



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

One of the highlights of the recently concluded APTA TRANSform Conference in Anaheim was LA Metro's Thought Leadership Workshop hosted by Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins.

Access Services and agencies from around the United States came together to share their perspectives on providing large-scale special event transportation in cities across North America.

We heard from guest speakers, Andy Byford (Amtrak), Dorval Carter (Chicago Transit Authority), and Felicia Alexander (USDOT) who shared their insights on providing transportation for large events. It was particularly fascinating to hear Mr. Byford's perspective on the challenge of providing transportation services for Queen Elizabeth's funeral when he was the head of Transport for London.

As Los Angeles prepares to host the World Cup in 2026 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2028, it is critical that we continue to work together to ensure Los Angeles County residents and visitors from around the world have access to a world-class, accessible transit system.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Access attends APTA's TRANSform Conference and EXPO

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) held its annual TRANSform Conference and EXPO from Sept. 29 to Oct 2 in Anaheim, CA. There were 3,100 attendees, including visitors from transit agencies in Canada and the United Kingdom. The conference brought together public transit professionals, policymakers, and industry leaders to share best practices, collaborate, and celebrate industry achievements.

Members of the Access Board of Directors and Access staff attended. Attendees engaged in panel discussions and committee meetings and met with experts offering the latest technology and solutions for bus, paratransit, and rail systems at the Products and Services Showcase.



The numerous committee meetings and panels addressed a number of critical topics for the transit industry, such as electric and hydrogen bus procurement and workforce development. APTA also highlighted the association's commitment to racial equity, equity-driven initiatives, and diversity.

Academy Award-winning actress Mira Sorvino, a human rights advocate, delivered the opening day keynote. She underscored transit's role in stopping human trafficking and the importance of training employees to see the signs of trafficking.

Executive Director Andre Colaiace participated in a live Transit Unplugged panel, hosted by Paul Comfort and Uber Transit, discussing how paratransit agencies are utilizing Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), like Uber, Lyft and SilverRide to deliver quality next-day and same-day paratransit. He was joined by transit executives from New York, Portland and the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority in Florida.

Randy Johnson
Director, Government Affairs and Outreach

Access staff participates in Latinos in Transit Leadership Academy

I recently participated in the Leadership Academy: Leading in Middle Management for Latinos in Transit (LIT), and gained invaluable knowledge in public transportation management practices, including finance, procurement, labor relations, and regulatory compliance.

The academy consisted of five modules, which I completed over a five-month period from March 2024 to September 2024. Industry leaders virtually conducted the modules, and, to graduate, I participated in an in-person presentation. The 2024 LIT Leadership Summit took place on September 14, 2024, in Portland, Oregon. During the Summit, my group and I presented on the crucial role of paratransit, its current state, and the challenges faced by the agencies we interviewed. We emphasized the importance of community engagement, funding, and the need for technological upgrades, proposing how both funding and technology impact accessibility.



During the Leadership Academy, I developed several key skills:

1. Leadership and Management: Enhanced my ability to manage projects and make strategic decisions.
2. Communication: Improved my public speaking, presentation, and interpersonal communication skills.
3. Networking: Built a strong network of industry professionals and peers, which is invaluable for future collaborations and career growth.
4. Problem-Solving: Learned to approach challenges with a strategic mindset and develop effective solutions.
5. Time Management: Balanced multiple responsibilities and deadlines, honing my ability to manage time efficiently.
6. Technical Knowledge: Gained deeper insights into public transportation systems, regulatory compliance, and technological advancements in the industry.

These skills have significantly enhanced my professional capabilities and prepared me to take on more substantial roles in the future. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to network with professionals across the country, engage in professional development, and learn from industry leaders. Our presentation at the LIT summit was well-received, sparking significant discussion from the audience. As a result, LIT expressed interest in including specific paratransit topics in their next summit and academy. Thank you, Access, for this incredible opportunity.

Elizabeth Zambrano
Human Resources Manager

Commendations

"Carla was my driver on this trip. She was very professional and nice. She made sure the vehicle was cleaned and was super helpful to me."

Reiko Bradley

Rider since March 2010

"I use Access-to-Work, and my driver Keyko Sanchez is courteous, a great driver and a safe driver. She is very responsive to everyone on the ride and patient and communicates effectively and makes riders feel relaxed."

Thomas Garnett

Rider since October 2010