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CTSA Analyst

# access ...**BEHIND** **THE SCENES**

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## Executive Report

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We have a very exciting agenda planned for the **15th Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 to 12:00**. This year the focus of our report and the meeting is our customer - the Access Services rider. We will also be presenting three important awards - 2009 Spirit of Accessibility, 2009 Jerry Walker Commitment to Quality Service, and Helping Hands.

After the Annual Meeting the Access Board of Directors will be meeting in lieu of the regularly scheduled March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Both meetings will be held at the new Access Services offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, 3rd Floor, El Monte, CA.

I look forward to seeing everyone next Thursday!

Shelly Verrinder  
Executive Director

## Emergency Plan

Access recently selected a consultant to develop the agency's **Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan**. The project will provide Access with practical plans for emergency response and the continuation of transportation services in the event of a disaster. The plan will address the immediate protection of Access riders, contractor staff, facilities and the use of Access resources to meet specialized transportation needs during the disaster response.

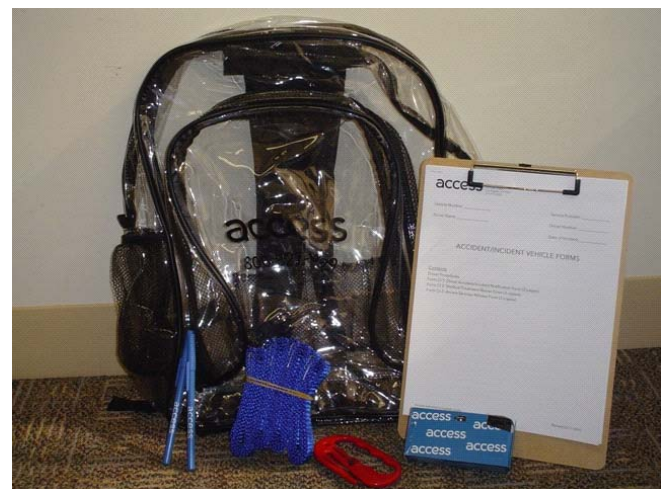
Work on plan development began in February with a draft plan to be completed in June 2010. During this period, the consultant will be contacting and meeting with Access' service providers, advisory committees and emergency response agencies within the county.

Matthew Avancena  
Mgr. of Planning & Coordination

## Safety Backpacks

Access Services Safety program is introducing the new "Safety Backpack" that will be placed in each vehicle. The backpack was created to assist the driver in documenting and responding to incidents/accidents. The backpack is a see thru nylon backpack containing a digital camera, tether straps, strap cutter, pens, accident forms, clipboard, and other safety related items. Backpacks will be distributed to service providers beginning the week of March 8

Luis Pacheco  
Safety Analyst



...Behind the Scenes

## Provider Appreciation Day

For the first half of the fiscal year, Access and its service providers have overcome several operational challenges that impacted our service performance. Our service providers were able to focus on minimizing service interruptions and maintaining operation performance, which helped Access to achieve its on-time performance standard at mid year.

On February 23<sup>rd</sup> during early morning hours, Access operations staff went out in full force and delivered 1,032 Krispy Kreme donuts to Access drivers, call center staff, and administrative staff through out the six service regions.

The Provider Appreciation Day was just a small way of showing our appreciation to the provider



staff for a job well done. It was also a good and memorable day for the Access staff.

Steve Chang  
Dir. of Contracted Services

## US DOT

Last Friday, Shelly Verrinder and I attended a Transportation Reauthorization Outreach Tour that was sponsored by the United States Department of Transportation. The morning session focused on SAFETEA-Lu Reauthorization Issues and featured a panel of public agency executives from across California. After a short break, attendees heard from USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood and Senator Barbara Boxer who gave their views on federal transportation

funding going forward. We were then treated to a surprisingly informal and lively question and answer session between the audience and Secretary LaHood and Senator Boxer that touched on a number of current transportation topics, from high-speed rail to Metrolink. Senator Boxer, in particular, offered an interesting window into Washington that it made this a particularly fascinating event.

André Colaiace  
Dir. of Governmental Services

## Superior Service Award

Southland Transit vehicle operator Joy Paez was the recipient of the Access Superior Service Award for the month of January. The award was presented during the February Access Board of Directors Meeting; Joy was unable to attend and California Transit General Manager Scott Manchan accepted the award on Joy's behalf. Joy is a proud mother of four and a veteran of the United States Army. Joy started her paratransit career with Southland Transit in August 2007 and over the course of time has

maximized on the opportunity to help others. We are very proud of Joy and her accomplishments, and appreciate her dedication to the safe transportation of our customers. Congratulations Joy!!



Luis Garcia  
Project Administrator

## Metro/ Access Shuttle Service

Access was called into action! When L. A. Metro called to inform Access of an elevator outage at the Blue Line Slauson Station and wanted Access to help by providing a shuttle service for Metro’s disabled customers between the Slauson and Vernon stations and the Slauson and Florence stations, we said absolutely YES, we can help!

The six-week elevator outage at the Blue Line Slauson station began on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and ends on April 5<sup>th</sup>. With just little over a week’s time to prepare and put the resources together, Access provider Global Paratransit was able to assist in providing the service and we were able to start the Access Metro Shuttle Service on schedule.

Access understands the important role it plays in the community, and how our transit partners are



counting on us to provide safe, reliable, and courteous service to our ADA customers.

Geoffrey Okamoto  
Project Administrator

## Safety Initiative Update

Effective communication plays a key role in the success of any operation. When it comes to risk management, Access staff have established an open two-way communication with our service providers in sharing safety knowledge and experience. One of the communication channels used by service providers and Access staff is the weekly “Board of Inquiry” or BOI. On a weekly basis, Access Project Administrators and staff meet with the service providers at their project sites to review all accidents and incidents that

occurred the previous week. Trend and safety data specific to the provider is shared and discussed. Drivers involved in the accidents are invited to attend the meeting to help the team understand what occurred. The BOI findings are used to identify potential improvements that can be made to existing training and/or procedures. The feedback from everyone involved in the weekly BOI process has been positive and very educational.

Steve Chang  
Dir. of Contracted Services

## Superior Service Award

At the February Access Board of Directors meeting, Access Project Administrator Geoffrey Okamoto presented the February 2010 Superior Service Award to Mrs. Suzy Yoguez from MV Transportation. Mrs. Yoguez is as a Call Center Supervisor for the Santa Clarita service area. On behalf of Access and the Board of Directors, we want to thank Mrs. Suzy Yoguez for her dedication and making a positive difference to the Access Operation!

Geoffrey Okamoto  
Project Administrator



from left, Geoffrey Okamoto-Access, Suzy Yoguez-MV Transit, Adrian Aguilar-City of Santa Clarita

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## ~ Mission Statement ~

*Access Services promotes access to all modes of transportation and provides quality and safe ADA paratransit service on behalf of public transit agencies in Los Angeles County.*

## ~ Vision Statement ~

*Access Services serves the community as the leader in promoting accessible and innovative transportation solutions.*

*We accomplish this vision by:*

- *Providing quality, efficient, safe and dependable ADA paratransit service.*
- *Leading the national dialogue as an advocate for universal access to transportation.*
- *Partnering with other entities to secure alternate funding sources and legislation that expands transportation options.*

## Weathering Difficult Times

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Stephen Wrenn and I participated in the, **Weathering Difficult Times: Resources for Children with Special Needs and their Families** conference hosted by Children's Hospital of Los Angeles and USC Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. During the exhibit session, we distributed Access materials (applications, flyers and information) while we talked with the various attendants and organizers who visited our table. Stephen and I answered many questions about Access Services and the other options that are available for children with disabilities.

Afterwards we participated in the panel discussion for Transportation Resources. During this panel we talked about the Los Angeles County fixed route policy for the minimum of age for children to ride without being accompanied by a parent/guardian and we explained how that policy fits into Access policy for children under the age of five. We also gave an overview of Access Services, Mobility Management and Travel Training. Many of the session attendees asked lots of questions, asked us for our contact information and talked with us after the panel finished. Conference organizers were very happy with our participation, representing Access Services and we received a very good reception from the conference attendees.

Nicole Leiva  
Mobility Management Coordinator

## Rider comments

"My husband is the blessed recipient of Access Services. I am his PCA & caregiver. He is unable to walk, talk, or move from bed to wheelchair... which allows me to move him from bed to van to be transported wherever is needed. We depend totally on Access to meet our needs for transport. We are not financially able to use private transportation. Access fee for service is affordable making it possible to make all of his Dr. appointments, etc. We are grateful for your service and appreciate the courteous manner in which your employees greet us on the phone & the van drivers. Thank You!"

– Mary, Los Angeles  
– Rider since 2000