I am honored to say that 20 years ago today, I started my career with Access Services. At that time, Access sublet a very small space in Downtown Los Angeles and there were no more than five employees. I still have my offer of employment letter, signed by Richard DeRock, founding Executive Director. Richard wrote that I would have no direct reports nor did he plan that anyone would directly report to me in the future. How times have changed! The first year Richard and I finalized all of the transportation service provider contracts. I remember when we expanded the service east to the 605 Freeway. Another big milestone was when Access expanded to include Downtown Los Angeles. Twenty years ago, I would never have imagined that Access would transport over 10,000 passengers a day. One of the truly amazing things is the number of people who began that journey twenty years ago that I am still fortunate enough to continue to work with. Thank you everyone for a great twenty years!

Shelly Verrinder
Executive Director

Later this year, Access will be providing origin to destination service to those individuals who need assistance beyond curb-to-curb service. The first step in implementing origin to destination service was to establish an Ad Hoc Regional Paratransit Working Group on Origin to Destination, made up of customers, advocates, member agencies, service providers and staff to meet and develop a policy recommendation. The first meeting took place on Friday, January 9, 2015, at Access Headquarters in El Monte. Each person brought their unique perspective to the discussion which focused on identifying the benefits, issues, and concerns of implementing the service in L.A. County. The group reviewed policies from across the country including San Diego, Dallas, and Washington D.C., among others, to understand how others are providing origin to destination service. The next meeting will take place on Friday, January 23rd, and will focus on drafting a policy recommendation to take to the Access Board of Directors and our Member Agencies. At the Access Board of Director’s Meeting on January 12, 2015, the Board of Directors approved an action plan for implementation of origin to destination service. In January, staff will focus on the development of a proposed policy. In February and March, staff will present and solicit feedback from community members, advisory committees, and FTA, while gathering trip and cost projections for the service.

Continued on page 4
Community Outreach

In early December, Access staff visited Therapeutic Living Centers for the Blind in Reseda. Mr. Mario Murrieta, Assistant Program Coordinator, met with Access staff and provided a tour of the facility. During the site visit, Access staff was able to conduct a location evaluation of the facility and identify the optimal area where we can erect the Access Stand Sign to help Access drivers locate our customers. Mr. Murrieta appreciates Access for taking time to visit the center.

Geoffrey Okamoto
Interim Manager of Eligibility

West Central Region Community Meeting

On Saturday, January 10, 2015, Access Services conducted a community meeting in the West Central Region. The meeting was held at the Westchester Senior Citizen Center and over 80 Access customers and their family members attended the meeting.

Operations Administrator Jack Garate (English) and Operations Service Monitors Hamilton Franco (Spanish) and Gina Breceda (Service Animal) led the meeting with an informative presentation about how the partnership between Access and its customers has led to advances in the quality of service being delivered today. The “Together We Made a Difference” presentation for both English and Spanish language customers provided information on recent operational changes surrounding Sedan Seating Capacity with the inclusion of sedan capacity for customers with service animals. The presenters gave a brief overview of the Access “Helping Hands” program that recognizes customers for their efforts to improve the service. A video presentation that features the Access Services 2013 Spirit of Accessibility Award recipient Richard Devylder was viewed by all. Lastly, the presentation provided an educational opportunity for customers to better understand the undertakings of trip reservation, the revised no-show policy, and a glimpse of origin to destination.

After the presentations, questions and comments were taken from the audience. Several customers announced their satisfaction with the service being delivered in the West Central Region and the improvement throughout the system over the last year. Comment cards were collected so that staff can get in contact with customers who attended the meeting but may not have been able to be heard during the question and comment section of the meeting.

Jack Garate
Operations Administrator
HR Round Table

Every quarter, a core group of Human Resources (HR) Professionals of Access providers, partner agencies, and Access Services meet to discuss HR issues important to all companies. This group started meeting in March 2014 to exchange ideas and share best practices. Each quarter a different agency hosts the meeting at their headquarters. On December 11th, the group met at the corporate office of Foothill Transit in West Covina. Changes to labor laws and pre-screening driver candidates were among the topics discussed at this meeting.

Matt Mumford, Director of Customer Relations and Human Resources shared APTA’s Bus Operator Selection Survey (BOSS) with the group. BOSS is a driver selection process consisting primarily of a pre-employment screening survey and structured interview process. The group discussed how they might pool resources and benefit from BOSS.

The HR Roundtable is open to any transit or paratransit agency. The group plans to reach out to all Access member agencies in hopes that they will participate in this valuable professional networking group.

Faye Moseley
Deputy Executive Director, Administration

January 2015 Northern Community Meeting

This time around Access hosted three (3) separate meetings for each region, an English speaking version, a Spanish speaking version, and a service animal version. By separating these meetings it provides an optimal setting for each of the groups to focus on the discussion topics. Based on the customer feedback, they were very pleased with the efforts made by Access to improve the service, as well as, the consideration of upcoming policy changes with No Show and Origin and Destination. Topics presented at the meetings included seating capacities in sedans, revised no show policy, origin to destination, trip booking, and customer recognition programs. The Access community meetings provide a forum for our customers to meet with Access staff and service providers, as well as, it opens dialogue for customers to provide direct feedback as to what is working and what can be improved with the services that we provide.

Geoffrey Okamoto
Interim Manager of Eligibility

On Saturday, January 10, 2015 Access Services hosted the Northern Region Community meeting. Despite the rain, 63 Access customers and their family members attended the meeting to hear our presentations and to provide feedback.
Customer called to say that she is visually impaired and is so thankful for Access driver Norik. She stated that the driver walked her up the stairs, and got her to her location on time. When the driver went back to the Access vehicle he found that she had dropped $20.00. The driver ran back to her door to return it to her. “Thank you Norik!”

Joann, Sierra Madre Rider Since 1997

Continuing - Access Ad Hoc Regional Paratransit Working Group

The policy along with projections will be presented to the Board at the March 2015 Board of Directors Meeting before a presentation to all Access member agencies takes place at the Access Annual Meeting in April. During May and June, staff will work closely with service providers to ensure frontline staff is trained and with a finalized FY16 budget, origin to destination service is scheduled to start on July 1, 2015. Access thanks all the participants of the Ad Hoc Working Group for taking the time and energy to be part of the group.

Participants: Michael Conrad, customer/CAC; Rachele Goeman, customer/QSS; Liz Lyons, customer/CAC; Dov Cohen, CAC Chair; Kurt Baldwin, ILCSC/CAC; Myrna Cabanban, customer/QSS; Terri Lantz, UCP/CAC; Gracie Davis, OCTA/TPAC; Jess Segovia, Metro/TPAC; Adrian Aguilar, SCT; Petros Keshishian, SGT; Mike Fricke, CTI; Nader Raydan, MV; Luis Garcia, GPI; Laura Moreno, DT.

Alfredo Torales
Special Projects Administrator