

Former Directors of the SMARTER Board – January, 2026

The following are brief biographical sketches of former officers and directors of the Skilled Motorcyclist Association -Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders, Inc. The information presented here is accurate as of the time of everyone's service on the board.

Don Smith, Ph.D.

Dr. Don, Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University, was the chair of the board of directors of SMARTER from its inception in 2007 until January 2013 and continued as an active board member until his death in November, 2021. He was a leading traffic-safety expert, having authored or co-authored numerous publications as well as having consulted on or directed numerous traffic-safety research projects. Don was the grandfather (some might say the godfather) of Michigan's rider education program. He was selected by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation to conduct Michigan's first motorcyclist-instructor training in 1973 and was a consultant to the Foundation in the development of the first Beginning Rider Course and the initial Motorcycle Rider Skill Test.



Don served as the motorcyclist safety program coordinator at Michigan State University for many years. He was the recipient of MDTSEA's Silvernale Award in 1976 for his work at MSU's Highway Traffic Center. Don and Tom Hampton, who served as the SMARTER's inaugural vice chairperson and was the first educational consultant for rider education with the Michigan Department of Education (1979-1997), built Michigan's rider training programs.

Tom Hampton

Tom served as SMARTER's inaugural vice chairperson from February 2007 to August 2007. If Dr. Don Smith is the grandfather of Michigan's rider-education program, Tom is certainly the father. Thomas Joseph Hampton died at his home in Lansing on December 5, 2021. He was 83 years old. Tom Hampton was Michigan's first Rider Education Coordinator with the Michigan Department of Education (MDOE). Tom was on the staff at MSP headquarters in 1979 when the Department of Education posted the motorcycle rider education consultant position. Tom was selected and filled this position until his retirement in 1996.



Tom, like Dr. Don Smith, whom we lost in November, 2021, was a founding Board of Directors member of SMARTER. Those who knew Dr. Don and Tom and their accomplishments both individually and as a team would refer to Don as the godfather and Tom as the grandfather of Michigan rider education.

As the first leader of Michigan's rider education program Tom made it his priority to meet every instructor in the state. Tom scheduled a visit to every Instructor Preparation course, often on graduation day when he officially welcomed the new instructors to the team. He regularly met with his Chief Instructor's to coordinate these courses, review practices and procedures and plan for future improvements.

ABOVE – Tom Hampton speaks to Michigan's rider education instructors at the state-wide rider education instructor professional development conference held in Lansing in the spring of 1990.

Jon Twork

Jon served as a SMARTER board member from February 2007 through January 2008. Jon's entire professional career was in the motorcycle industry, first with Suzuki and then Yamaha. Now a dedicated RV'er, Jon was formerly a rider training instructor/coach and a long-time coordinator of rider education in northwest Michigan. He began his involvement in rider training with the formal start of Michigan's statewide program in 1984, led the Central Michigan University rider-education program when it was recognized as an Outstanding Regional Program in 1988, and continued his active involvement in rider education until his retirement in 2000. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation recognized Jon's career-long contributions to rider safety by awarding him a special Outstanding Motorcycle Safety Promotion award.

Linda Thompson

Linda served as the first treasurer of SMARTER from February 2007 through January 2009. She played a vital role in SMARTER's incorporation. Linda is a dynamic RiderCoach known for her outstanding positive support for struggling new riders. As a RiderCoach, she worked for several northern Michigan public sponsors and was actively involved in Harley-Davidson's Riders Edge program as both a RiderCoach and a Quality Improvement Specialist. She is a retired elementary school teacher who holds a master's degree specializing in teaching children to read.

Diane Tammens

Diane Tammens served on the SMARTER Board from inception in February 2007 through January 2011. Diane has off-road, track-day, and street-riding experience. She is retired from a career as a teacher and public-school administrator. She was certified MSF RiderCoach in 2000 and is a RiderCoach who thoughtfully and with rigor applies her deep knowledge of how people learn to her facilitation of rider training courses. Her first bike was a SRX 250 Yamaha (you know the little red-and-white sport bike with the red seat), and she longs to have it back again.

Kim Cloud

Kim served as the board secretary of SMARTER from February 2007 through January 2011. Until recently Kim was an active RiderCoach with both the publicly funded program sponsored by Ferris State University (Big Rapids, MI) and the Riders Edge program sponsored by Hot Rod Harley-Davidson of Muskegon, MI. Kim retired from his elementary school teaching position in 2006 and is now enjoying more time in his garage. He rides both street and off-road bikes.

Jorge Cerame

Jorge was a founding member, then vice-chairperson upon the resignation of Tom Hampton, and then a director after SMARTER reorganization serving on the SMARTER board from August 2007 through January 2012. Jorge has been involved in motorcycle rider safety instruction for over ten years. He has been an instructor and RiderCoach in schools in both California and Michigan. Jorge is an engineer who works for Dow Chemical Company's Environmental, Health and Safety Department.

Steve Lick

Steve served on the board from February 2007 through January 2010. Steve is the former director of the Professional Development and Training Institute for Ferris State University where he served as the administrator of their Motorcycle Safety Program. He has also served as founder and coordinator of the Allegan County Intermediate School Motorcycle Rider Safety Program and the Grand Rapids Community College Motorcycle Rider Safety Programs. Steve has been a RiderCoach/Instructor since 1998, became Riders Edge certified in 2006 and later completed RiderCoach Trainer training. When it comes to RiderCourse curriculum-aligned creative tools, Steve is a leader.

Mark Plant

Jan. 2011–Jan. 2015: A founding member of SMARTER Mark served on the board from January 2011 through January 2015. Mark was raised in the Black Hills of South Dakota, where he learned off-road riding, starting out with a Honda 70 trails bike.

He has been a certified MSF RiderCoach since 1990 and currently works for the Ferris State University and Grand Rapids Community College Motorcycle Safety Programs. Additionally, from 1999 to 2011, Mark was a Sidecar/Trike instructor, certified by the Evergreen Safety Council.

He has also coached for the Gold Wing Road Riders Association, of which he is a life member. Mark currently rides a Honda Gold Wing 1500-cc touring bike and a Kawasaki 250-cc Ninja. Mark works at Progressive Technologies in the building-maintenance department.

Sean Duperron

Sean served on the SMARTER board from January 2009 to January 2020 always in the role of treasurer. He considered himself the conservative board member leaning toward supporting all-rider helmet laws for the financial savings to society while also not being a supporter of unneeded government regulation.

In 2017 he became a leader in the plans to expand Michigan's off-road riding trails in Benzie County, his home area. Sean joined the AMA at age 16 so he could enter and compete in motocross races, and he has been a politically active member ever since. The AMA recognized him as a life member in 2012.

Sean became an MSF RiderCoach in 1999, and he completed the Harley-Davidson Motor Company Inc. Rider's Edge Instructor Training Program in 2002 and the Fasttrax Safety School for Street Riders in 2003.

He graduated with honors from Central Michigan University and owns a construction business, of which he is general contractor.

Jason Bradford

Jason Bradford served as a director on the SMARTER Board from January 2015 through January of 2021. Jason is a lifelong resident of the Grand Rapids, MI area having served in law enforcement for the Grand Rapids Police Department from 1995- 2013.

In 2009 he achieved certification with MSF as a RiderCoach. In addition to the teaching duties, Jason has assisted with various tasks, such as course preparation and curriculum development. Jason taught with the Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) program and has served as the program manager of Fox Powersports Riding Academy, Grand Rapids, MI.

Scott Shoup

Scott joined the SMARTER board in 2010 and served as secretary of the board through 2021. Wanting to share his passion with others, Scott became an MSF RiderCoach in 2002, and in 2007 he became Harley-Davidson Rider's Edge certified. Scott is a Lead/Chase rider for Yamaha Event Demos and has participated in the "New to 2" initiative across the country to attract new riders to the sport.

To support his passion, he works as an insurance underwriter. As a member of the Scottville (MI) Optimist Club, he was selected the club's 2012 Member of the Year, was formerly vice-president of the organization, and was its 2013-14 president.

Randy Travelbee

Randy served on the SMARTER Board as Treasurer from 2021 - 2023. Randy has been a resident of southern Michigan all life with the exception of a few years transferring with the company for which he worked. His work transfers included a couple of years in WI and a few years in southern Indiana. He retired in 2017.

Since retiring he has spent much more time restoring older Japanese motorcycles. His current stable includes a 1982 Honda CB900, 1979 Honda Twinstar, 1983 Honda GL650, and a 198? something Yamaha TW200. His everyday ride is a 2010 BMW F650GS. Randy has been a Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) instructor since 1985. He is a long-time member of the Iron Butt Association. Randy has been a SMARTER member since the inception of the association in 2007.

Eric Line

Eric served on the SMARTER from 2022-2024. Eric is retired from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Traffic Safety section. He has spent nearly 20 years as MDOT's sole Senior Traffic Safety Data Analyst and Motorcycle Safety Representative.

Eric consulted with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) safety office and MDOT engineers on highway infrastructure concerns that affected motorcyclists. Eric has been a recognized resource on several traffic safety committees, teams, and working groups including the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission's Motorcycle Action Team, the Crash Data Users Group, and two MDOT Research Advisory Panels.

Eric received two MDOT Simply Super Service Awards for his traffic safety work including a special Motorcycle Safety related project. He was selected by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning to be the coordinator for the Engineering section of Michigan's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Motorcycle Safety Program Technical Assessment. In 2017 Eric was selected by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to serve on the Motorcyclist Advisory Council.

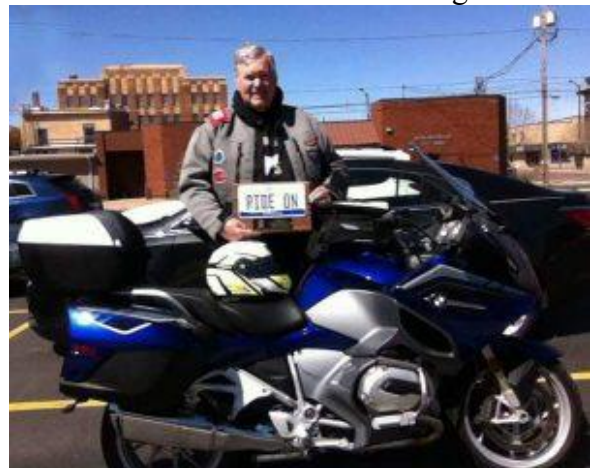
Rich Henrion

Rich was a charter member of the SMARTER Board of Directors and served on the board for 20 years beginning with the association's founding in 2007. Rich holds double master's degrees in education, is a Master Mechanic, a now retired Motorcycle Safety Foundation RiderCoach (1980), RiderCoach Trainer (1986), MSF Chief Instructor award winner, long-time Iron Butt member, and multi-time guest author for the BMW Owners Association magazine.



Rich is also a third-party tester for the State of Michigan and conducts both motorcycle and automobile tests. He is an active member of the Upper Peninsula (UP) of Michigan Traffic Safety Council.

After having served on the board of directors of SMARTER in various capacities since its inception, Rich was elected chair in January, 2013 and served in that role until leaving the board in January, 2026.



Dan Petterson, Ed.D.



With the support and encouragement of Dr. Don Smith, Dan was the driving force behind the formation and development of SMARTER. He served as the associations president and CEO from 2007 through January, 2025. He served as a board director in 2025 and was appointed a non-voting ex-officio board member in January 2026.

His individual work and his efforts as CEO of SMARTER earned national recognition.

Dan is the recipient of the following awards:



- * 2003 RiderCoach Trainer of the Year - Motorcycle Safety Foundation
- * 2011 one of five individuals nationally to receive recognition by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation for “Extraordinary Contributions to Motorcyclist Safety.”
- * 2014 recipient of the Silvernale Award, the purpose of which is to recognize persons nationally who have made outstanding contributions to traffic safety education by the Michigan Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (MDTSEA).
- * 2021 Richard H. Austin Traffic Safety Award for long-term contributions and commitment to traffic safety for the Skilled Motorcyclist Association - Responsible Trained and Educated Riders, Inc. by the Michigan Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC).