



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

The Spirit of Accessibility Award was established in 2000 to recognize the achievements of individuals and organizations involved in making accessible public transportation in Los Angeles County a reality.

We are currently accepting nominations for the 2021 Spirit of Accessibility Award. If you would like to nominate an individual or organization, please download, fill out the form, and submit it according to the instructions. The form can be downloaded from the Access website: https://accessla.org/about_us/publications.html

The award will be presented during the Access Services Annual Membership Meeting on November 18, 2021.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Meet Karen Gilbert, Project Manager for MTM

Access is proud to introduce Karen Gilbert, Program Director of Access ADA Assessments for Access' eligibility services contractor, MTM Transit. Founded in 1995, MTM started as a provider of non-emergency transportation services and has since branched out to include ADA eligibility assessments, and has been Access's eligibility contractor since 2017.



Karen has been with the Access contract since 2017 and quickly ascended to the lead role of Program Director, a critical role in ensuring that Access Services is providing a compliant and high-quality functional assessment to our new applicants and existing customers.

Born in El Salvador, Karen immigrated to the United States with her family at age 10. A dedicated student, Karen received her AA degree from LA City College and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and a Minor in Psychology from Cal State Bakersfield. Karen then returned to Southern California and completed her Master's Degree in Social Work (summa cum laude no less) from Cal State Northridge! Karen's career path has been centered on working with persons with disabilities with organizations such as Mental Health America, Housing for Health, NAMI, Penny Lane Foster Care, and an Adult Day Health Care company providing multidisciplinary care for the geriatric population.

Karen keeps equally busy away from her career with her husband of 12 years, two sons and a new puppy. Additionally, Karen recently found out they have another son on the way. Congratulations to the Gilbert family! In her spare time, she loves spending time with her family, walking their dog, and volunteering for her sons' football team and teaching Sunday school at her church!

When asked what her favorite aspects of the job are, Karen responded, "I love the social aspect of my role. I enjoy the

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opportunity to get to hear about applicant's needs and how I can best help them maintain or gain their independence through Access eligibility. I also enjoy training my staff. This ensures that applicants are treated and provided with quality service, respect, and professionalism. I also enjoy working with my client Access Services. I could not ask for a better client, they are amazing!"

It is a pleasure working with Karen and a pleasure to introduce her to our BTS readers!

David Foster
Eligibility Manager

CTSA Extension hosts Government Contracting Workshop



Government contracting is often characterized as a complex and administratively burdensome process. This notion can deter smaller businesses and organizations from engaging in business opportunities with the government. To help simplify the process, CTSA Extension collaborated with GCAP Services to offer an online Introduction to Government Contracting workshop.

The course provided an overview of the government contracting process from both the contractor and agency perspective. This approach addresses why certain terms and conditions exist and helps

participants understand some of the challenges that public agencies and contractors face when responding to formal solicitations. With these insights, contractors can better prepare for a proposal or bid, and anticipate next steps in the contracting process once they are awarded a government contract. The class provided attendees with the tools to more adequately navigate the government procurement process.

To close the 2021 Learning & Development Program CTSA Extension is hosting Emotional Intelligence training in October. To register for the class, click [here](#).

Melissa Lucero
CTSA Analyst

Commendations

"I would like to file a commendation for Roxanne, a CSR from the Eastern Region. I dialed the 1-800 number and received a polite call taker. She was even able to provide me with a time that worked with my schedule. A big thank you to Roxanne and thank you to Access Services."

Julie Kitashima
Rider since January 2006

"I would like to file a commendation for Francine, a representative from SGT. I called the 1-800 number, and she stayed on the line with me until the vehicle arrived. She was helpful, and it is obvious she cares about her customers."

Gregory Torres
Rider since December 2017