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# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Report

For the last ten years, Metro Board of Directors has approved the Access budget in May of each year. This allows us to plan our budget for the coming year and to have it approved by the Access Board. Our budget request is based on projections for the upcoming year to ensure we can provide service to anyone who needs it. This year, we also requested a significant increase in capital funding to replace a vehicle fleet where many of the vehicles have over 300,000 miles on them.

This year, after the budget was approved at the Metro Programming and Planning Committee, our item was pulled from the Consent Calendar for discussion and did not have enough votes to pass since some of the Board Members had additional questions. Staff is providing the requested information to Metro staff and hopes that it will be sufficient but we are also notifying community partners and elected officials about the repercussions for people with disabilities and the region if our funding is not approved in the June Metro Board cycle.

Staff is cautiously optimistic that we have addressed all the issues that were raised by the Metro Board and that Access will receive full funding in June. We will keep you updated on any new developments.

*Shelly Verrinder*  
*Executive Director*

## CTAA Annual Rodeo Winner!



**Josemaria & Rodeo Coordinator  
Kelly Shawn**

At last year's Access Rodeo, driver Josemaria Mendoza from California Transit took top honors in the individual drivers' competition. This allowed him the opportunity to compete (for the first time) at the National level in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Mendoza came away with top honors for the minivan competition at the 2013 National Community Transportation Rodeo.

This win is extra special because, to prepare him, Access Operations Supervisor, "coach" Faustino Salvador, took him out to practice many of the more difficult maneuvers such as the right tire clearance, serpentine, offset street, as well as the right and left hand reverse courses. To

stage the courses Faustino used tennis balls as well as safety cones and practiced in the scorching heat. To add to the preparation, staff team member from CTI, Aurora Delgado ensured that Mr. Mendoza was well versed on wheelchair securement and his pre-trip inspection. Josemaria Mendoza, better known as "Joey," felt with all the extra support he was provided with that he was ready to bring back the gold for Access. He had been waiting all year for the opportunity and challenge to represent Access' best of the best.

Access and California Transit, Inc. wish Mr. Mendoza a huge congratulations for putting Access on the map as the best minivan driver in the nation for 2013!

*Geoffrey Okamoto*  
*Project Administrator*



## Santa Clarita Community Meeting



The Summer 2013 Access Community Meetings kicked off at the state-of-the-art Old Town Newhall Library on May 30th. About twice a year, Access hosts community meetings in every region to meet and listen to our customers about what's on their minds. In addition, Access uses this opportunity to present information on our projects and programs. At the Santa Clarita Region meeting, about fifteen customers, along with numerous PCA's and children, attended to voice their concerns and offer commendations on our service.

Some of the topics of discussion were the Free Fare Program, Transfer Trips to and from Santa Clarita, and TAP cards. Access and City of Santa Clarita staff was able to answer most of their questions. We also provided Rider's Guides

and other informational resources to resolve other concerns. Access Operations Supervisors presented a brief slide show on some of our programs. Phillip Rice presented on our recent safety efforts and Hamilton Franco described our customer and provider recognition programs, the Helping Hands Program and the Superior Service Awards. Most of the customers at the meeting stated that they were very pleased with the service, with one specifically stating that "the drivers are always helpful and courteous."

Overall, the feedback from customers in the Santa Clarita Region was very positive and staff felt that every customer received the information they came for.

*Alfredo Torales  
Project Administrator*

## METRO Visits the Southern Region



Metro's Cathy Rosas, Interim Transportation Contract Services Manager, and Giovanna Gogreve, ADA Paratransit Program Administrator, visited Global Paratransit, the ADA paratransit service provider for the Southern Region on May 31st. The visit consisted of a tour of the facility, along with a brief informal meeting afterwards with myself, Global Paratransit Chief Operations Officer Edward Muncy and General Manager Luis Garcia. The visit showcased Global Paratransit's maintenance facility, call center,

dispatch room, and other very important tools that make it possible to service over three thousand trips every day in the Southern Region.

In addition, Metro staff got up close to some of the Southern Region's newest green technology fleet vehicles, which include the Toyota Camry Hybrid and the VGP MV-1. Overall, it was an excellent learning opportunity for all involved.

*Alfredo Torales  
Project Administrator*

## Access Staff Participate in Division 9 Emergency Evacuation Drill



Evacuating volunteer Rycharde Martindale in the Stryker chair

On May 30, 2013, the occupants of Metro Division 9 participated in an emergency evacuation drill. The drill began at 10:30 a.m. and all building occupants evacuated to their respective staging areas.

That afternoon, METRO called a debriefing meeting to discuss areas for improvement and to determine the lessons learned. Access employee Luis Pacheco and Access Consultant Mike Greenwood joined METRO staff Scott Norwood and Henry Ho, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, and Division 9 staff for the meeting. Mr. Norwood and Mr. Ho explained that Access staff was very organized, efficient and prompt. Additionally, Access utilized proper evacuation routes and expertly followed directions.

Mr. Norwood and Mr. Ho commented on the Stryker emergency evacuation chair and enjoyed the evacuation

demonstration of the chair with Access staff Rycharde Martindale. The evacuation chair is an essential tool for transporting individuals who utilize a mobility device or are unable to descend stairs.

With any type of drill, there is a list of lessons learned. There was no announcement via the PA system on the second or third floors nor did a siren sound to indicate the start of the evacuation. METRO will make the adjustment and an announcement will be made before the drill begins.

A big THANK YOU goes out to Access staff for a job well done. Your cooperation was appreciated. Special thanks to Rycharde Martindale for volunteering to be evacuated in the Stryker emergency evacuation chair.

*Charace Thompson*  
CTSA Analyst

## LA Current Affairs Forum



Councilmember Englander with Evie Palicz & Steve Chang

On May 31<sup>st</sup> Access staff Evie Palicz, Manager of Safety, Training, and Emergency Preparedness, and I attended the Los Angeles Current Affairs Forum. Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitchell Englander was the guest speaker. Councilmember Mitchell Englander was elected to serve as Los Angeles City Councilmember for the Twelfth District. He represents the communities of Granada Hills, Northridge, Porter Ranch, Chatsworth, North Hills, Reseda and West Hills. It was very

insightful to hear Councilman Mitch Englander's view on various budget initiatives, city projects, and current events. In addition to his busy schedule as a Los Angeles City councilmember, he is also an active LAPD Reserve Police Officer. Councilman Englander was very pleased to have Access Services represented at the event.

*Steve Chang*  
Deputy Executive Director, Operations

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## Access Employee of the Quarter Award Established



**Ruben Prieto & Cynthia Stevenson**

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, a very special honor was bestowed on two special Access employees, **Cynthia Stevenson and Ruben Prieto**. They were named, during the Access Employee Appreciation Luncheon, the first recipients of the Access

“Employee of the Quarter” (EOQ) honor.

The “Employee of the Quarter” (EOQ) program was developed based on suggestions by the 2013 Jerry Walker (JW) award selection committee. Each year Access staff are strong contenders for the prestigious JW award and the committee felt a separate award should be established to honor Access staff exclusively. The Access Employee Entertainment Group was initially tasked with getting the program underway and establishing criteria for award recipients. It was then determined that the 1st quarter recipients would be Ms. Cynthia Perkins-Stevenson and Mr. Ruben Prieto, as they were top runner ups for the JW Award.

Along with a personalized trophy, the Employee of the Quarter (EOQ) recipient’s photo is placed on a special lobby plaque, and they are presented to the Board of Directors at a monthly meeting. Nominations from staff are being accepted for the 2nd Quarter recipient(s) and the winner(s) will be selected and announced in Mid-July 2013.

Special thanks to the Employee Entertainment Group for their contributions toward making the EOQ Program a reality; Charlene Motta, Jessica Thompson, Audrey Cervantes, Richard Rodriguez and Charace Thompson.

*Charace Thompson*  
 CTSA Analyst

## Scratch & Win Update

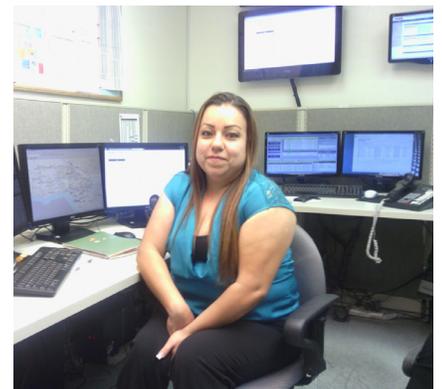


**Teneshia Washington**

As the Scratch and Win Incentive program approaches its one year anniversary, the number of winners continues to grow.

Instant and Raffle winners have been recognized for their commitment to quality service whether it’s on the front line or behind the scenes.

The Scratch and Win Raffle recipients for April are Teneshia Washington, GPI & Beatrice Lara, MV Transit.



**Beatrice Lara**

*Galen Hale*  
 Administrative Assistant

**access**