

FDOT DISTRICT TWO

Intelligent Transportation Systems Newsletter –
March 2010
Issue 30



***SPRING HAS ARRIVED
DID YOU FIND YOUR POT OF GOLD
ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY?***

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ITS Announcements

Alachua TIM Meeting

Wednesday, April 14th- 10 a.m.

Please contact the ITS Office at (904) 360-5465 if you would like to participate in the meetings.

Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

When I accepted the challenge of being the District Two ITS Engineer eight years ago I knew that it would be a unique, dynamic and spontaneous experience as I helped the program grow. In several previous newsletters you may recall me comparing this to a roller coaster ride with several peaks and valleys. Well, the month of March was definitely like riding the Mamba roller coaster at Busch Gardens in Tampa, FL. We began the month of March with the prospect of starting construction on the new RTMC in late 2010 or early 2011. We ended the month with several budgetary challenges in the Florida Legislature and not enough money to go around. Thus, the new RTMC project has been shelved until better economic conditions surface for the Department.

Although the end result is somewhat disappointing we must realize that we are ONE FDOT and this District is just one of many that have had to tighten their belts due to current economic conditions. I am still hopeful that in the near future our luck takes a 180 and we get back on track with this project, however it will not stop the ITS program from moving forward with its Mission and Vision. Until then, we can continue to plan, tweak and adjust the ITS and Incident Management program to make do with the current resources.

As I was driving to the TMC this morning (while stuck in traffic) I had the chance to think of what

“could have been” if the project was still on track. Late last night we had a heavy rain storm pass through the Jacksonville area that dragged on into the early commuter hours. Due to the rain, six accidents occurred simultaneously throughout the City. There were two incidents on I-10, three on I-95 and one on Butler Boulevard. Traffic throughout the City was at a crawl as morning commuters made their way to work and estimates of 45 minute to one-hour delays were commonplace water cooler talk this morning. With resources spread thin, many of the Incident Responders were scrambling to cover all the events thus communication was a key element to getting lanes opened as quickly as possible.

When I made it to the office there was a flurry of activity as the TMC Operator and Supervisor were communicating via telephone with various responders. Each call was to relay new or updated information on the status of these six events to Fire/Rescue, JSO, JRCC dispatchers, Maintenance, COJ Traffic and the Road Rangers. I estimated that it took about 2 minutes per call for each event. Tallying it up for the six events, the TMC Operator and Supervisor spent a minimum of about 30 minutes each on the phone sharing detailed information with our partners. In the future, having the multi-agency RTMC would reduce this time down to a total of five-minutes as the information is shared just once to all six incident responders.

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued

In the meantime, we are still working on the building blocks of our program by coordinating with key partners who are new to the Incident Management program. Last week, we met with CSX Representatives to discuss their numerous corridors in Jacksonville that tie up arterial traffic when trains pass through. The big concern of the TIM team members was having information on when a train was going to block a particular roadway since dispatchers could then select an alternate sub-station or officer to respond to the incident. CSX was very helpful and offered to provide a web-based software package that shows dynamic GPS information for their trains. This type of data will allow dispatchers to determine when an arterial roadway may be impacted by an on-coming train, thus allowing them to set “plan b” in motion to respond to an incident.

Another key partner new to the TIM team is JaxPort Security who oversees all activities related to shipping in the Blount Island area. During the development of the Phase VII project we conducted several meetings with their personnel and now have a game plan that will benefit everyone once the Phase VII project is complete. Part of the discussion was how everyone planned to manage the additional trucks resulting from the two new ports currently under construction in the Blount Island area. JaxPort had funding to address some concerns and the Department was incorporating features in its

Phase VII plans as well. After the meeting we decided to “join forces” for economies of scale and are currently developing a system that captures inbound and outbound truck traffic. This will definitely be a “win-win” situation for both agencies.

I will wrap up with a discussion on the new Road Ranger contract. The ITS team is very excited about the prospects of this new contract since we can now move forward with the sponsorship opportunities. The existing vendor, First Coast Road Rangers, has received numerous inquiries related to funding the program but had to hold off due to the transition to the new contract. By this July, the District will have a clear understanding on how much sponsorship funding can be generated through logos and roadway signage. The goal in the next few years is to have the program fully funded through private dollars with competition eventually driving expansion to more units and roadways in District Two.

Pete Vega
District 2
ITS Engineer



www.fl511.com

Performance Measures

In the past few months, many concerns have been addressed with Central Office ITS regarding the Performance Measures reports. A new report was recently released so that a more thorough audit of all events could be conducted. It was realized that over 60% of the events managed by the TMC are not included in the Quarterly Performance Measures Report. After reviewing the reasons these events were excluded from the summary report, a number of recurring issues were identified.

Efforts are being made to have Central Office's Consultant correct the SunGuide software reporting system and to increase accuracy during the input of information by the TMC Operators. Fortunately, the software is equipped in such a way that any omission of input made initially can be adjusted to reflect what actually occurred even after the event has been closed.

The goal is to format the performance measures in such a way that an accurate portrayal of the performance of everyone involved during incidents is reported. When this is achieved, those involved can use the data to ascertain where improvements need to be made. Some software adjustments are to include events that occur on the ramps and also to remove shoulder blockage from being calculated as travel lane blockage.

Another enhancement is to be sure that all available Information and data is entered into the system at the time of occurrence. These adjustments will ensure that all relevant events are included and that they are entered exactly as they occurred. We anticipate that Central Office should provide the "new and improved" SunGuide reporting by early April.

Jill Dawson
Metric Engineering



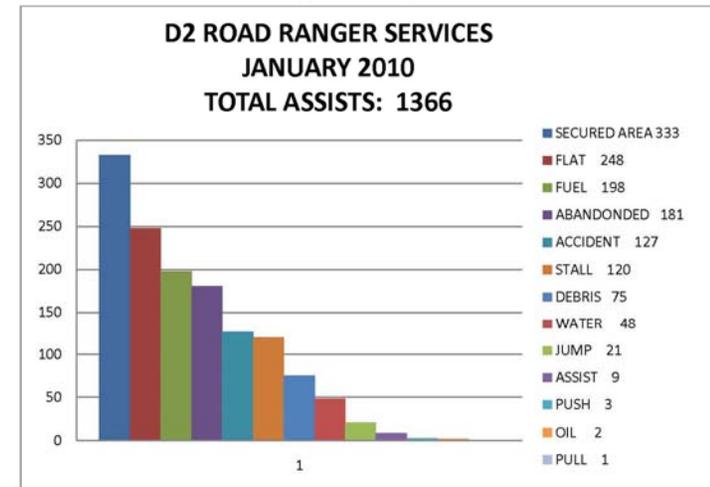
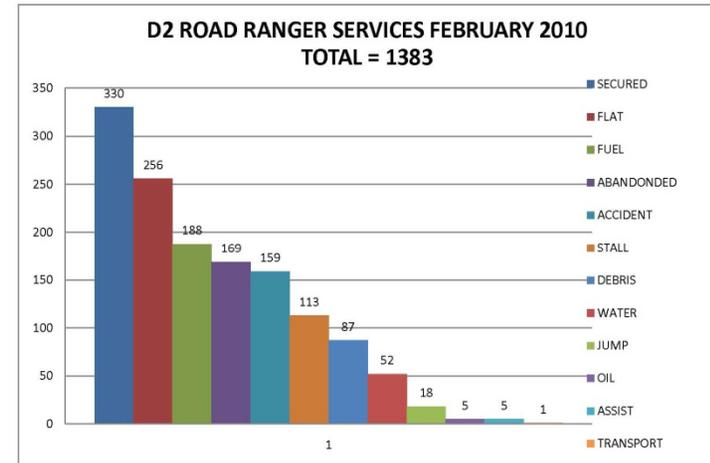
Road Ranger Update

Our District Two Road Ranger Service Patrol Contract is currently being re-bid. Due to a change in the contract, this contract was re-advertised and should be awarded by May.

As of Monday, March 22nd, our current Road Ranger Service Patrol was decreased by two vehicles. The Rangers are still actively patrolling and providing service within the same limits on I-95, I-295, 9A, I-10 and J. Turner Butler. All routes are activated 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM. As shown on the chart below, Road Ranger Operators assisted 1383 stranded vehicles in the month of February. Our Road Ranger Service Patrol continues to be a great asset to our District 2 Traffic Incident Management Program and we look forward to starting our new contract.

RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance Update)

Since December 18, 2010, we have not had an incident that required the services of our Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC). Our Contractors, Southern Wrecker and Recovery, LLC., Walt's Wrecker Service, John's Towing Auto and Truck Services, Inc., and University Towing and Transport, Inc. – are ready to be activated if the need arises.



Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update

ALACHUA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

Our next meeting for our Alachua Traffic Incident Management will be Wednesday, April 14th, at the FDOT Gainesville Maintenance Conference Room, N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Management Team met on Tuesday, March 16, 2010 with the following agencies represented: Metric Engineering, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, St. Johns Sheriff’s Office, Nassau County Sheriff’s Office, Jorgensen, CSX, First Coast Road Rangers, DBI Services, Florida Highway Patrol, FDOT Traffic Operations/ITS, FDOT Maintenance and FDOT Public Information Office, AAG Environmental, SmartRoute Systems, and the Florida Highway Patrol.

After incidents were discussed and debriefed, several announcements were made. Cliff Stayton with CSX announced there is training online provided by CSX and all members are encouraged to take this valuable training. We are currently revising our District 2 Diversion Routes and members were advised several routes will be sent by email for their review and approval. It was announced HAZMAT Training will be conducted at our next First Coast TIM Team Meeting on May 18, 2010.

Congratulations are given to Major Gene Spaulding and Captain Keith Gaston for their advancement with the Florida Highway Patrol.

Special welcome to Mr. Bob Kosoy, our new Jacksonville Maintenance Engineer.

2010 MEETING SCHEDULES

FIRST COAST

FDOT D2 URBAN OFFICE TRAINING CENTER
2198 EDISON AVENUE
904-360-5400

- MAY 18, 2010
- JULY 20, 2010
- SEPTEMBER 21, 2010
- NOVEMBER 16, 2010

ALACHUA

FDOT GAINESVILLE MAINTENANCE OFFICE
5301 N.E. 39TH AVE
352-381-4300

- APRIL 14, 2010
- JUNE 9, 2010
- AUGUST 11, 2010
- OCTOBER 13, 2010
- DECEMBER 8, 2010

Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Operations
Program Manager

Maintenance

The ITS System has seen no major issues since the last Newsletter. The ITS Maintenance Contractor, TCD, has continued to resolve most device issues as they surface. The main areas where ITS devices are not working properly continued to be in the Roadway Construction work zones mainly due to fiber or power service damage.

As an update to last month’s Maintenance Section, we still have not received permission from JEA to install fiber optic cable on their poles along Ellis Road in order to get the video feeds to the FDOT Jacksonville Maintenance Yard. The ITS office is now looking at getting a permit with the City of Jacksonville and the estimated cost to install the fiber optic cable underground. Further information on the progress of this task will be provided in next month’s Newsletter.

ITS Maintenance staff has been looking at reconfiguring video monitors at the FHP Jacksonville Regional Communications Center (JRCC) on Davis Street. The Traffic Management Center has a 24/7 Operator at the Dispatch Center, who works closely with FHP Dispatchers to get “up to the minute” information. The video monitors are used to provide real time traffic information by allowing the TMC Operators and FHP Dispatchers at the JRCC to view incidents and congestion. The existing monitors have

reached their end of life cycle and have lost much of their pixilation. The new configuration will replace the existing video wall with better performing energy efficient monitors and the existing projector with a new model, for better picture clarity.

TCD has also begun to expand the ITS network redundancy by interconnecting the existing Interstate fiber optic cable to the arterial roadway network that connects traffic signal systems. Once this task is completed, the City of Jacksonville’s Traffic Engineering office will be able to get off the existing dial-up modems and will improve communication responsiveness exponentially to their systems. The Department’s TMC will benefit from this interconnectivity since the Operators will then have access to the City’s CCTV cameras and can begin diverting traffic during major Interstate events onto the arterial roadway network.

In conclusion, the ITS Maintenance Contract has been advertised. We expect several firms to bid on the Contract and hope to have the new contract in place by June 2010.

Kevin Jackson
 District 2 ITS Field Specialist

Construction

The I-95 Project (Phase VI) is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and Vehicle Detectors along I-95 from the I-295 Southern Interchange to the St. Johns County Line. This project continues to run smoothly, with approximately 60% of the work completed. All of the conduit, pull boxes, splice vaults, and fiber optic cable have been installed. Electrical services and associated electrical equipment are being installed at each of the device sites. All of the vehicle detector poles and all of the smaller CCTV poles have been installed, leaving only the three larger CCTV poles to be installed. The Dynamic Message Signs structures and the Dynamic Message Signs have been installed. The Project is on schedule for completion in July.

This project will allow the Traffic Management Center to monitor traffic congestion resulting from I-95 southbound commuters exiting onto CR 210 and will provide thru-traffic motorists advanced warning of the congestion. The objective is to monitor a highly congested area while keeping traffic flow to the posted speed limit.

The System Manager, Metric Engineering, for the SR 9A Project (Phase VII) has submitted 100% plans for FDOT review. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside

Weather Information Sensors along SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd North to I-95. The Project also includes two Arterial Dynamic Message Signs on Heckscher Drive approaching SR 9A in each direction. The project continues to be on schedule and will have the Design completed by the end of March. The Construction Contract will be let in early Fall with an anticipated start of Construction in Early 2011.

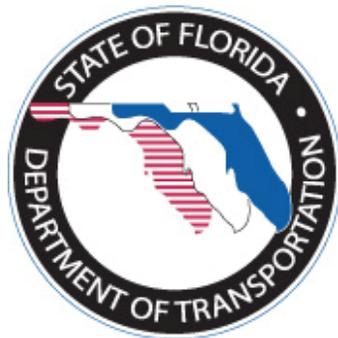
This project is critical to this area due to the continuing growth of Blount Island ports and also the development along SR 9A. The ITS devices installed by this Project will provide TMC Operators with the ability to monitor the roadways and provide information to motorists and responders alike.

The I-295 Project (Phase VIII) has submitted 60% plans. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along I-295 from I-10 North to I-95. This project will complete the Fiber Communications ring around the northwest side of Jacksonville. The project is important to this area of Jacksonville due to the large number of Trucking company warehouses along the corridor and the proximity to Jacksonville International Airport.

Construction continued

Several projects are ongoing with Duval and Clay Counties. The SR 21 project has submitted 100% Design Plans and the Design-Build Team plan to start construction around the first of April. The Philips Highway project is currently on hold and may be delayed for several months before a Design- Build Team is awarded the Contract. The SR 15 Project has been advertised and should be awarded mid-April. All of these projects are using existing arterial roadway fiber infrastructure and will be adding state of the art traffic signal controllers, Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and CCTV cameras to allow for the City of Jacksonville and Clay County to view their arterial roadways, provide information to travelers, and dynamically adjust their signal timing to help alleviate congestion.

John Kell
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



Marketing

The 511 Marketing Team has been enjoying its own version of March Madness. On March 6th we attended the opening ceremonies of the Riverside Arts Market. RAM, as it's affectionately known, will be in full swing every Saturday from now until November (rain or shine). This free local market is held from 10am – 4pm underneath the Fuller Warren Bridge on Riverside Avenue. A couple of the Jaguars players were on hand to auction off game day packages, and Mayor Peyton even stopped by for a visit.

Our next stop on the March Madness tour took us to beautiful downtown St. Augustine for the annual Lions Seafood Festival where we braved wind gusts of 35-40 mph. The 511 tent proved to be gale force certified and even our prize wheel held its ground (after we secured it to the table with bungee cords).

Our final stops brought us to the I-75 and I-95 Florida Welcome Centers where tourists were lining up to get a glimpse of our beautiful springtime weather. With all the extra motorists joining us for Spring Break, remember to dial 511 for up-to-the-minute traffic updates on all of Florida's major roadways.

Sherri Byrd
511 Marketing Manager

North Florida TPO Update

The North Florida TPO (NFTPO) projects are moving along slowly toward completion. The Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) notified me two weeks ago that the two products required by local agencies (the SixNet switch and Bosch Camera) are in the final stages of approval. Once these products receive TERL certification the local agencies can begin ordering and installing the final components on arterial roads.

Duval County will be installing/integrating traffic signal controllers and ITS components on Atlantic Boulevard, Beach Boulevard, San Jose Boulevard, Roosevelt Boulevard, Baymeadows Road and Main Street. The North Florida TPO's System Manager, DRMP Engineering, will be coordinating and assisting Jacksonville with the installation of ITS components. St. Johns County is beginning work on State Road A1A in Ponte Vedra and will receive assistance from DRMP as well.

Nassau County has received all of its equipment for State Road 200 and has their contractor, TCD, beginning work in the next few weeks. The Department will provide ITS expertise on this project with the assistance of DRMP since the County has not worked with wireless technology in the past. We anticipate the work will be completed in the next 60 days.

Three ITS/Signal upgrade projects are being handled by the Department. Two projects are in

Clay County and one is in Duval County. The project on SR 21 in Clay County will begin construction in the next 30 days. The other project on SR 15 in Clay and Philips Highway in Duval are currently being re-advertised with a selection pending in the next two months. During this time, the City and Department are working together on integrating arterial systems into the Interstate's fiber optic network so that a link can be provided to the City at their Superior Street office.

One final note is that the success of the TIME4Safety video has spurred the North Florida TPO to fund another study for incident management. Some ideas are currently being tossed around by TIM team members; however nothing definite has been decided. The goal is to make this worthwhile for the region as well as our incident management partners around the State.



Operations

The TMC is making the transition from a cold January and February to the rainy season! March and the months to come bring on the challenges of busy traffic days when the afternoon rains start to fall. The Management team is getting used to its new structure as Ryan Crist steps up into the Project Supervisor role and Santos Morin takes on our new Lead Operator / Assistant Supervisor position. We continue to move forward toward an ever improving team dynamic.

The Feedback feature on the 511 phone system continued to be a valued tool as we keep up the quest to perfect Operations. In February, District 2 had over 18,000 calls made to the 511 system and only a very small percentage of the overall feedback was for us here in Northeast Florida. We continue to see great cooperation among the First Responders here that allows us to get information posted quickly and accurately.

In February, the District 2 TMC worked over 1,977 total events, including 121 events involving lane blockage. The Road Rangers continue to be a vital part of the TMC team as they assisted in 1,459 total events.

As we keep striving to post the most accurate traffic information, we have expanded the tools we can use to collect traffic information in areas without ITS devices: University Towing in

Gainesville has become a partner to help us monitor traffic conditions on I-75 when there is a serious crash and we need up to date information. The first deployment with University Towing was this past Friday with a crash on I-75 in the Alachua-Marion County area with significant on-going congestion. We continue to use the 'Traffic Plane' to keep track of conditions during the morning and afternoon rush and during emergency situations, especially in those non-instrumented areas.

We depend on the many different partners in District 2. The outreach continues to bring in all the information we can to the TMC in a timely manner, so we can in turn get that quality info out to the traveling public. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904) 301-3700 (ext. 122) or our work day line at (904) 360-5465. You can also now leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 System to report any notable traffic conditions, incidents, or 'bugs' you may find in the system. This user feedback is relayed directly to our operators, in real-time, and is an important supplement to our deployed devices.

Remember: Know Before You Go!

Dial 511 or go to FL511.com

Derrick Odom
TMC Assistant Supervisor

Spotlight on...Vicky Mixon

This month's spotlight shines on Vicky Mixson. Since 2004 she has worked with the Florida Department of Transportation on 511 educational outreach, first with the I-4 only system in Central Florida, and later for the expanded Central Florida, Southwest Florida and Statewide Florida 511 systems. Currently, she's the Florida 511 Marketing Project Manager.

Talk about your upbringing – where were you born / raised?

I'm a native Floridian, born and raised in Vero Beach.

Early Career and/or brief job history:

After graduating from the University of Florida with a public relations degree, I moved to Orlando and joined a public relations/advertising agency as an Account Executive. I was later promoted to Manager of Public Relations for the firm. My clients included an agribusiness, oil company, financial institutions and industry associations.

What's the best advice anyone's ever given you?

My dad always told me to do at least 10% more than is required. He said anybody can just do the bare minimum, but to be above average you have to work at an above average level.

Do you have a favorite quote? Something that inspires you?

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. And will you succeed? Yes indeed, yes indeed! Ninety-eight and three-quarters percent guaranteed." Dr. Seuss

Any job related awards or special recognition you've received?

Our 511 team won the 2007 "Best of ITS Award" for Marketing and Outreach related to My Florida 511 personalized services. We also won a Public Relations Society of America 2009 Bronze Anvil Award for 511 Media Relations.



Vicky being interviewed about 511 for television

Spotlight on...Vicky Mixon continued

Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life.

My best and most fulfilling role in life is being a mom. I have enjoyed every age and stage of my children's lives.

Best job ever / worst job ever... or both?

My best job ever is my current job. I love the talented team I'm privileged to lead, and I enjoy working with the Department. No two days are ever the same. If I had to choose a fantasy career, I would love to be a QVC hostess. I'm fascinated with the way they can talk for an hour about "today's special value."

Tell us a little about your family.

My husband, Bob, and I have been married 30 years. We have two children: Patrick, 25, who is finishing his last year of law school at UF; and Natalie, 22, a UF nursing grad working at Vanderbilt Medical Center.

Do you have any hobbies?

Gator football, traveling, cooking, reading



Penny's Ponderings

As you may know, I'm a native of Northeast Florida, born and raised in Green Cove Springs. I've had occasion to be down in Green Cove and in Keystone Heights a couple of times in the last month or so.

I continue to be amazed at the growth. As I headed to Keystone on Blanding Boulevard (SR 21) I realized that Orange Park has now "merged" with Middleburg. I remember the days when there were miles and miles of rolling farm land and forested properties, and a couple of Mom and Pop businesses in Middleburg. Not so much now. Even with all the additional lanes, the traffic congestion continues as more folks "re-locate" to rural Clay County.

Over on the US 17 corridor, in my youth there was nothing but DuPont forests, Painter's Poultry and the old Thunderbolt Speedway where we'd all go hang out. Now, there's Pace Island, Eagle Harbor, Hibernia Plantation and Margaret's Walk to name a few. Most of these residents work to the north, so US 17, even with the additional lanes, is a parking lot from CR 220 up to and through Orange Park. All it takes is one crash, and you're looking at doubling your commute time.

All I can say is thank goodness for the pending ITS/Signalization projects on these roadways, thanks, in part to the TPO. With this information, it will help 511 to be able to provide information so motorists will have "choices" when commuting.

Photo Gallery



511 visits the Riverside Arts Market



Metric Engineering's own Craig Carnes having a close encounter of the reptilian kind with an alligator



Performer at RAM balances stool on chin almost as well as District 2 balances traffic

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TMC Desk at FDOT **360-5465** Mon-Fri 6a-6p
 TMC Desk at FHP - ***FHP (301-3700) x 122** -24/7/365
 Penny Kamish, Project Manager
 Ryan Crist, TMC Lead Supervisor
 John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Supervisor
 Jason Summerfield, Network Manager
 Derrick Odom, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Santos Morin, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

<u>D2 Day Operators</u>	<u>D2 Night & Weekend Operators</u>	<u>D3 Day Operators</u>	<u>511 Probe</u>
Jesse Gilmour	Jason Evans	Santos Morin	Sherri Byrd
Jessica Lakey	David Rolfe	Adrienne Catapano	Kristen Kirk
Adam Page	Rebecca Reid	Jessica Vazquez	
	Tyler Sowers	Ed Capps	