



In this issue:

Sustainable Driver Workforce.....2
Celebrating Alphy Heedly2
Back to School Fair.....3
Rider Commendations.....3

Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

Earlier this week, the Access Board and senior staff held a day-long governing work session to further develop the agency's strategic organizational development. The session, facilitated by Doug Eadie, had four major objectives - to discuss major developments in the field of public transit governance, to update the Board's strategic framework, to identify practical ways to strengthen the Board's governing capacity, and to identify leadership targets for the Executive Director.

The Board and staff were broken up into six breakout groups that provided feedback that will lead to further refinement of the above objectives over the next couple of months. I would like to thank everyone who participated and I am looking forward to continuing this into the future.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Women in Transportation (WTS) Celebration



I recently had the pleasure of attending a Women in Transportation, Los Angeles Chapter event to celebrate recent industry milestones for women.

The dinner was in celebration of the outstanding achievements

of five incredible women. The women were Nadine Lee, Chief of Staff, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Elissa Konove, Undersecretary, California State Transportation Agency; Michelle Boehm, Director of Transportation, City of Los Angeles, Office of the Mayor, and Jonaura Wisdom, Chief Civil Rights Programs Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; and Yvette Zoe-Robles Rapose, Chief Communications Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Appointed to senior industry leadership positions, each individual answered in-depth questions asked by the host and attendees about their professional journey. The women shared uplifting stories, obstacles, and issues but each had a positive outcome. It was great to hear about their professional journey because they valued their obstacles as a learning tool. As women in transportation, they gave attendees advice such as having a mentor or someone to speak with when in doubt.

The celebration concluded with more advice to new professionals in transportation, and personal engagement with attendees after the presentations. The accomplishments from each of these women is remarkable, and provided me and others with tools to help with our professional careers.

Onnika Payne
CTSA Analyst

Retaining a Sustainable Driver Workforce

Last month, Access Services' CTSA Extension program hosted the Retaining a Sustainable Driver Workforce training. Caryn Souza, a Trainer and Certification Program Director from the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) facilitated the class.

The class addressed all aspects of employee retention and the need for driver recruitment. The training outlined various topics including selection guidelines, onboarding, performance appraisals, training and development. The practical tools gave attendees an action plan to maintain a successful driver recruitment and retention program.

The CTSA Extension program is expanding its efforts to connect, collaborate, and foster relationships with professionals from transit to non-profit agencies, social workers, health and human services representatives, and community advocates. As outreach continues to grow, the CTSA Extension program will introduce new areas of development and interactive courses to meet the needs of Los Angeles County professionals.

For more information about upcoming trainings, please check out the CTSA Extension program's [Learning and Development EBook](#). If you have additional questions, please contact ctsa@accessla.org.

Onnika Payne
CTSA Analyst

Alphy Heedly: Celebrating a 20 year commitment to providing quality ADA service



Global Paratransit Inc. (GPI) celebrated Alphy Heedly's 20th year anniversary. Alphy began her career with ITOA Cab Company, which performed roughly 250 Access trips per day at the time. She recalls the environment as being very challenging with only 10 call takers available per shift. The primary goal was to help riders by providing safe and reliable transportation, which is very similar to today's objective.

Alphy explained that things took a complete turn for the better once Global Paratransit was awarded the Access contract many years ago.

Under the leadership of CEO Reza Nasrollahy, who developed a structured system and provided the necessary guidance and support to run a successful operation, service delivery improved. Perhaps most importantly, a family style culture took root, which is the main reason she has remained at GPI for all these years.

Alphy expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve GPI and Access customers for the past 20 years. She truly loves her job and enjoys helping Access riders with their transportation needs.

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a commendation for my driver, Liliana Silva. Liliana was outstanding during my trip and exceeded expectations. As a rider with MS, unexpected accommodations may be necessary. Liliana helped me adjust myself correctly into my seat, and later offered to pull the vehicle over for additional assistance when I experienced my MS symptoms. My safety and comfort was Liliana's primary concern from start to finish. "

Brenda Leggon
Rider since July 2010

"I want to file a commendation on behalf of my mother, Lourdes. My mother is a person with dementia and gets very anxious while traveling. The driver spoke with my mother to help ease her anxiety. Thanks to this fantastic driver, my mother responded well during the trip and had a great experience. I am so thankful for this driver, and I look forward to riding with her again in the future."

Lourdes Devera
Rider since 2016

8th Annual Back to School Resource and Health Fair



South Central Los Angeles Regional Center (SCLARC) hosted their 8th Annual Back to School Resource and Health Fair. This Invitation Only event is highly anticipated by SCLARC consumers. This year, the event was held at the South Gate Auditorium located within South Gate Park. The auditorium's banquet room was filled with ten resource exhibitors, ranging from medical, dental, social service, and transportation vendors. Over 150 clients and their families were in attendance. Consumers had their choice from several tables filled with school supplies, including free backpacks designated for pre-registered clients. SCLARC serves over 16,000 consumers and is one of seven regional centers in Los Angeles County. Access Services Compliance Specialist, Mayra Perez-Calderon and Southern Region Project Administrator, Faustino Salvador were proud to provide support and collaborate with SCLARC on this resource fair.

Mayra Perez-Calderon
Compliance Specialist

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