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Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

Access recently joined with Metro and other transit operators to provide free rides to the polls on Election Day. The initiative was approved by the Access Services Board at a special meeting and staff then informed riders using seat drops, web site notices and recordings on reservations and customer service lines.

Overall, 312 customers requested free trips to polling places on Election Day! Access is proud to have participated in this initiative to make it easier for people with disabilities to have their voices heard.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Access attends California Transit Association's 53rd Annual Fall Conference & Expo

I recently attended the California Transit Association's (CTA) 53rd Annual Fall Conference & Expo in Long Beach, CA. The conference took place October 24-26 at the Long Beach Convention Center. This three-day event featured dynamic presentations from industry experts on the pressing transit challenges facing California, and the innovative solutions transit leaders are using to address them.

The conference also featured a number of educational sessions:

- > On-Demand Solutions: This panel of experts from state agencies, public and private organizations, discussed the emergence of on-demand travel modes, like micro transit, currently changing the transportation landscape.
- > Living In The Future: The private sector has quickly responded to the demand for faster, greener, and more convenient transportation options. While these options have dramatically enhanced transit connectivity, at the same time, new challenges have surfaced in the areas of safety, ADA accessibility, social equity, and ridership retention. A panel of municipal operators shared how transit agencies were adapting and responding to the impacts of these new, emerging modes.
- > Mobility-as-a-Service: The goal for private and public operators alike is to make traveling more integrated, seamless, and more connected. The State of California's goal is to facilitate a process for statewide trip planning and payment options, to make traveling simpler and more cost-effective for all.



Culver City Transportation Director Art Ida, left, accepts the Transit Professional of the Year Award for Small Operators.

Other conference highlights included a moving speech from former Dallas Police Chief David Brown, who shared his message of outreach, accountability, and inclusion. Also, the presentation of the annual Small Operators Awards, with the Transit Professional of the Year Award going to Art Ida, Transit Director, Culver City Bus, and Access Board member.

Randy Johnson
Manager Government Affairs and Outreach

Access Services Presentation at East Los Angeles Community Service Center

Access Services was recently invited to the East Los Angeles Community Service Center (ELACSC) to provide their senior group information regarding paratransit services. The ELACSC networks with county departments and non-profit organizations, such as Access Services, which provides their participants with comprehensive information, referrals, assistance completing forms and translations services.



This multi-purpose facility is designed to enhance the community with a range of health, educational, social and recreational activities. Access Services provided participants with valuable information regarding:

- > What is Access
- > What is the eligibility criteria
- > What to expect at the evaluation center
- > How to ride on Access
- > Other Transit Resources

In addition, Access Services was on hand to provide new applicants and renewing riders a status update on their submitted or renewal applications. It was a great meeting with such an active group; they had many good questions regarding the service and were very grateful for the information provided. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with this facility to ensure their patrons are aware of our service and how it could enhance their ability to travel independently.

Mayra Perez-Calderon
Compliance Specialist, Eligibility Department

New CSR Incentive Program rewards call takers

During the month of October, the first Access-provided incentives were delivered to contractors to recognize customer service representatives (CSRs) for delivering a great customer experience. CSRs are the voice of Access and provide a vital service for our riders.

It is not an easy job. One must be patient, have a deep understanding of the reservation process and be efficient. The program ranks CSRs with an automated point system that takes into consideration an average of Operations Service Monitor quality assurance observation scores and the total number of compliments and complaints lodged by riders.

With the assistance of the procurement team, 26 call takers received ten-dollar gift cards for In-N-Out Burger and 9 were provided with a family four pack of tickets to the movies. GPI's Patrick Hooker and Sergio Sanchez received the top prize; four tickets to Knott's Berry Farm theme park in Buena Park. Global Paratransit of the Southern Region and MV of the Northern Region tied for the honor of the most CSRs to earn a prize, with 13 each, while West-Central regional contractor California Transit saw 6 representatives receive awards.

Now that the first round of prizes has been delivered, the program will be reviewed to find any opportunities for improvement as it continues to incentivize great customer service.

Alex Chrisman
Project Administrator



GPI Call Center Manager Georgina Caldera presents four Knott's Berry Farm theme park tickets to CSR Patrick Hooker at Global's Gardena call center facility.

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a smile for my driver. She was attentive and approached me as I am blind. She was very friendly and let the ramp down for me as I approached. The driver even apologized for the multiple stops she had to make. I want Access to know how much I appreciate the driver approaching me and announcing his or her presence. Most of the drivers I receive don't approach."

Linda Tyler
Rider since June 2006

"I would like to file a smile for Ms. Ingrid Vargas. I have had the distinct pleasure of riding in her van multiple times. After just 11 months on the job, Ingrid has a calm, quiet, soft-spoken, and welcoming demeanor. She has the perfect personality to be an Access driver. You can tell she cares deeply about her quality of work and the passengers. Ingrid is a keeper Access should do everything it can to make sure she stays around!"

Allan Buck
Rider since November 2009

2018 Women's Transportation Seminar

On Thursday November 8th, Access staff Andre Colaiace, Alvina Narayan, Randy Johnson, Onnika Payne, Elizabeth Zambrano, Melissa Muniga, and Beth Ross attended the Los Angeles Chapter 2018 Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) Annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner. WTS is an international organization dedicated to building the future of transportation through the global advancement of women. With over 6,500 members, including both women and men, 79 chapters across the world, and a network of 40,000 transportation professionals, WTS is turning the glass ceiling into a career portal through its professional programs, networking opportunities, and unparalleled access to industry and government leaders.



Each year, WTS recognizes members, women, and employers who embody the WTS pursuit of transportation excellence through the achievement and success of women. At the reception Access was proud to award a \$5,000 Access Services WTS-LA Scholarship to Clare Blackwell, an undergraduate student at Scripps College in Claremont, CA majoring in environmental analysis: sustainability and the built environment. Ms. Blackwell aspires to make a difference at the local government level after she graduates, because she believes local politics are often the most influential in making a change in people's lives, particularly in the realm of transportation and urban planning.

Access believes Ms. Blackwell is an excellent recipient of the Access Services WTS-LA Scholarship for many reasons, but particularly because she displays the same kind of caring, passion, and altruism that defines Access itself.

In total, WTS-LA Chapter distributed \$90,000 in academic scholarships to 17 students, ranging from high school students to graduate students.

Congratulations to Clare and all the 2018 WTS- Scholarship Recipients!

Beth Ross
Emergency Management Coordinator