

Remarks of Cherri Williams, Claim Section Manager, State Farm

Good morning and thank you Glynn for the warm introduction. State Farm is proud to team up with MADD to bring the *Protecting You/Protecting Me* program to Atlanta. I am here today on behalf of State Farm to announce our gift of five pairs of *Protecting You/Protecting Me* curricula to Atlanta-area schools. As a leader in auto safety and a strong supporter of education, State Farm knows this program will be a valuable asset to the Atlanta community.

As part of our focus on education, State Farm strongly supports school-based service-learning and its role in raising academic achievement while helping solve community issues. We support service-learning because it promotes excellence in public schools and encourages students to become active participants in their education.

State Farm is proud to provide the funding for PY/PM, a unique program designed to teach children about brain research and the impact of alcohol on the developing brain. PY/PM also teaches kids how to protect themselves in a car with a driver who is not alcohol-free.

PY/PM also fills a gap for younger kids. Most prevention and education programs have been targeted to middle and high school students. However, research shows that to effect change in behavior, prevention efforts must begin at least 5 years before the risky behavior is expected to begin.

Kids today take their first drink of alcohol as early as age 12. So alcohol prevention before adolescence is critical to keeping children safe and preventing behaviors that can harm themselves and others. It is for this reason State Farm is helping to bring this lifesaving program to Georgia youth.