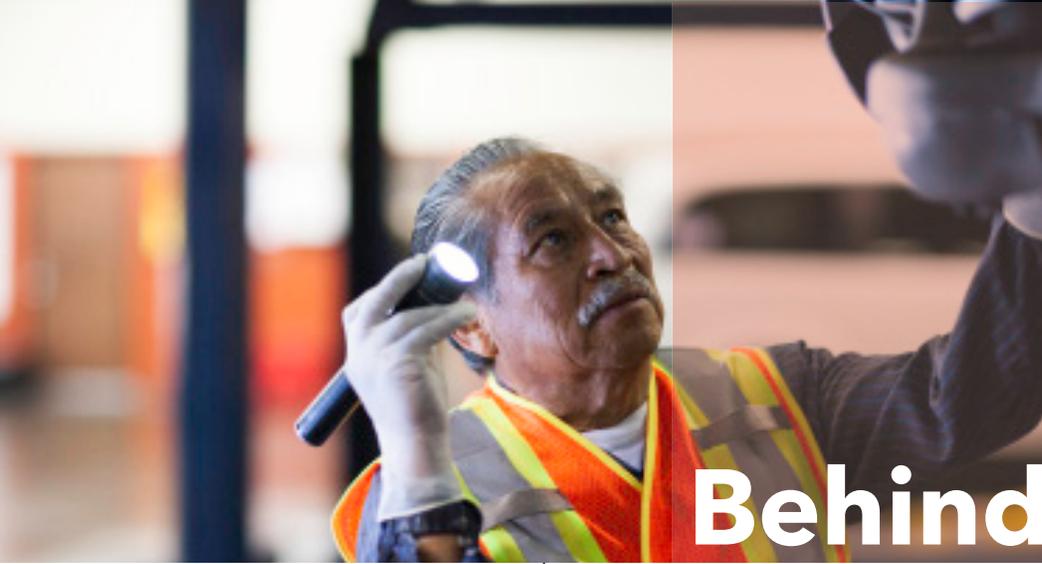


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Behind the Scenes

Special Guest Columnist

Dolores Nason
Vice-Chair, Access Board of Directors
Executive Director, Disabled Resources Center

I was fortunate to attend the APTA Transit Board Members and Board Support Seminar in July 2015. Flowing through the whole conference was the theme "You can't go there, if you cannot get there." Transit matters, even to those that don't use it. One bus removes 50 or 60 cars off of a freeway. Today 99% of buses in the nation are accessible and there are 160,000 individuals actively advocating across the nation for transit. It was suggested that the transit industry adopt the mantra of the movie Field of Dreams; "Build it and they will come." As a board member, it is important to look at transit with a long telescope by not only focusing on the present but keeping an eye on the future too.



In Remembrance of Richard Devylder



Photo: *Richard Devylder*

Access Services and the entire community lost a dear friend and advocate with the passing of Richard Devylder earlier this month. Richard was one of earliest riders of Access and he played a key role in our development as an agency by being one of the charter members of Access' Community Advisory Committee. Later Richard was appointed to Access' Board of Directors where he served from 1997 to 1999.

Richard was a tireless advocate for the disabled and championed transportation reforms and emergency preparedness. Professionally he served on all levels - local, state, and federal. This included being Director of the Dayle McIntosh Center for the Disabled in Anaheim, working

in California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and serving as the Senior Advisor for Accessible Transportation in the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Richard was honored by Access with the 2013 Spirit of Accessibility Award. The award recognized how he has had a profound impact on improving access to public transportation for people with disabilities, not just in Los Angeles County, but also in California and throughout the United States. He was presented the award at Access' Annual Meeting in front of many of Access' member agencies representatives and staff.

Richard's life was celebrated on Friday August 14th at a service attended by his friends, colleagues, and Access staff. Attendees shared wonderful memories of Richard and how much of a difference he played in their lives. An important point made by many was how Richard's contributions would continue to live on and help many in the disabled community.

*By F Scott Jewell,
Chief Operating Officer*

Harbor Regional Center Advisory Committee Meeting, on Access' Service Changes



On Saturday, August 15, Harbor Regional Center in Torrance held its quarterly Advisory Committee Meeting made up of Regional Center case workers and clients. In light of recent service changes at Access Services (adoption of Reasonable Modification and Beyond the Curb service on July 1st) and a proposed Dynamic Fare change (for Board discussion on August 24th), the Committee sought an update from Access Services.

Eric Haack, Access Strategic Planner, gave a general overview of what Access Services is and the paratransit transportation that it provides. He also discussed the changes that Access has already adopted. The presentation concluded with a discussion on the elements of the proposed Dynamic Fare structure in which Access would no longer retain its existing two-tier (\$2.75/\$3.50) fare structure;

a customer's fare would be based on the cost of the same trip happening on fixed route within a six-tier (\$0.00/\$0.50/\$1.00/\$2.00/\$3.00/\$4.00) fare structure.

Committee members saw immediate benefits with the newly started Beyond the Curb service for some customers who may be unable to get to/from the curb in front of their destination. The committee members were also very pleased with the overview of the proposed fare change as the Regional Centers generally reimburse their clients for trips they take on Access and this change could have an impact on the Regional Center's limited transportation budget.

For questions or comments about the Harbor Regional Center Advisory Committee, please feel free to contact me.

*By Eric Haack,
Strategic Planner*

Access participates in emergency preparedness Tabletop Exercise

Access and our service providers took part in a long anticipated Tabletop exercise with the assistance of First On Compliance on August 12, 2015. Almost 50 people participated as the third floor council chambers became a make-shift Incident Command Post (ICP) for each provider and the second floor conference room transformed into the Access Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The exercise provided much-needed practice to apply our Incident Command System (ICS) training.

The EOC and ICP were separated to test communications as if Access were responding to a real life event. EOC and provider staff did an excellent job communicating information to assist in the staged event. The exercise even simulated requests coming in for assistance from the County EOC and Metro as well. Exercise facilitators monitored activities and prompted reactions to "injects" throughout the day.

By the end of the afternoon, three distinct EOC teams had simulated operational periods and responded to wild fires in several areas of the county, a lost Access vehicle and rider, a forced evacuation of people from Olive View Medical Center, negative media and social media attention directed at Access' response, and civil unrest at Access' headquarters.

Another key part of the event was testing our ability to document efforts and resources. In the inevitable event that Access responds to a disaster, completing the proper forms for reimbursement will be critical. Access got detailed practice in what needs to be tracked and how it needs to be documented.

We can't wait until next year's exercise!

*By Cynthia P. Stevenson, Safety Analyst, and
Mike Greenwood, Deputy Executive Director of Operations*



Photo: Tabletop Participants

Long Beach CACOD Meeting on Access Service Changes

On Thursday, August 13, Louis Burns, Customer Service Manager and Eric Haack, Strategic Planner attended the August monthly meeting of the Long Beach Citizens Advisory Committee on Disabilities. The Committee's chair, Deaka McClain, had requested an update from Access Services on the service changes recently adopted by Access: Beyond the Curb Service and Reasonable Modification. The committee was also interested in an update on Access proposed changes to its fare structure (Dynamic Fare). Mr. Haack and Mr. Burns provided an overview of Access Services and the changes that Access has adopted and the fare change that it is proposing they also answered a variety of questions that came from the committee members as well as members of the Long Beach disability community. The committee members voiced how important Access is to the lives of so many people with disabilities in the Long Beach area.

Small improvements, such as Beyond the Curb service, can have major impacts on the traveling freedom of Access users. Other changes such as changing one's base fare from \$2.75 to \$3.00 or \$4.00 can have an equally important impact on that same freedom for someone on a fixed income. The committee thanked Access Services for the important work that it does and for the willingness to speak openly about its service model and changes that it has and is proposing to undertake.

For questions or comments about the Long Beach Citizens Advisory Committee on Disabilities, please feel free to contact me.

*By Eric Haack,
Strategic Planner*

Accounting Software Migration



On July 8, 2015, Access officially transitioned from its legacy Sage 50 Complete Accounting system to a cloud based financial and procurement system provided by Oracle Corporation. This change was made necessary due to the continued growth of Access and the outdated, manual processes that were in place.

The Sage 50 Complete Accounting system is aimed to serve small businesses, and was acquired by Access twenty years ago, at a time when the agency had less than one tenth the current operating budget. Over time Access began using spreadsheets in addition to the Sage system because it lacked features that are critical to the agency's financial operation.

The new Oracle software will allow the agency to better track expenses, quickly produce reports and more easily analyze financial data. Additionally, this new system has alleviated many of the manual processes of the Procurement department, which previously used forms, spreadsheets and databases to record, track and manage procurement records.

*By Melissa Thompson
Data Analyst*

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Rider Comments

"This note is to express my gratitude for the wonderful Access Program". On November of last year (2014), I was evaluated and accepted for this program. The financial relief is deeply appreciated during such a "lean" period of my life. It not only helps me, but many others. I would not be able to explore job opportunities, attend support groups or get to the library if it were not for your service.

Your program is a win-win situation for everyone. Thank you! Thank you! And a Big Hug to ALL that make this program possible"

Elizabeth,
 Rider since December 2014

Customer called to send a commendation for Access vehicles, she really welcomes the new vehicles, they are clean, fresh, and great to ride in; drivers are pleasant and helpful. Looking forward to many more rides.

Mildred,
 Rider since March 2014

access

Senior Citizen Scam Awareness Program



Photo: Senior Citizen Scam Awareness Program

Local seniors from the Los Angeles City Council, District 15, were transported to a Senior Citizen Fair on August 13, 2015, at the Normandale Recreation Center to enjoy each other's company and become informed about fraud, scams and elder abuse committed by con artists. The Senior Citizen Fair had appearances by the Stop Senior Scam Acting Program, a presentation by Ann Stahl from the Federal Trade Commission, and informational booths.

The Stop Senior Scam Acting Program incorporated entertainment skits, music,

and dance. They had several performances to raise awareness among seniors. They showcased performances that included, among others, internet, driver's license, and IRS scams. The senior actors shared their personal experiences to bring power and legitimacy to their message. The Federal Trade Commission provided an exemplary presentation on the subtle threats of fraud and scam crimes. According to Ann Stahl, 25% of Americans that fall victim to fraud are over the age of 60!

The Senior Citizen Fair was a great opportunity to shed light on the growing issue of elder abuse. It was the perfect atmosphere to create a positive impact and provide best practices towards solving the problem. An outreach event is where the magic begins. It was a rewarding experience to have attended this event. Access Services has been protecting and allocating resources to the most vulnerable individuals of every race, age, and gender for more than twenty years. I am indeed honored to be an intern at Access Services.

By Dulce Ramirez,
 Safety Intern

Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Upcoming Course

Access is hosting the Harassment Prevention for Transit Supervisors course that will be presented by the National Transit Institute (NTI). This course is AB-1825 Compliant and meets new California regulations.

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Harassment Prevention for Transit Supervisors

Please address any concerns or inquiries pertaining to course to Sherri Adams at adams2@accessla.org or call (213) 270-6000