

Behind the Scenes



Executive Director's Report

The Board committees met on January 23 and addressed the following:

- > The Performance Monitoring committee took action and approved a two-year pilot program for the use of TNCs (i.e. Uber) as subcontractors. They also heard a presentation on service area impacts due to updated transit agency route maps.
- > The Planning and Development committee took action and approved a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion resolution, authorized an amendment to the FY23 budget, and approved the FY24 funding request of \$292.2 million. They also approved the FY22 audit results.
- > The External/Stakeholder Relations committee took action and approved a Community Advisory Committee stipend increase. They also received legislative updates from Access' federal, state, and local lobbyists.

The next full meeting of the Board of Directors will be on February 27, 2023.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

access

New Northern Region General Manager strives for excellence



With more than 35 years of experience, Shawn Brophy is no stranger to the complexities of the transit industry and, this past July, he took on the role of General Manager for Access' Northern Region contractor, MV Transportation.

Shawn has worked with transit agencies all over the country, starting his career in the trucking

industry in New York before moving into fixed-route transit in Las Vegas where he helped develop the paratransit service after the Americans with Disabilities Act passed in 1994. Shawn eventually moved to Denver, then to Ann Arbor, Michigan before taking a position in the Bay Area where he served as a Regional Operations Manager and oversaw transit divisions throughout the Pacific Northwest. Most recently he worked with OmniTrans in San Bernardino as the Director of Operations.

Shawn takes on the General Manager role with both public and private sector experience. This gives him a unique perspective of the needs of Access' customers. Those around him can immediately sense that he genuinely cares about each rider's experience. From monitoring service to customer outreach, Shawn does all that he can to ensure superior service. Looking at past performance data and using those metrics to project future needs is one aspect of the job he enjoys.

Shawn fosters a 'lead by example' management style and believes that educating staff on the mission is the first step towards a shared focus and cohesive operation. He wants staff around him to succeed and strives to give them opportunities to gain experience and develop within their roles. He shared that paratransit is complex and requires fluidity throughout the day-to-day operation which may require staff to assist where needed. Therefore, he encourages those under his leadership to share knowledge and cross-train where possible.

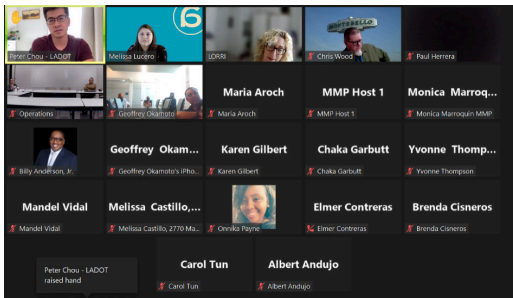
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Outside of work, Shawn has several interests and has an artistic background. From ATV riding to boating to painting, Shawn has dabbled in a little bit of everything. Shawn also enjoys traveling when time permits and has tentative plans to visit Hawaii in February with his wife of 25 years.

Shawn and the Northern Region are committed to providing safe and reliable transportation to all Access riders and we look forward to the new year with his leadership.

Jessica Volanos
Project Administrator

CTSA Guest Speaker Forum: Supporting people with service animals



Access' CTSA Extension recently hosted a forum for transit professionals to learn more about supporting people with service animals. Lorri Bernson, a Community Liaison at Guide Dogs of America, facilitated the speaking engagement.

Ms. Bernson has unique experience providing blindness consultation to production companies, actors, writers, and directors. She received her first guide dog, Nigel, in 2002. During the forum, participants engaged in an open dialogue with Lorri about the "dos and

don'ts" of interacting with service animals. She also provided her guidance for assisting persons with visual impairments. The best way to help is to simply ask.

Under the ADA, a service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Roughly 61 million Americans have some type of disability, but only 1% of them have access to service animals. Guide dogs undergo extensive specialized training that lasts 18 months and can cost between \$10,000 to \$20,000 to complete. Guide dogs act as a person's eyes, alert owners to important sounds, and in some cases, sense medical emergencies. The average wait time for a guide dog is 3 years. Foundations like Guide Dogs of America are an essential part of the training and application process.

Access Services would like to thank Lorri for sharing her experience with CTSA Extension and its participants. This forum marked the close of the 2022 Learning & Development Program.

Melissa Lucero
HR Assistant/Specialist

Commendations

"My driver is very nice and patient. He deserves commendation and a raise for continuously going above and beyond the call of duty."

Kelly Weiss
Rider since Feb 1999

"I am filing a smile for my driver, Hita. She is very thoughtful, considerate, and helpful. I had a hip replacement and Hita was quick to help me get inside the vehicle. What an excellent driver!"

Suleiman Edmondson
Rider since June 2016