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Behind the Scenes

Executive Director’s Report

Last year, Access Services retained Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to perform a Comprehensive Operational Review of the operational component of Access Paratransit. The focus of this study was to assess how Access Paratransit is organized and delivered.

The final report has been released and includes a number of short and long-term recommendations some of which are in the process of being completed, such as adopting and revising the Key Performance Indicators that Access uses to monitor the operating performance of its contractors. Other longer-term recommendations, regarding Access-owned facilities for example, will be folded into the Agency’s upcoming strategic plan.

The Final Report can be found on the Access website at: accessla.org/about_us/publications.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Second Annual Disability Pride Parade and Festival

The Southern California Resource Services for Independent Living (SCRS-IL) and Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis hosted the 2nd Annual Disability Pride Parade and Festival located at the East Los Angeles Civic Center.

The parade kicked off with well over 800 attendees who took to the streets of East Los Angeles to walk as one for Disability Pride. The celebration included entertainment, music, speakers, and festivities including a mini pumpkin patch sponsored by the Southern California Gas Company. Everyone stood side by side to celebrate inclusion and diversity.



Exhibitors from government and social service agencies, including Access, attended. Those who utilize Access as one of their transportation needs visited our table to express their appreciation for the service and offered several compliments regarding customer service and the drivers. One rider asked if there were alternative methods to file a commendation rather than calling customer service directly. I explained that the Access website, accessla.org, is another resource that provides a way for customers to give their input.

Mayra Perez-Calderon
Mobility Management Counselor

FTA Region IX hosts Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Forum

In September, the Federal Transit Administration Region IX Office of Civil Rights and Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) hosted the first Regional DBE Forum.

FTA's Region IX includes the states of Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada and includes the American territories of Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. Region IX's grant portfolio consists of \$12 billion in federal funding disbursed among 141 grantees to help fund over 800 transit-related projects. Each federally funded transit agency is required to establish a DBE Program, which ensures non-discrimination in the award of U.S. DOT-assisted contracts and re-affirms a commitment to fairness and equal opportunity to minority-owned business owners.

The forum hosted over 60 participants from across the region and included the following panelists:

- > Lynette Little, U.S. Department of Transportation, Region IX Civil Rights Officer
- > Virginia Abadessa, Orange County Transportation Authority
- > Aida Berudo Douglas, Long Beach Transit

- > Tashai Smith, LA Metro
- > Kimberly Wilson, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
- > Lia McNeil-Kakaris, Southern California Regional Rail Authority

The DBE Forum was the first training and educational opportunity designed specifically for Region IX Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Liaison Officers (DBELOs). The training provided a high-level overview of six areas of study including discussion forums and case studies.

Each panelist shared their DBE program structure including outreach, oversight, and implementation. They also discussed agency challenges regarding DBE implementation and reporting. The final session was structured as an open forum for all transit representatives to discuss opportunities and innovative solutions for a successful and compliant DBE Program.

Alvina Narayan
Grants and Compliance Analyst

Glendale Chamber of Commerce Speaker Series



Supervisor Barger

On October 4, Access was invited to attend the Glendale Chamber of Commerce Speaker Series, featuring Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

Supervisor Barger not only touched on Metro, where she is a member of the Board, but she also

spoke about other modes of transportation that are available including Metrolink. Supervisor Barger sees Metrolink as a service County residents have not fully utilized.

I was fortunate enough to make the first comment when she opened the floor for questions. I identified myself and thanked Supervisor Barger and her fellow Supervisors for supporting Access' bid to receive Measure M funding. I also stated that more is needed to support transportation services for a growing disabled population. I closed by saying, "If we live long enough, many of us will require a service like Access'.

After the meeting, Supervisor Barger was kind enough to thank me for speaking on behalf of the paratransit community.

Louis Burns
Community Liaison

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a compliment for Daniel Zarate a CSR at ALTA for remaining patient while helping me retrieve my Rider ID. I am blind and I am having difficulty writing my ID correctly and remembering it. Daniel spent about 15 minutes on the phone with me. Daniel went out of his way to help me memorize my ID numbers. I asked to speak with his supervisor to tell them what a great job he was doing and he refused, because he said it was his job to help."

Cathy Lewis
Customer since May 1999

"I would like to file a compliment for driver Jennifer. Jennifer really goes above and beyond to make sure her riders are safe and comfortable. She is always offering assistance, and is extremely helpful. Jennifer really cares about her customers. Jennifer is very caring and shows each rider the same wonderful service. Jennifer deserves this recognition because her customer service makes me smile. I would like to thank Jennifer for her kindness."

Undina Lewis
Customer since January 1997

Irwindale Senior Center Health Fair

The Irwindale Senior Center hosted its Annual Health Fair in early October which strives to serve the needs of the senior population by providing vital health information and services.

Access Services Project Administrator Jack Garate and I were on hand to provide members of the senior center information regarding their paratransit options, as well as local options in their area. Mobility Management Partners Travel Trainer Bryan

Garza was also available to provide members with information regarding individual and group travel training options. In addition, seniors are taken on excursions through Metro's On the Move Program, which trains members on using public transportation.

Mayra Perez-Calderon
Mobility Management Counselor

