansen began a career in driver safety instruction in 1968 by conducting the 8-hour DDC class for Caterpillar Tractor employees. He moved on to teach DDC-8 to sales employees at Kraft Foods in five regions and taught DDC-Professional Truck Driver to Kraft transport drivers in California,

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*Peggy Miller, director of community development, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

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Pennsylvania, Texas and Illinois. Additional clients include Verizon (formerly General Telephone and Electronics), Nationwide Cellular Service Inc., and the National Loss Control Service Corp., a subsidiary of Kemper Insurance Co.

Hansen, a certified OSHA instructor, also has taught graduate-level safety administration courses at Northern Illinois University and is the adjunct faculty member teaching safety at Illinois Institute of Technology and Illinois Central College.

Since 1988, Hansen has been a member of the DDC International Advisory Committee, with which he helped revise the DDC-4, DDC-8 and DDC-PTD courses.

"His expertise in the field and his many years of teaching has helped to shape each revision," said Peggy Miller, director of community development at the College of Lake County in Grayslake, IL. "His emphasis on ensuring the concept is understandable and teachable is always foremost in his intentions."

His contributions to safety continue as a member of the National Safety Council Food and Beverage Committee and the Motor Transportation Committee. He also is a member of the National Fire Protection Association and a former chairman of the editorial board for an American Society of Safety Engineers publication.

With enthusiasm, humor and extensive knowledge of safety, Hansen has conducted seminars and lectures for the National Safety Council, North American Management Society, American Society of Safety Engineers, Bradley University and Northern Illinois University.

## **DDC-6-NY**

### **Kenneth M. Lucente**

Kenneth M. Lucente's love for teaching has helped him make several contributions to promoting driver safety during the past 25 years he has worked for the U.S. Postal Service.

Lucente began his career in safety as a tractor trailer driver in the early 1980s. The Long Island, NY, native logged more than 1 million miles across the United States with his 18-wheeler and later was asked to take on the responsibility as a driver instructor. He was a national trainer for the U.S. Postal Service from 1992 to 2005. After he received his National Safety Council DDC Instructor certification in 1986, he taught 1,231

**One of Lucente's major contributions to driver safety was his assistance in writing the new driver program for the U.S. Postal Service in 2005.**

classes during a 10-year period, has trained about 18,450 students in the DDC-6-NY Point and Insurance Reduction Program, and has been an Instructor Trainer for the council since 1988. He continues to devote his life to safety as a council DDC Instructor and Instructor Trainer.

One of his major contributions to driver safety was his assistance in writing the new driver program for the U.S. Postal Service in 2005. Lucente's love for sharing knowledge motivated him as he traveled around the country to deliver the new program at numerous post offices.

Overall, he said, his work for DDC and the U.S. Postal Service is "very gratifying."

## **DDC-6-TX**

### **Robert S. Reeder**

Robert S. Reeder still is surprised, when he enters a room and the students applaud, that his reputation as a safety instructor precedes him.

Known to his students as "El Profe," Reeder's ability to use engaging stories to teach and his bilingual skills have made him a valued safety consultant and instructor. As a pioneer in bilingual safety training, Reeder was one of the first to translate many of the National Safety Council's safety manuals into Spanish. He is an Instructor and Instructor Trainer. But the Brownsville, TX, native's contributions to safety began long before he joined the council.

Reeder earned bachelor's degrees in English and Spanish in 1969 from the University of Houston and spent a year in the U.S. military. He earned his master's degree in teaching from the University of Houston while he worked for Trees Inc., a tree service company in Houston. His reputation as a solid translator earned him a job as safety director for Trees Inc. There, Reeder's hands-on, enthusiastic teaching approach went beyond the classroom and extended into the field. His passion to teach in a manner that would help others improve their lives also assisted several of his former Hispanic students in gaining U.S. citizenship.

A love of diverse people and the diversity of his job kept him motivated during the 30 years he worked there. He has since

**"To me, it's important that I get it right and that I continue to train. I have to hit a home run every day."**

*Robert S. Reeder*

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**James A. Solomon**  
DDC Program  
Development  
and Training  
Director

The Defensive Driving Courses International Advisory Committee met in April and decided on the format and design of the new 3rd edition of **DDC-Alive at 25**. The program will continue to be four hours long, including three 10-minute breaks. Working session titles are:

Session 1: RUA Potential Statistic?

Session 2: RUA Good Judge of Driving Hazards?

Session 3: RUA Person in Control?

Session 4: RUA Person Ready to Take Charge?

The program features several enhancements. Each session has approximately six minutes of new video. When activity directions are given in the Instructor Manual, they will be in two formats: Each exercise will include activity instructions for 16- to 20-year-olds and for 21- to 24-year-olds. This will allow the Instructor to facilitate the program for either mixed classes or age-specific classes by selecting material designed specifically for the student age group. Topics that can be used with U.S. military students, as well as a new PowerPoint presentation, also are included.

All materials will be ready to ship on Jan. 5, 2009. All Training Centers must transition to the new course no later than March 31, 2009. Webcast rollouts of the new program will be held in mid-December of this year.

Attention Instructor Trainers for DDC-Alive at 25: Please carefully plan your Instructor Development Course calendar. The National Safety Council will not issue Alive at 25 course numbers for November and December 2008.

Also going on shelf at the same time is **Teaching DDC-Alive at 25**. This is a totally new 20-hour Instructor Development Course for the 3rd edition of Alive at 25. Instructor Trainers must have the new Teaching DDC-Alive at 25 kit in their possession prior to teaching their first Instructor Development Course in this new program.

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Jan. 5, 2009, also will mark the launch of **DDC-Attitudinal Dynamics of Driving-Young Adult**. This program is intended to be the next level for some of our Alive at 25 students. Alive at 25 is currently used in two types of training. Many high school students take it on a volunteer basis: they need it to obtain a parking pass at school, a parent's company provides it as a benefit, they take it to get their learner's permit early, or local clubs or churches offer it. Other young drivers are ordered to take the course by their local court or state driver's license authority. In either case, the question has been asked: "What's next?" If student drivers do not adopt the concepts in Alive at 25 the first time, it isn't logical to have them take it again.

This new program (taught in six or eight hours) is being developed through a close working relationship with the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina and the North Carolina state court system. Judges know that DDC-ADD is an excellent program, but they do not want young adult offenders in the same classroom as older, multiple offenders. (Some believe older offenders may discuss driving behaviors in the classroom that the court would prefer young violators did not hear.) The redevelopment of the program gives us another chance at exercises on speed- and alcohol-related convictions, which are the top reasons drivers are ordered into this program.

**Current DDC-ADD:** Instructor Manual, Course Guide\*, PowerPoint\*\*, 2 videos

**New DDC-ADD-YA:** New Instructor Manual, Course Guide\*, new PowerPoint\*\*, 3 videos\*\*\*

\*The current DDC-ADD course guide has a number of note pages at the end of each session. This was designed to allow use of the same course guide in each program, in order to keep costs reasonable for the training centers. When the new course guide is printed, it will at first only go to training centers teaching DDC-ADD-YA. As the supply of the current course guide is exhausted, everyone will use the new course guide. Instructors teaching the standard DDC-ADD course will use the pages in the course guide outlined in their Instructor Manual. Instructors using DDC-ADD-YA will use the pages outlined in their Instructor Manual.

\*\*The same system will be used in the development of the PowerPoint with two versions of the PowerPoint on one disc.

\*\*\*Because the DDC-ADD videos are purchased and not leased, agencies teaching DDC-ADD-YA will need to purchase the new video. Agencies teaching the standard course will not have to buy anything else.

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prepared several English-Spanish safety manuals for the construction and tree industry. He has been teaching DDC under the National Safety Council's banner for more than 30 years.

"To me it's important that I get it right and that I continue to train," Reeder said of his teaching style. "I have to hit a home run every day ... preparation is the key. I spend as much or more time in preparation for a class at home as I do presenting the safety subject in the classroom."

Reeder still has the energy to teach Spanish to high school students, even after traveling over the past 25 years to 16 states and consulting with 21 companies. He is a certified arborist, is a certified safety instructor for the Petroleum Education Council in Texas, is certified in hydrogen sulfide safety training, is a first aid/CPR Red Cross instructor, and is certified by the National Center for Construction. He also is a lifetime member and past director of the Texas Association of Business (Houston Chapter).

## **DDC-Attitudinal Dynamics of Driving Delores Vocino**

Delores Vocino is a part-time DDC Instructor for the Mature Adult Driver Retraining Program of the National Safety Council. The Somerville, MA, native got started in safety while working for Verizon as a technician in the Central Office. Her responsibilities of testing lines and computer software programs and her clean safety record led her higher-ups to notice her potential for teaching safety. She worked for Verizon for 20 years.

Vocino now teaches DDC programs for the National Safety Council three to four times a month. She has been an Instructor since 2004 and holds certifications for the DDC-ADD program and for Junior Operator License classes for the Massachusetts

Registry of Motor Vehicles. After having trained more than 4,000 students, she said she still won't put up with any foul language or cell phone use during her classes.

Vocino also operates a day care for kindergarteners through fifth graders and has worked part-time for the last seven years as a paraprofessional for Peabody Public Schools. On top of that, she is employed part-time at a local Home Depot.

What drives her to continue to teach DDC programs is seeing nightly news reports on fatal vehicular crashes, and the need to educate drivers that their actions have a far-reaching effect, she said. A car crash can have a costly effect on people involved, as well as those people around them, she said.

"I think that's what bothers me the most, how it affects everybody else – not just the person who did the wrong thing," Vocino said.

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## **Nominate someone for the 2008 Instructor of the Year**

*Applications for the 2008 Instructor of the Year Award will be accepted from Oct. 1 until Feb. 28, 2009. Winners will be honored at the DDC Awards Banquet during the National Safety Council's 2009 Congress & Expo in Orlando, FL. More information is available on the DDC Information Highway at <http://ddcinfohighway.org>.*

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