

# 2013 Annual Report

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Extending our Reach*

My first full year as President of Operation Lifesaver, Inc. has passed, an exciting year of change and growth. In 2013, the new Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer (OLAV) program officially opened, we launched the online Authorized Volunteer Education classroom, and Operation Lifesaver's certified presenters started becoming authorized volunteers. In order to assess the effectiveness of these changes, OLI's leadership bodies, the National Advisory Council and Board of Directors, developed OLAV program goals, objectives, and evaluation metrics.



These are our goals:

1. Reach More People With OL's Safety Message
2. Involve More People in OL Volunteer Activities
3. Increase Visibility and Awareness of Operation Lifesaver
4. Improve Safety at Rail Crossings and along Railroad Rights-of-Way

In 2013, Operation Lifesaver, Inc. focused on meeting these goals, by: building new partnerships with national safety and transportation organizations, developing effective and broad-based national public awareness campaigns, and expanding the OL program's network of volunteers.

Operation Lifesaver's leadership, state coordinators, and volunteers have been amazing as they work together to meet the challenges of implementing program changes. I am reminded of the theme of the February 2013 State Coordinators Orientation and Summit: "We're Stronger Together." As we move into 2014 and fully live into the new OLAV education model, we must stay focused on Operation Lifesaver's goals and continue to work together to achieve them.

Sincerely,

Joyce Rose

President

## 2013 Social Media and Web Reach

**54%**



Increase in Facebook "Likes"

**150%**



Increase in Twitter followers

**130%**



Increase in Pinterest followers

**220**



followers on Instagram since start on June 2013

**568,603**



total web site page views

**30%**



Increase in web site visits



**OPERATION LIFESAVER®**

**Rail Safety Education**

Total audience reach for 2013

**2,112,481**

## 2013 Education Reach

**478**

Classroom sessions with an attendance of

**10,271**

**42,803**

Presentations with an attendance of

**951,269**

**2,251**

Special Events with an attendance of

**1,150,941**

## Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer (OLAV) Program Takes Off

*New program gives new technologies, tools to volunteers*

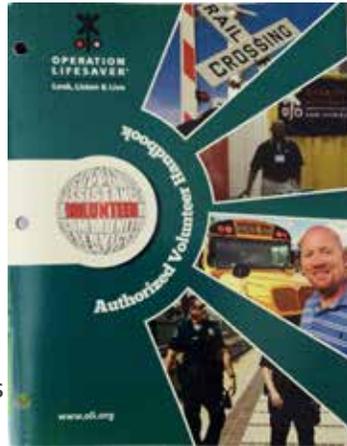
In August 2013, OLI unveiled the new OLAV (Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer) system to recruit and manage its volunteers who provide rail safety and anti-trespassing education to professional drivers, schools, new drivers and other community groups around the country.

OL state coordinators review online applications from prospective volunteers; then the applicant must complete the Authorized Volunteer Education online training within 30 days. Next, the state coordinator conducts an in-person, video conference or teleconference meeting with the new recruit. From there, the new authorized volunteer can conduct safety presentations, volunteer on safety trains, work at exhibit booths and in other capacities. Traditional OL certified presenters have until the end of 2014 to become OLAVs.

OLAVs will have access to a digital library of OLI-approved rail safety education materials to deliver to audiences.

“Operation Lifesaver’s core safety messages are embedded in the materials,” says OLI Vice President Wende Corcoran, “so that everyone gets the same consistent message about navigating rail crossings safely and the importance of staying off rail property outside of a designated crossing.”

With the OLAV system, volunteers report activities and hours volunteered through an online dashboard. OL State program directors may report on additional metrics, like special events, website hits and social media results.



## 2013 OLAV Results

**506**

Applicants became OLAVs

**102**

Applicants completed OLAV coaching classes

## OL Goes International

*Expanding our presence*

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. participated in a number of international activities in 2013, including:

- In April, Joyce Rose met with a delegation of officials from Indian Railways, India’s state-owned railroad, to discuss U.S. rail safety education best practices.
- June brought a visit from a delegation of Thai railway officials, who met with OLI staff to discuss rail safety education efforts.
- In October, the OLI president presented a paper on ways that rail safety education in the United States is innovating to reach audiences through technology at the 23rd International Railway Safety Conference in Vancouver, Canada. She received an award for best paper of the conference.
- At the end of 2013, Joyce Rose was invited to serve on the Canada OL Advisory Committee.



*Joyce Rose meets with delegates from Indian Railways.*



*Wende Corcoran and Joyce Rose show off the OLI offices in Alexandria, VA to Thai railway officials*

May 7, 2013 is International Grade Crossing Awareness Day.



Act safely at railroad crossings.  
www.oli.org



## ILCAD 2013

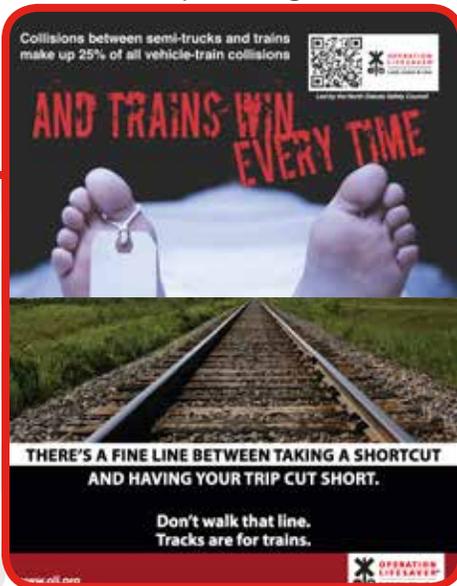
*Joining Rail Safety Around the World*

On May 7, 2013, Operation Lifesaver USA joined countries around the world in celebrating the sixth annual International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD). In 28 States and more than 100 communities, OL leaders and volunteers worked with partners from the railroads, state government agencies, and law enforcement to carry out rail crossing safety and anti-trespassing activities.

## 2013 OLI GRANTS

*Competition brings out the best*

For the first time in 2013, OLI grants were managed on a competitive basis, with a standard application format and application period deadlines. Evaluation criteria included defined safety need, targeted messaging, clarity and completeness of the project description and budget, and leveraging federal grant funds. The State Grants competition garnered 17 applications for safety outreach programs and PSA campaigns. 14 States received grant awards, a total of \$230,000: Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.



Transit Safety Education Grants were made available to OL state programs and transit agencies, also on a competitive basis. A total of 16 applicants resulted in eight grant awards totaling \$194,000 for PSA campaigns and safety education programs at the transit agency level. The eight awardees were: Capital Metro, Austin TX; RTD, Denver CO; CalTrain, San Mateo County CA; District of Columbia DOT, SunRail, Orlando FL (through Florida OL); Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit, CA; TriMet, Portland OR, and MBTA, Boston MA.

At the end of 2013, OLI instituted a new online grants management system called Common Grant Application, which will allow applicants to electronically file, review and track grants online.

## SEE TRACKS? THINK TRAIN!

*Developing a National Safety Campaign*

In 2013, OLI and the Association of American Railroads, Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Transit Administration began an unprecedented public-private partnership to develop a national rail safety public awareness campaign called *See Tracks? Think Train!* (ST3).

Intended to appeal to the high-risk audience of young men, ages 18-35, the campaign uses a boxing match theme, where the "opponent" of the train is a person or vehicle acting in an unsafe manner. Campaign materials highlight common risks drivers and pedestrians take each day, such as walking on railroad tracks, trying to beat a train at a grade crossing, and being distracted around rail platforms and tracks. The campaign slogan, "It's no contest," underscores the lopsided matchup between a train and a person or vehicle.

The ST3 campaign will be national, with a particular focus on the "Top 15" states for trespass and rail crossing fatalities. National campaign activities will be supported by State and partner events and activities carried out on a rolling basis from region to region throughout the country during 2014. The Federal Highway Administration is slated to become an additional campaign partner in 2014. OLI and AAR developed the following campaign materials:

- Bilingual television and radio public service announcements
- Bilingual print and billboard advertisements
- Other campaign materials, including bar coasters and giveaway merchandise

The campaign includes a dedicated microsite ([www.SeeTracksThinkTrain.org](http://www.SeeTracksThinkTrain.org)) where visitors can view the PSAs, download and share campaign materials, and learn more about rail safety.



[SeeTracksThinkTrain.org](http://SeeTracksThinkTrain.org)

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Operation Lifesaver Expands Its Circle

2013 was a major year for strengthening current and creating new partnerships with national safety and transportation organizations.

**Amtrak** created a new Operation Lifesaver Specialist position in its Safety Department. The new OL Specialist encourages Amtrak employee participation in Operation Lifesaver and manages Amtrak's joint safety education projects with OL at the national and state level.



### The American Public Transportation

**Association** executed a collaborative agreement with Operation Lifesaver to cooperatively pursue grade crossing, pedestrian, and passenger safety education and outreach activities in rail transit environments, such as commuter rail, subway, light rail, and streetcar.



**The Association of American Railroads** entered a partnership with Operation Lifesaver, Inc. to



develop and carry out a national safety awareness campaign called, "See Tracks? Think Train!" The new campaign will be launched in early 2014, and includes television and radio PSA's, billboards and posters, and a strong online communications element, including a dedicated website [www.SeeTracksThinkTrain.org](http://www.SeeTracksThinkTrain.org).

Operation Lifesaver has increased its visibility with the grassroots, youth-led **National Organizations for Youth Safety**. OL provided rail safety educational material for use in the NOYS Distracted Driving Community Engagement Guide [http://www.noys.org/mydocuments/community\\_engagement\\_guide.pdf](http://www.noys.org/mydocuments/community_engagement_guide.pdf), and worked through NOYS-sponsored events to attract more teens and youth to become Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers.



## TRANSIT SAFETY

### Same Safety Challenges, New Safety Partners

Passenger rail and rail transit safety are a very important part of OLI's mission. As Americans increasingly use rail transit systems like commuter railroads, subways, light rail, and streetcar, more opportunities arise for crossing collisions, car-transit vehicle incidents, and pedestrian strikes.

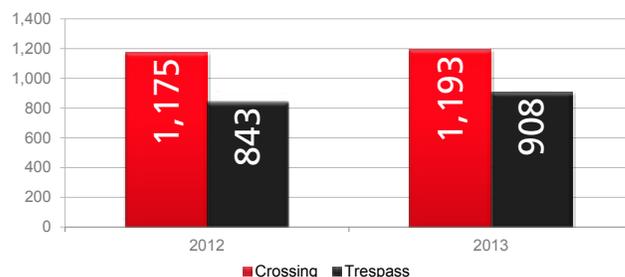
Last year, Operation Lifesaver, Inc. awarded eight transit safety education grants of \$20,000-\$25,000 each to transit agencies around the country, utilizing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. These grants fund a variety of transit safety education and awareness activities, ranging from youth-produced safety videos to online and social media safety campaigns, bus and train wraps, billboards, safety curricula for schools, and community law enforcement training. As these projects are completed, the new safety education and awareness materials that have been developed with OLI grant funds will be made available for other transit agencies to use.

During 2013, OLI President Joyce Rose participated in an advisory committee that made recommendations to FTA on how to implement new safety responsibilities required under 2012's MAP-21 legislation. Operation Lifesaver urged FTA to develop better transit safety data and to consider rail crossing and pedestrian safety issues at the same level of importance as other safety concerns.



## Rail-Related Casualties

2012 vs. 2013\*



\* Based on preliminary FRA data

Operation Lifesaver's network of authorized volunteer speakers and trained instructors offer free rail safety education programs in fifty states. We speak to school groups, driver education classes, community audiences, professional drivers, law enforcement officers, and emergency responders.

Our programs are co-sponsored by federal, state and local government agencies, highway safety organizations and America's railroads. Together we promote the three E's - education, enforcement and engineering - to keep people safe around the tracks and railway crossings within our communities.