

# Driving School Association of New Jersey, Inc.

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**\*Members Only Meeting Thursday 8/6 7pm\***  
**\*Carteret Holiday Inn (Exit 12 NJ Turnpike)\***  
**Please RSVP via e-mail at [eds005@aol.com](mailto:eds005@aol.com) or via phone at 732-433-1238**

July 21, 2009

Dear Owner/Director:

**It is more important than ever to join or renew!** Whether you are renewing your membership or joining for the first time, being a member of a professional organization should be an integral part of operating a successful driver education program. The Driving School Association of New Jersey is an organization of driving school professionals who seek to educate, train and promote safe driving to the public. In addition, as a group we seek to influence legislation and regulations that promote public safety and enhance our professionalism. Together we share ideas to increase everyone's productivity, efficiency and profit while advancing the cause of traffic safety. Membership in the DSANJ is an essential business expenditure that will provide the programs that can accomplish the aforementioned objectives.

I invite all driving schools to join now. Our membership year runs from August 1 to July 31. We changed our membership year from a calendar year to coincide with the increased cash flow driving schools experience during the summer. Here is the 2009-10 membership application-**tiered annual membership based on the number of vehicles you operate**. It should be noted that dues have not increased in several years.

I know this is a long letter to read but I have no other means of communicating with driving school owners. So please give me the courtesy of reading this letter and making an informed decision to join or renew the association.

Membership year 2008-09 had been busy and successful for the Driving School Association of New Jersey and I hope that you find our accomplishments are additionally beneficial to your business. Many of the recommendations made by the Teenage Driver Safety Commission have become law. The Commission made astounding progress and very serious recommendations to the governor on how to pursue making teenage drivers safer on the road. In pursuit of teen safety, I also looked out for the driving school industry's interest in the 16-year-old program and becoming **partners in future education endeavors**. As I write this, only one piece of legislation is outstanding to fully implement many of the recommendations of the Commission. Our lobbying firm was instrumental in insuring that DSANJ is a key player in any legislation aimed toward teen driver safety.

Additionally, our board members sit on the Highway Traffic Safety Committee and a sub-committee concerning Motorcycle safety.

We had successful regional membership meetings in both North and South Jersey again this membership year with our partner in insurance the Borden Perlman Agency providing a light dinner at both meetings. At these meetings it was discussed what the Teen Driver Safety Commission recommendations were and the impact the new enhancements to the GDL will have on your business. **We are currently in the process of negotiating with MVC about the expiring driving school regulations. Now more than ever you need your voice to be heard.**

DSANJ has on a continual basis contracted with a professional lobbying firm to promote our interests in Trenton both in the legislature and the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC). The Kaufman Zita Group is our lobbying firm and has been given the task of protecting our interests in GDL legislation. Not only is our lobbyist a legislation watchdog, but also it is a facilitator of communication between our organization and the Motor Vehicle Commission.

**Many of you may ask why do I care if the association has a lobbying firm.** Perhaps your school does not offer the many programs driving schools can now offer- defensive driving classroom, or written and eye exams. These programs however, add value to your school because you can offer them. One day you may wish to sell your school. I wonder how many of us have thought of the future and what will happen to your school once you retire. I know I have, as I don't plan to operate a business until the day I die. I want to be able to sell my business one day not just close up shop and have nothing to show for the 40 plus years I would have worked when that day comes. Any new program that we are allowed to implement means greater revenue for your school. Greater revenue means your business may be worth more.

This is what our lobbyist helps us accomplish. Despite how you feel about the lobbying process it is how Trenton works and it also opens doors at MVC. So as an association we chose to enter the world of politics or we could have been left behind. It is a very slow and frustrating process but eventually the association does win some battles. I know I have said this many times, but without a lobbyist the driving school industry would have been written out of the GDL law. There would have been no 16-year-old program. MVC now respects us and asks our opinions and your board members as I stated previously sit on numerous committees on driver safety in Trenton. As a result of the decade or so, DSANJ has had a lobbyist the relationship the association has with the Motor Vehicle Commission has gone from adversarial to a partnership in the driver safety of NJ's citizens. This is the intangible but nonetheless invaluable benefit to be had of contracting with a lobbying firm.

As we speak your board is working diligently on a new legislative agenda to pursue other avenues for advancement in the driving school industry. Your board also seeks your suggestions. **To serve you to our best ability, we need to know what you think the goals of DSANJ should be and what legislation to pursue.**

However, to sustain our aggressive legislative agenda, additional contributions are necessary. Our modest membership fee alone does not cover lobbying expenses. We need additional contributions to remain a viable organization. **Enclosed find a legislative contribution form. Without your additional contributions we will have to fire the lobbyist and then we will lose our voice in Trenton.**

To keep membership informed, we hold member meetings at least annually. **Thursday August 6, 2009 at 7pm at the Carteret Holiday Inn (Exit 12, NJ Turnpike) a meeting will be held to discuss the proposed regulation changes. You must be a member in good standing to attend the meeting.**

Of course our board members are always accessible. For a list of board members, please call me or visit our website, another essential communication tool to distribute information to our members and show the public and lawmakers what our organization is about. Our Newsletter, meeting dates, agendas and minutes, and upcoming legislation affecting the driving school industry are among some of the information available on the website. Any and all suggestions are most welcome and needed. This is your website and our association's chance to speak with one voice. Please visit us at [www.DSANJ.com](http://www.DSANJ.com). **All member schools will be listed on our site and those with a website of your own can be added as a link to our site.** Anyone interested in having a website created for you can contact our website consultant for information.

Our organization also has its own classroom defensive driving program. If you would like to offer classroom courses to licensed drivers who desire an insurance discount or 2-point reduction, you no longer have to buy your kit, annual lease renewal and books from the NJ State Safety Council. DSANJ offers a state-approved course with a one-time kit purchase, no annual film lease and a small fee for books and processing. Contact Stephanie Mihalczko at (732) 297-9133 for details.

**Please complete the enclosed application(s) and mail back with your check(s) made payable to DSANJ on as soon as possible.** If you have questions, contact me at (609) 586-4944 or email me at [Dgaskill@PrincetonDrivingSchool.org](mailto:Dgaskill@PrincetonDrivingSchool.org)

**In conclusion, your executive board is extending an invitation to members to become board members.** The more talent and diversity we have on our board the better for the driving school industry. However, being a board member is at times a thankless job and can be time consuming. We would welcome any member willing to accept the commitment and wants to contribute his/her time.

One final note, the recession has taken a toll on our industry. I know it has impacted my school's profit margin. The economic forecast is gloomy and your student count may begin to drop as parents postpone paying for driving lessons. Everyone has limited resources and driving lessons may be classified as a luxury for some households. You should be thinking of cutting unnecessary business expenses. **Please do not consider your DSANJ membership as such a cost. More now than ever, the membership must remain strong.** We need membership and we need to be able to fund our lobbyist to come to the table from the strongest position possible.

With Warm Regards,

*Dan Gaskill*

Daniel Gaskill, President DSANJ  
President, Princeton Driving School, Inc.