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Behind the Scenes

Executive Director’s Report

I am pleased to report that Access recently received notification from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that they have accepted Access’ responses to findings outlined in the ADA Complementary Paratransit Compliance Review of Access Services, which was originally conducted on August 14-18, 2017. The review is now officially considered closed.

I would like to thank the many Access staff members (particularly Matthew Avancena and Alvina Narayan) who helped prepare for the Review and worked on addressing the findings. I would also like to thank the FTA for their assistance during this process and their focus on working with Access to improve service to our customers.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Immigrants with Disabilities: 1st Annual Resource Fair

Access Services was invited to be an exhibitor at the Immigrants with Disabilities 1st Annual Resource Fair. Immigrants with Disabilities, a Non-Profit organization, operates their services from the Church of the Epiphany in Lincoln Heights. The organization provides persons with disabilities a variety of resources and aims to raise awareness among the immigrant population.



The festivities included a special presentation by Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis. Ms. Solis provided a touching story of her parent’s migration to the United States in hopes of achieving the “American Dream.” Like many families, she spoke of her parent’s ambition to provide their children the best opportunities this country can provide. Through hard work and dedication, she counts herself as a prime example that anything is possible - “Si Se Puede” (Yes We Can).

In addition to Access Services, other agencies provided brief presentations on a variety of local resources including transportation, medical, legal, and volunteer opportunities in Los Angeles County. For interested applicants, Access staff was on hand to provide clarification regarding eligibility criteria and was able to assist many participants in registering for paratransit services, no matter their immigration status.

Mayra Perez-Calderon
Compliance Specialist, Eligibility Department

Pasadena Transit and transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities

As part of Access' member agency outreach, I recently met with Pasadena's Transit Manager Valerie Gibson, and Senior Planner Sebastian Hernandez to discuss some of the programs and new innovations that Pasadena has for its residents and visitors.

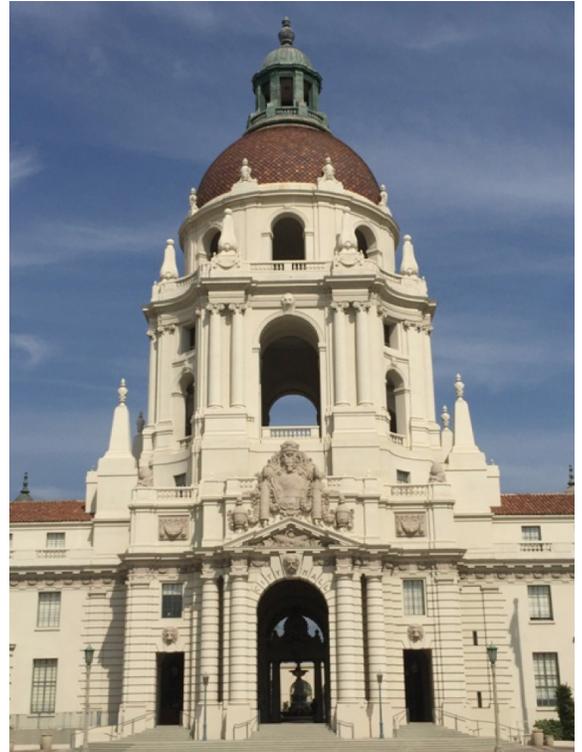
The City of Pasadena provides fixed route services throughout Pasadena and Altadena on eight bus routes. Pasadena also provides a Dial-a-Ride service for seniors (60 and over) and persons with disabilities who are residents of the cities of Pasadena, Altadena, San Marino and portions of unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Pasadena recently introduced real-time bus arrival screens on stops throughout Pasadena Transit's service area. Persons waiting for fixed route service can look on a small solar-powered screen attached to the bus stop pole to see when buses of specific Pasadena Transit or L.A. Metro routes will arrive at a specific bus stop. Access customers with a valid Access ID card can ride Pasadena Transit free of charge since Pasadena is part of the Free Fare Program.

Pasadena's Dial-A-Ride service recently installed TAP card reading validators on its vehicles, so customers can either pay the \$0.75 one way fare in cash or by using stored value on a Senior/Disabled TAP card.

Pasadena Transit prides itself on its customer-focused, friendly service for its customers, and works to design a service that is responsive to the needs of the residents who live, work and play throughout Pasadena's service area.

Eric Haack
Strategic Planner



2018 Joe King Memorial Scholarship Award Winner



The Joe King Memorial Scholarship Award was established to honor the dedication and contribution of the late Joe King, a legendary staff member of Access Services. Access Services established the scholarship award to honor Mr. King's legacy by recognizing an individual who exhibits leadership and contributions to transit and paratransit services.

This year's 2018 Joe King Memorial Scholarship Award recipient is Justin Rambaran. Mr. Rambaran is a Mobility Assessment Evaluator at Medical Transportation Management, Inc. (MTM). His dedication to helping people with disabilities began when he switched his career path from information technology to physical therapy, where he had an opportunity to guide persons with disabilities through their treatment plans.

In the past year, Justin has processed over 1,300 eligibility determinations for Access applicants and addressed over 170 customer service inquiries on top of his primary role as an evaluator. Additionally, Mr. Rambaran demonstrated dedication and passion to learn more about paratransit services by assisting people with disabilities at various locations throughout Los Angeles County.

His contributions led him to earn the "Spotlight Award" at MTM. The award is given to employees who make a significant contribution to the organization's core values and are ready to take on a leadership role. Mr. Rambaran is an asset to the eligibility team at MTM, and his passions exude that of a true leader.

Justin will attend the University of the Pacific, 2019 Transit and Paratransit Management Certificate Program on a scholarship. Congratulations Justin on being the 2018 Joe King Memorial Scholarship Award recipient!

Onnika Payne
CTSA Analyst

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a smile for Jessica from OMC. I was waiting for my vehicle and called for an ETA. I spoke to Jessica. I was running late and did not want to cancel my trip because I might have received a no-show. Jessica spoke with her Supervisor Tamika and they were able to get my trip canceled and rebooked without charging a no-show. I appreciate the extra effort that was taken to help me."

Bernette Staten
Rider since May 2014

"I would like to file a smile for my driver Poleta. She greeted me with a smile and a hello. She didn't wait for me to go to her, she came to me. She takes great care for each and every passenger she meets. Poleta is very polite, caring and passionate. She picked me up on time and got me home on time. Poleta is just the greatest driver."

Kathleen Schultz
Rider since March 2005

Marking and Tethering Program Training

Road Safety Inspector Phillip Rice and I recently went to Access' Eligibility Facility in Commerce and performed a "Train the Trainer" session on marking and tethering mobility devices. Operations Manager Rogelio Gomez and Eligibility personnel from Access (Geoffrey Okamoto, Mayra Perez-Calderon, Norma DeAlba, and Torrance Johnson) joined us along with three members of the MTM staff (Scotty Galvan, Miguel Rodriguez and Karen Gilbert).



The classroom session included a Power Point presentation that featured "Proper & Improper Securement" videos as well as:

- > Principles of Marking & Tethering
- > Best Practices
- > What Not To Do
- > Questions and Answers

The hands-on session took us to the Eligibility Center's "Functional Assessment Room". There, we were able to use the shell of an Access van and two types of mobility devices, a manual wheelchair and a power scooter. Separately, both devices were loaded and secured in the van. Once secured, best points of securement were shown and the marking for "J Hooks" and tethering were explained to staff. Staff took turns in securing the devices.

The response from the MTM staff was very positive with comments like, "The training event was very thorough," and, "The Marking and Tethering training was very informative."

MTM has since adopted this presentation for use in training their own staff while providing marking and tethering during the eligibility process.

Colin J Obeso
Senior Road Safety Inspector