



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

I am very pleased to announce that Access Services is one of 35 recipients in 18 states that have been selected to receive grant funding from President Biden's American Rescue Plan.

Access was selected to receive \$5 million to fund a program for preventive maintenance, major component repairs and rehabilitation of ADA accessible vehicles that have exceeded their useful life. With this award, Access will have the ability to use federal funding to help contractors pay for major component repairs, which can include engines, transmissions, differentials, trans-axles, suspension, and air conditioning units. This program will help extend the life of our vehicle fleet which is critical given the shortages in the automotive market.

I would like to thank Hector Rodriguez, Deputy Executive Director; Rick Streiff, Senior Manager, Fleet Design and Maintenance; and Mike Greenwood, Chief Operations Officer for helping to prepare the fleet data and financial projections and Matthew Avancena, Director, Planning and Coordination for writing the grant application and submitting it to FTA.

The DOT press release can be found here: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/news/biden-harris-administration-and-us-department-transportation-announce-22-billion-grants>.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

access

Rancho Las Amigos National Rehabilitation Center Bluetooth Beacon Project



As part of a grant award from the FTA, Access Services started a pilot project using a Bluetooth enabled beacon to assist visually impaired customers while using Access' Where's My Ride (WMR) app. For this project, Access collaborated with Rancho Los Amigos Rehabilitation Center (RLA) to install the beacon devices throughout the first floor of the outpatient building and Access stand-sign locations. The same beacon devices were also installed in three vehicles operated by Global Paratransit, Inc., Access' contractor for the Southern region.

This is how the system works. As the test vehicle approaches the pick-up point, the vehicle will broadcast a beacon signal, which is then received by the customer's smart phone. Once the customer's phone receives the signal, it will wake up the WMR app and alert the customer that the vehicle has arrived at the pickup location.

Once the customer boards the vehicle, the driver will receive confirmation that the customer who booked the trip is on board and the driver can proceed with the trip. When the vehicle arrives at the drop off location, it will alert the customer that they have arrived at their destination.

In addition to Bluetooth beacons, Access worked with RLA to install an audio wayfinding system in the facility to help visually impaired customers navigate the premises. When a customer arrives at the center, WMR will prompt a third party wayfinding guidance app to provide turn-by-turn directions. The vendor will start testing the beacon devices along with the wayfinding guidance app in the next few weeks. Beta testing with customers will begin in late summer 2022.

continued

I would like to thank Carlos Benavides, President of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities and Co-Chair of the Rancho Los Amigos Patient Advisory Council, RLA staff and Global Paratransit, Inc. for their support and assistance during the pilot project.

Bill Tsuei

Director of Information Technology

WTS-LA Celebrates International Women's Day



International Women's Day (IWD) originated in 1908 in New York City during a garment worker's strike. The United Nations did not officially recognize International Women's Day until 1975. Today it is celebrated in 80 countries across the world. In addition to a globally recognized day, former President Barack Obama established March as Women's History Month in 2011.

Last week I had the pleasure of attending the first in-person event for WTS-LA since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was fitting that the event was in celebration of International Women's Day.

The event was held at the DoubleTree Hilton in Downtown Los Angeles amongst a group of new and current WTS members who came together to honor this day. Some of the special guests at the event included: Seleta

Reynolds, General Manager, LADOT; Samantha Bricker, Chief Sustainability and Revenue Management Officer, LAWA; and Gloria Roberts, Chief Deputy District Director, Caltrans.

As the event came to an end, I reflected on how many women were pioneers in the fight for equality. WTS continues to exemplify their passion of recognizing and advancing women in transportation along with the importance of diversity and inclusion.

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish."

-Former First Lady Michelle Obama

Onnika Payne

Transportation Planner

Commendations

"I would like to return the smile for Sandra, Badge #6121. She was nice, professional, and I can hear the smile in her voice."

Brenda Street

Rider since Dec 2008

"My driver is a jewel and deserves commendation. He is consistently going above the minimum to help me and ensure I am comfortable. He is beyond a 10."

Bobbie Walker

Rider since May 1990