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Contact: David W. Eby, (734) 763-2466 or [eby@umich.edu](mailto:eby@umich.edu)

## **UMTRI-Led Effort Wins University Transportation Center**

*Ann Arbor, Michigan* – The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) is leading a \$6 million University of Michigan (U-M) grant to establish a U.S. DOT Tier I University Transportation Center (UTC). It was announced by the USDOT on September 29 that the U-M team led by UMTRI was successful in their UTC proposal under the theme “safety and mobility across the lifespan”; the U-M UTC will conduct research, provide education, and disseminate research results. The Center will support a vigorous research program encompassing basic and applied projects to improve safety and mobility for young people and older adults, with a strong emphasis on advanced research. Expected accomplishments over the three-year grant period include providing matching support for 15 or more research projects that attract an equal number of students into the transportation field.

David W. Eby, research associate professor and director of the U-M UTC, says, “Both young people and older adults present unique safety and mobility challenges. The U-M UTC will examine the risks related to these two ends of the age spectrum, across the dimensions of the roadway, vehicle, and driver. We’ll focus on understanding the changing perceptual, cognitive, and psychomotor abilities of older drivers; the transportation needs of young people and older adults; and the elevated crash risk of young drivers.”

Peter Sweatman, UMTRI director, says, “This is a phenomenal opportunity to partner with the U.S Department of Transportation and to involve more of the unique strengths of the University of Michigan schools and colleges in highway safety research. The UTC vision – to meet the nation’s need for safe, efficient, and environmentally-sound movement of people and goods – meshes perfectly with UMTRI’s mission. We look forward to building this program collaboratively with expert faculty at the University.”

Sweatman will also chair a UTC advisory board of executive stakeholders from the auto industry, other businesses, government agencies, and community groups. A core group of U-M faculty will teach courses and collaborate on research, and UMTRI staff members will administer the grant. An executive committee, comprised of U-M faculty, will provide guidance on UTC activities.

The project is funded through the Office of Innovation, Research, and Education, a division of the Research and Special Programs Administration (RITA) of the U.S. DOT.

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