

Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society
2012 State Chapter Membership Growth Award Application (for 2011 Calendar Year)



Following a progressive year in in 2010, the GRITS chapter once again experienced large growth in overall membership numbers as well as unique organizations during 2011. Officially established in 2009, the chapter grew by over an impressive 500 percent in 2010. Surprisingly, after such marked growth in 2010, the trend did not cease in 2011. The chapter boosted an increase from 45 to 54 unique organizations, a 20 percent increase, and total membership grew from 280 to 374, an increase of upwards of 30 percent.

Due in large part to strong and diverse chapter leadership, as well as a continued commitment to established policies from years past the membership growth in 2011 was also a result of three main successful activities:

1) Regional Workshops Meetings:

To encourage membership growth, the chapter began hosting seasonal half day workshops in the states not hosting the annual meeting. The workshops, held in Batesville, MS in April and in New Orleans, LA in August, allowed each state the opportunity for members and non-members to gather in a local area. This allows members or potential members that may not be able to attend the annual meeting due to travel or other restrictions the opportunity to interact with members and learn more about GRITS and ITS. The workshops were free for members, while there was a nominal fee for non-members. This effort to foster convenient educational and networking opportunities has helped GRITS to further membership growth.

2) A Highly Successful Annual Meeting:

In November, the chapter held its third annual meeting in Montgomery, AL drawing large attendance from the public, private and academic sectors. The meeting boasted the largest attendance for a GRITS meeting to date with over 230 registrants. As in the 2010 event, membership dues for the remainder of 2011 through 2012 were included in the event registration. As a result of the meeting over 70 individual members were added to the GRITS roster. This resulted in GRITS reaching its maximum of 374 members by December 2011.

3) Continued Website Updates and Social Media Outreach:

In addition to the GRITS tweets and website updates, in 2011 GRITS established a Communications Committee to further the organizations goals by keeping the

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website regularly updated and spread the GRITS message both internally and to the masses through the web and other social media tools. One addition has been the GRITS Facebook page. These outlets have served the chapter in enabling GRITS to better reach both members and non-members alike, across all generations. GRITS tweets boasts over 130 followers, while the website received approximately 850 visitors a month in 2011. By promoting not only news and activities pertinent to the chapter, but also information relevant to the industry, such as training and educational opportunities, these tools have served to spread the GRITS message, promoting both membership growth along with continued information exchange.