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## News

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### **U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces \$13.8 Million for Transportation Research and Education**

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced more than \$13.8 million in grants to eight University Transportation Centers (UTC) located throughout the United States to advance research and education programs that address critical transportation challenges facing the nation.

The awards were made by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA). UTCs conduct research that directly support the U.S. Department of Transportation's priorities and are a critical part of our national transportation strategy.

"By investing in research at our nation's universities, we are helping to address today's transportation needs while we train tomorrow's transportation professionals," Secretary LaHood said.

"Sound science and rigorous analysis provide a solid foundation for the development of transportation policy," said RITA Administrator Peter H. Appel. "The UTC program plays a key role in supporting collaborative research and transportation workforce development that will help us create a truly 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation system."

The only UTC associated with a medical school, the University Transportation Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB-UTC) works to address and resolve transportation safety, trauma care and injury control issues associated with the ways individuals travel. UAB-UTC will use a \$550,000 grant to continue research on ways to reduce emergency medical services response times in congested areas, traffic management emergency preparedness and distracted driving.

Headquartered at UC Berkeley, the University of California Transportation Center will use a \$2,082,800 grant to fund research on a range of issues including goods movement, air quality impact assessment, eco-friendly driving and transit-oriented development. Funds will also provide support for graduate student fellowships and technology transfer.

The NEXTRANS Center, headquartered at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., has been awarded \$2,082,800 to develop integrated and innovative solutions to transportation challenges by explicitly capturing the interactions between vehicle, traveler, and infrastructure.

The University of Maryland's Center for Integrated Transportation Systems Management will receive \$926,700 to continue developing advanced technology, improving processes, and enhancing organizational structures for the integrated management and operation of transportation facilities and corridors.

The Michigan Center for Advancing Safe Transportation throughout the Lifespan, based at the University of Michigan's Transportation Research Institute, will use a \$925,700 grant to support research, education and technology transfer activities that address the changing perceptual, cognitive and movement abilities of older drivers. It will also address the transportation needs of young people and older adults, when they are unable or choose not to drive themselves, and the elevated crash risk of young drivers.

A consortium of nine universities from five states, the Southeastern Transportation Center (STC) will use a \$2,082,800 grant to provide educational assistance to undergraduate and graduate students throughout the southeastern region, and support basic and applied research into comprehensive transportation safety. STC is based at the University of Tennessee.

Also based at the University of Tennessee, the National Transportation Research Center, Inc. will receive a \$2,000,000 grant to develop public-private research partnerships focused on improving heavy vehicle safety, and security and operational efficiency on the nation's highways.

The University of Vermont Transportation Research Center will receive \$3,243,400 to support innovative and interdisciplinary research, education and outreach on sustainable transportation system solutions.

UTCs maintain vital partnerships with regional, state and local transportation agencies to help find solutions to challenges impacting their local communities. In addition, RITA's UTC Program is now leading the efforts to develop a National Transportation Workforce Development Strategy to ensure our nation has access to a diverse, multi-disciplinary and highly skilled workforce capable of meeting the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation system.

RITA provides \$81 million in annual funding to 136 colleges and universities conducting transportation research and providing the training needed to manage today's modern transportation infrastructure through the UTC Program. UTC colleges and universities trained 32,000 practicing transportation professionals in 2009. More information about the UTC Program can be found at [www.rita.dot.gov](http://www.rita.dot.gov).

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