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Behind the Scenes

Executive Report

Access' FY2013/14 budget will be increasing almost 10% next year to \$134,800,000. While operating expenses are increasing 4.8%, the bulk of the increase is for capital vehicle replacement. Access will be planning to replace over 180 vehicles next year at a cost of \$9 million dollars due to deferred replacements that would have normally occurred this year. From an operations perspective we are budgeting to carry over 3.6 million passengers or 2.8 million trips at a cost per trip of \$34.88.

The FY2013/14 budget is currently being reviewed by the Access Service Board ad hoc budget subcommittee and is scheduled to be approved at the June Board meeting.

*Shelly Verrinder
Executive Director*

Safety Fair Educates Access Employees



3rd Floor Access Safety Booth

On Wednesday, May 15, 2013 Access' Safety, Training and Emergency Preparedness Department presented the First Annual Safety Fair. The event was held in the lobbies of the second and third floors of Access Headquarters. Staff was encouraged to visit during the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and between 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to learn about the current and future safety campaigns being developed for drivers and staff.

Two safety booths were erected on each floor with streaming videos, refreshments, and handouts. Safety staff was on hand to answer questions and provide valuable safety tips. The second floor safety

booth focused on Emergency Preparedness. There were interactive demonstrations of the Stryker evacuation chair and materials were disseminated on Active Shooters, First Aid, and CPR. The third floor safety booth explored driver safety campaigns and their slogans. Materials and posters were available to educate staff on the many preventative programs in place. The highlight of the third floor booth was the 'no cell phone while driving' and 'rear-end avoidance' campaign that Access is presently implementing.

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Safety Fair, cont..



2nd Floor Access Safety Booth

The visitors that attended both booths received a yellow safety bracelet which contains the Access logo and the current Safety Slogan "Safer Journeys Every Day". Access' vision statement explains its commitment to providing efficient, safe and dependable ADA paratransit service. These are not empty words as evidenced by the successful driver incentive program, the monthly meeting of

the Operations Safety Steering Committee, the internal strategy meetings to discuss current and future safety campaigns and the Safety Fair. Access knows that reaching every employee will strengthen its vision and having this kind of continued dialogue reinforces the strong safety culture already in place.

*Charace Thompson,
CTSA Analyst*

Verbal Judo

Access and Provider staff attended a train-the-trainer course on Skills for Effectively Defusing Difficult Situations also known as Verbal Judo. Evie Palicz and Tracy Robinson organized and conducted the course, which gave our Customer Service Representative (CSR) trainers and Driver trainers a powerful teaching tool when instructing a CSR or driver on how to handle an angry customer. The first day of training covered a demonstration on how the class should be taught so the trainers would know exactly what to expect when delivering the material. Part of this session included instructing the trainers on the skills needed to effectively deliver the concepts and techniques. During the skill building section, Tracy used role playing exercises, combined with structured discussion, to encourage people to determine

the reason a customer is complaining or acting out. Are they upset with the service, or do they actually just want to be heard? Both verbal judo and emotional intelligence concepts are essential skills when dealing with upset or emotional customers.

The final day focused on preparing the trainers to teach the course. This included an in-depth discussion on the similarities and differences between the driver course and the CSR course. The largest disadvantage of the CSR course is the lack of visuals, such as reading body language and facial expressions.

At the end of the two day training, the instructors were excited to begin teaching these skills to their employees. CTI is ready to roll this out immediately as an addition to their new hire driver curriculum. Additionally, SGT is ready to

start training right away. It is rewarding to witness the provider trainers so eager to give their drivers and CSRs new skills to make their jobs better.

Justin Catoe, Operations Intern

City of Arcadia Resources Fair



To heighten Spring awareness and its many opportunities, the **City of Arcadia Recreation and Community Services Department** held their annual **'Resources Fair'** for their

senior members. With over forty neighboring and participating vendors the Arcadian townsfolk were enlightened on today's sophisticated and mature business climate. No matter the age of the citizen, education is always the key to better living. This year the 'Fair' provided information on employment opportunities for seniors including financial assistance programs. Booths were set up to provide information on government benefits including programs on healthy living, Medicare/ Medical (Medi-Medi) and senior housing opportunities. Experts provided information and samples in nutrition needs. The Fair's patrons were informed about programs in their area

providing meals on wheels and home services.

In a continuation of providing a broad spectrum of recreational activities, programs and direct services, the Arcadia Center invited Access Mobility Management staff to attend. The Access information table became a hotbed of activity for the many attendees who were searching for means of maintaining their independence. For other clients this was their first introduction to Access Services and it provided options on how to get to their doctor's office or to the grocers, for many it meant flexibility, convenience and another way of saving money.

Erik Washington
Mobility Management Counselor

One Year Anniversary!

On May 1, 2013, Diversified Transit, the contractor for the Antelope Valley region, recently celebrated their one year anniversary providing paratransit transportation for Access Services. An anniversary cake was provided for their staff to take part in celebrating such a momentous occasion. During their one year of paratransit service, DT has shown a high level of commitment by maintaining and or exceeding Access Services' performance standards, as well as fully implementing the Stratagen software while ridership and

trip volumes are at an all-time high. Laura Moreno, General Manager, goes on to say, "It has been a challenge but we feel we have had success in all aspects of the operation. This extends to Diversified Transit's accident rate being the lowest in the Keolis company and has also been low with Access Services." Access congratulates Diversified Transit and looks forward to continued years of service.

Geoffrey Okamoto, Project Administrator

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Rider Comments

""I am so very happy to be a part of such a wonderful program, like that which Access Services provides. It is always a pleasant experience to speak with ASI staff in the mornings. You are all doing such a great job. All are so very polite, enthusiastic, and courteous. I don't know how someone can make it through the day with the amount of stress we sometimes place on you, but I am definitely happy to have experienced such great service from such a great company."

Norma, Monrovia

One Hundred Years in the Making



Graduates & Coach, (l to r) Faustino Salvador, Yvette Richardson, Eric Haack, Christina Blanco.

This is the 100-year anniversary of the Dale Carnegie program and his thirty principles that have truly stood the test of time. The new crop of Access Dale Carnegie graduates are Christina Blanco, Eric Haack, and Faustino Salvador. Each attended classes from February 6 thru May 1, 2013. The difference between this group and others in the past was the opportunity to develop their lifestyle changes in a 12 week program rather than the mini 8 week program. The difference can be likened to getting a meal at a drive thru restaurant and dining at a luxury restaurant. It is all about quality and time.

Let us see what the program meant to the graduates in their own words.

Christina Blanco stated, "I want to thank Access for giving us the

opportunity to take the course. Many companies do not invest in their employees but with the Dale Carnegie course you can see how a company can benefit with an aware employee. The course was wonderful and I can't wait for everyone to have the same opportunities to learn so that we can have a strong team."

Erick Haack stated, "I found the course a great

way to understand and face the challenges of leadership and public speaking. The Dale Carnegie course - and our very talented instructor - provided a variety of exercises to reduce the fear of speaking in front of people and build confidence expressing one's views and making convincing arguments."

Faustino Salvador stated, "I learned and implemented new concepts and processes from the Dale Carnegie Course that will help me grow to be a better person and leader. THANK YOU ACCESS for the opportunity to attend the course.

Imagine a 100 year old program that still builds confidence for individuals who want to become leaders. No wonder the mantra for all Dale Carnegie participants remains, "We don't just take the Dale Carnegie course. We live it!"

Yvette Richardson, Audit Supervisor

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