

# Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!

**VOLKSWAGEN CHALLENGES TEENS TO GENERATE A POSITIVE TREND FOR SEAT BELT USE, SAVING LIVES**

*Education program developed with Scholastic encourages students to create PSA; Eight winning entries to be nationally broadcast*

**V**olkswagen of America is launching its award-winning *Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!* program for the fourth consecutive year.

The program challenges high school students to create their own public service announcements encouraging their peers to buckle up. Vehicular accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers, killing more than 5,000 young people every year. Many of these deaths could be prevented, as more than half of the teens involved in fatal crashes are not wearing seat belts. This supplementary education program, developed with Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education and media company, arrived in 7,000 classrooms in 150 cities across the country during the past two weeks.

*Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!*, a joint educational effort between Volkswagen and Scholastic, provides interactive educational materials that teaches high school students how to use their communication and language arts skills to affect change and influence their peers through positive messaging. As part of this program, participating students compete to develop PSAs that encourage teens to wear safety belts. Specifically, lesson plans and activities help teens build language and literacy skills, practice oral and written communication skills, and use creative expression. The resulting PSA announcements feature a wide variety of creative storylines and styles,

but a singular message: "Buckling up is cool." An informal study conducted by Volkswagen revealed the top reason teens don't wear a safety belt is because they believe it is "uncool."

"*Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!* uses a very powerful tool – peer-to-peer influence – in a positive way to change teens' attitudes about safety," said Adrian Hallmark, executive vice president, Volkswagen of America, Inc. "The program teaches kids that it's not cool to lose their chance to go far in life. Importantly, kids learn that they have an opportunity to make a difference in their peer group and save lives by getting this critical message out to their friends."

"*Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!* program offers an engaging way to infuse this critical topic into classroom discussions across the country," stated Shelley White, editorial director of Scholastic Marketing Partners. "The program not only teaches positive messages and important communication skills to teens, but ultimately can help save their lives."

Volkswagen and Scholastic will select eight finalists, whose PSAs will appear on a national television broadcast. A grand prize winner will win a \$12,000 U.S. Savings Bond; the runner-up will receive a \$6,000 U.S. Savings Bond; two second-place winners will each receive a \$600 US Savings Bond; and four third-place winners will each receive a \$300 U.S. Savings Bond for a total of over \$20,000 in prizes. The first 500 students to enter

the contest will receive a Volkswagen baseball hat.

The teacher of the grand prize winner will receive a \$1,000 Scholastic gift certificate and a digital video camera; the teacher of the runner-up will receive a \$500 Scholastic gift certificate and a digital video camera; the teachers of the second-place winners will each receive a \$250 Scholastic gift certificate and a digital video camera; and the teachers of the third-place winners will receive a \$100 Scholastic gift certificate.

*Fasten Your Seat Belt...Go Far!* earned a Halo Award in 2005 from the Cause Marketing Forum in the "Best Joint Message Promotion" category.

## ABOUT SCHOLASTIC

Scholastic Corporation is the world's largest publisher and distributor of children's books and a leader in educational technology, including children's books, magazines, technology-based products, teacher materials, television programming, film, videos and toys. The Company distributes its products and services through a variety of channels; see [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com).

## ABOUT VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen of America is a subsidiary of Volkswagen AG, of Wolfsburg, Germany. Volkswagen is one of the world's largest producers of passenger cars and Europe's largest automaker, with more than 600 independent US dealers. ■



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