2020 National Trauma Awareness Month Focused On Preventing Distractions

May 1, 2020 (Falls Church, VA) – Distractions have become an alarming trend behind the cause of traumatic deaths and disabilities, including incidents involving transportation, lifestyle and in the workplace. The American Trauma Society (ATS) and the Society of Trauma Nurses (STN) have once again teamed up in an effort to draw attention to a significant problem area in trauma and the strategies for targeted prevention. Leading the 2020 effort as co-chairs are Christy Adams, ATS Injury Prevention Committee chair and Sandy Strack-Arabian STN Injury Prevention Special Interest Group chair.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), each day nine people are killed due to a distraction involving a motor vehicle, and more than one thousand are injured. Trauma centers have learned that distractions are not limited to motorized vehicles. On average, nationally thirty-eight children are dying from heat stroke after being left in a hot car and an estimated 11,000 injuries involve distracted walking with cell phones, including while at work. “Distractions have permeated into every aspect of our lives, personally and professionally, to the point where we have normalized it,” stated Sandy Arabian. “The resulting global effects are the hundreds of thousands of individuals, young and old alike, who are harmed or killed each year due to distractions on the roads, at work or at home,” added Co-Chair Christy Adams.

Adams and Arabian note that the NTAM is in its 31st campaign year, taking this opportunity to re-affirm that most injuries are preventable through awareness and education. “We hope that this campaign and its materials will continue to draw attention to all injury prevention efforts and will invoke change by the communities,” states ATS President Anna Newcomb. President Newcomb cautioned that more than 199,800 Americans die annually as a result of accidental injuries, and injuries are the leading cause of death among people 1-44 years of age in the United States — that is more deaths than non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases combined.

Prepared by the committee, the ATS has posted free distraction prevention resource materials covering general, motorized, lifestyle and workplace on the ATS and STN websites. Previous NTAM campaigns focused on Fall Prevention, Stop the Bleed, Drowsy Driving, Drunk/Drugged Driving, and Sports Safety.

All of these resources are available on the ATS website at www.amtrauma.org/NTAM and the STN website https://www.traumanurses.org/2020-trauma-awareness.

The American Trauma Society is a 501c3 organization with over 2000 individual, and institutional members, representing all 50 United States.

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