

# Garland ISD Employees “Vote for Safety”

Each year, employees of the Garland (TX) Independent School District (ISD) average 300 injuries costing the district \$1.3 million. The Garland ISD is comprised of 7,500 employees, 56,000 students and 72 campuses. Most of the injuries are the result of slips, trips and falls.

During the fall semester 2008, in order to increase safety awareness in an interesting, humorous, and memorable way, the Garland ISD Risk Management Department developed a safety campaign called Vote for Safety. This campaign tied-in to 2008’s national presidential election.

During the Vote for Safety program, each operating location in the district selected a Campus Team Safety Leader, who was invited to a “campaign” meeting and given instructions on how to participate in the safety program:

- During the first week of each month, the risk management department sent a safety flyer to each team leader, who was asked to forward this flyer to everyone at his or her location. These flyers contained a safety quiz that participants were asked to complete and return to their team leaders.
- Before the end of the month, after team leaders received completed flyers from those who participated, they selected one person as their “Safety Person of the Month.”

- Each campus received safety points when they sent the initial flyer for each month; when they selected a safety person of the month; and when they reported other safety activities, such as conducting extra fire and lock-down drills or reporting no injuries for the month. These points were tallied throughout the school year.

“Each person selected as a monthly safety person received an award from risk management,” said Henry Kaplan, risk management specialist. “While we did not give out gold doubloons, we did distribute awards that were fun and practical, such as key chains, first aid kits and flashlights. At the end of the safety campaign in May, those campus/ departments with accumulated points were honored with riches worth more than gold... they were given appreciation and recognition in the form of a plaque that they can hang on the wall for all to see!”

Kaplan points out that “while the use of safety flyers in safety training has been around since the beginning of safety,” this project is unique because it utilized current events and tied these events to a safety awareness campaign. Its design and implementation was simple and inexpensive, yet had a large visual impact.

“Our program was a huge success,” said Alan Smith, risk manager. “We spent between \$2 and \$3 per employee to produce this program (\$15,000 to \$23,000

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Each month, *Public Risk* features a member who has gone above and beyond in a feature column titled “Member Spotlight.” Do you know someone who deserves recognition, has made a contribution or excelled in their profession?

If so, we’d like to hear from you for this exciting column, as PRIMA shines the spotlight on its members. To be considered for the Member Spotlight column, email Jennifer Ackerman at [jackerman@primacentral.org](mailto:jackerman@primacentral.org) or call 703.253.1267.

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total), and generated almost \$600,000 in savings in the workers’ compensation program this past year. The additional benefits were a boost in employee morale, reduction in the pain and suffering due to injuries, the decreased expense of doctors’ visits and most importantly, employees who are happier at work.”

For more information on Garland ISD’s Vote for Safety program, contact Alan Smith at [awsmith@garlandisd.net](mailto:awsmith@garlandisd.net). ■

