

# Behind the Scenes



## Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors held a special meeting on July 19, 2021.

The Board elected a new slate of officers – Chair Martin Gombert, Vice Chair Theresa DeVera, Treasurer Lee Burner and Secretary Doran Barnes. The Board also approved the City of Artesia as the newest Access member agency.

Because of the indoor mask mandate that was recently reinstated in Los Angeles County, the in-person Board retreat planned for August has been postponed. The Board Operations Committee will meet on August 23, 2021 with the rest of the committee meetings occurring on September 20, 2021.

The next full meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for October 18, 2021.

**Andre Colaiace**  
**Executive Director**

## A paratransit veteran steers the Eastern Region through challenging times

It is never easy to be a general manager of an Access contractor during an average year. Riders deserve great service, the agency keeps a close eye, and the business needs to be run. Each day brings new and potentially unexpected challenges.

To say the least, 2020 was not an average year. The COVID-19 pandemic brought danger and new challenges which San Gabriel Transit General Manager Dawn Boulden and her team were prepared for. The first order of business while adapting to the new normal was keeping everyone safe. Issuing personal protective equipment and reassuring staff, Dawn was well prepared for this moment. Performance remained stable and the community could continue to rely on Access for essential travel.



Dawn started at San Gabriel Transit in 1994, just one year after the creation of Access. In those days, things were quite different. Trips would arrive during the day on a printed card, from a large printer that operated around the clock. Some of the trips were for same day service requests, and some were for next day. All of these trips needed to be manually entered into the dispatch system. This was not easy, to put it lightly. Today this work is done

by sophisticated, purpose-built reservation, scheduling and dispatch software.

During her time with Access, she has been a Customer Service Representative, Lead Customer Service Representative, Customer Service Supervisor, Customer Service Manager, Dispatcher, Operations Manager and a General Manager. This gives her experience at the ground level that she can draw upon as she leads San Gabriel Transit.

Throughout it all, Dawn never loses focus of what is truly important.

"We have lives in our hands," she says while talking about the

"We have lives in our hands," she says while talking about the importance of getting people from point A to point B. Nothing comes before safety.

She leads with a style that is democratic when possible, seeking input as she collaborates with her team. Riders can rest assured that San Gabriel Transit is helmed by a leader who appreciates the importance of Access and works diligently towards our collective goals of safe and reliable paratransit service.

**Alex Chrisman**  
*Project Administrator*

## Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training

### The Effects & Consequences of Prohibited Drug Use



Last month, staff from Access Services and various other agencies attended a Drug and Alcohol Awareness training program. The interactive virtual course, led by program consultant Leila Procopio-Makuh, covered a wide variety of best practices that personnel in safety-sensitive positions should be aware of when performing functions under the scope of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Department of Transportation (DOT).

The effects and key indicators of multiple narcotics, alcohol, and over-the-counter medications were reviewed to reinforce the knowledge and understanding of the consequences of using these substances both casually, and in the workplace. Rather than simply reviewing issues such as compliance standards for testing, the course was structured to allow participants the opportunity to ask questions from the instructor, during which time background and historical information were given to provide context and a deeper understanding of the topics.

Overall, the course served as a powerful tool for understanding the topic and an excellent reminder of the role that substance abuse awareness plays in the transit industry.

**Jimmy Flores**  
*Operations Service Monitor*

---

## Commendations

"I would like to file a commendation for my driver from Global. I was having a bad day, she tried her best to cheer me up and it helped. She was professional and amazing at her job."

**William Fuentes**  
*Rider since October 1997*

"I would like to file a commendation for my driver from MV Van Nuys. She was a true professional and took extra care in making sure I was properly boarded and strapped in safely. I appreciate how attentive she was."

**Asuncion Hernandez**  
*Rider since April 1996*