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# Behind the Scenes

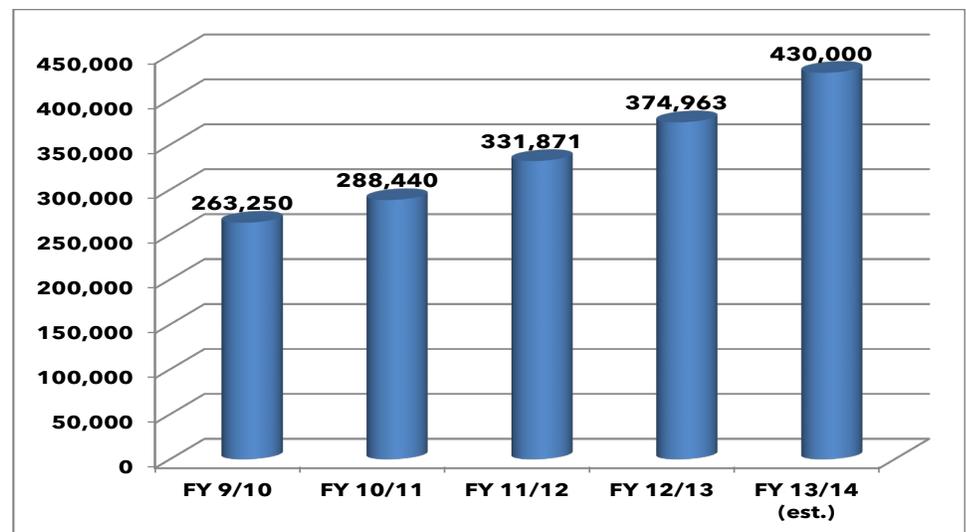
## Executive Report

Over the last month things have been very busy at Access. F Scott Jewell, Deputy Executive Director, and I have been to Boston and Fort Lauderdale negotiating the final details of some exciting software improvements to be used during reservations and dispatch. We hope to finish the design specifications by the end of the month and expect the programming to take approximately 6 months. Our customers and dispatchers will see some very user friendly upgrades by the summer of 2014. There are some new and improved performance measures being introduced to the Customer Service Center and Operations Monitoring Center that will be welcomed by everyone. The Access Executive Team is working on a staff reorganization to flatten out the organization in order to effectively plan for and meet the challenges that are ahead. As we head into the holiday season we are moving full speed ahead to ensure that Access continues provide high quality services to all of our customers.

From all of us at Access we wish each of you a happy Thanksgiving and happy Hanukkah.

*Shelly Verrinder*  
Executive Director

## Customer Service Improvements



In the past two years many inroads have been made to improve the responsiveness and quality of the customer service department at Access. Over the past several years the call volume has increased (as the graph illustrates) as the service has grown and in August 2011 when the Access (TAP) ID card was implemented a significant increase occurred. Since Access headquarters has no additional space to expand the existing call center Access opted to design a hybrid of in house customer service and call outsourcing.

In the fall of 2012 and the beginning of 2013, Access outsourced calls to Southland Transit, and while these steps were successful in call volume

management, an analysis conducted in recent months has identified that there are still significant opportunities for improvement with respect to call quality management. The first step was the implementation of a Quality Assurance process in the spring of 2013 to conduct observations of recordings and rate the staff on the quality of their call handling skills.

The last phase of call quality management was to review the performance measures used to assess the responsiveness of our call center. The analysis revealed that while hold times is a good

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## Gary Jansen - Farewell to our Friend and Customer



It is with a heavy heart that Access announces that Access customer and former Access Community Advisory Committee member, Gary Jansen has passed away. As a long time employee of

Access, even before there was an agency called Access Services, many of us, including myself have known Gary since 1992 when this service was just starting. Then called Metro Access, the service only covered four cities in the east San Gabriel Valley and Gary was one of the first customers I heard about through the call center.

Gary had some endearing personality traits and was sometimes overwhelmed by the world around him. As

anyone at Access knows, there was a time when Gary had to confirm what you told him by asking, "For fake or for real?" This was Gary's way of being reassured that you were telling him the truth. This phrase became so well known at Access that at one time, it was the password for the operations report where all the trip data was stored many years ago.

As Access CAC member, Teri Lantz aptly states, "Access enabled Gary to travel independently throughout L.A County and he valued being an Access rider and his relationships with Access CAC members and Access staff".

Gary was part of our family and the reason we all come to work here at Access every day. Gary will be missed by everyone and our community meetings, Advisory Committee meetings and other special events will never be the same without his presence.

*David Foster*  
 Manager of Customer Support Services

## Customer Service Improvements (continued from page 1)

tool to assess the call center's performance there are other more critical key performance indicators that are more effective tools for assessing and improving customer response times. The key measurement tools include 1) call abandonment percentage, and 2) percentage of calls on hold more than 5 minutes; these same performance measures will also be applied to the outsourcing contractor before the start of the New Year.

These additional measures have required additional staffing to

handle the calls within the Access call center and a plan has been devised to accomplish this without adding new customer service representatives. Instead we are combining our 13 customer service staff with our four complaint staff and cross training them so that all 17 individuals can handle both calls and complaint investigations. This will allow for more flexible resources to respond to spikes in call volume while still managing the complaints process. Additionally, realignment in duties for the customer service leadership team

will ensure that each individual is tasked with the responsibilities that best meet their skillsets. It's an exciting time at Access to be part of the customer service team and we look forward to sharing the results of our call quality management plan in upcoming issues of Behind the Scenes!

*David Foster*  
 Manager of Customer Support Services

## Access' Driver Incentive Program at California Transit!



On Friday, November 1st, Access visited California Transit to acknowledge safe driving. Three drivers received a family fun pack of four to Disneyland. One of those drivers was also awarded a 37" television as he surpassed both safety miles levels of achievement. What makes this even more memorable is he was also wearing an Access watch, which he was awarded with previously.

Another recipient of the Disneyland tickets was so happy to receive the tickets because it just happened to be his 9-year-old son's birthday. What a great feeling it is to know the prizes are shared amongst the driver's families. Which means the Driver Safety Incentive Program is exceeding its reach by including family members of drivers. The families of the drivers get to see that safe driving is important, and that is a positive message to send to our community of drivers. Access congratulates all drivers. On this day Access celebrated California Transit.

*Geoffrey Okamoto  
Project Administrator*

## Stratagen 2013 Conference



On November 12-15, Global Paratransit, MV Transportation, and Access staff attended the Stratagen user conference in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Stratagen is the provider of the Adept reservation and scheduling

system used by Global Paratransit in the Southern region, Keolis in the Antelope Valley, and MV Transportation in the Northern region.

The conference showcased several product roadmap demonstrations involving innovative dispatch web based tools and mobile smartphone applications, as well as core infrastructure improvements to the

current Adept application. Also, to address key transit challenges several conference participants presented user case studies about capacity management, effective taxi usage in paratransit, and business model changes. In addition, I had the opportunity to serve on an Electronic Payment Gateway panel to discuss lessons learned, benefits, and the growth of our Tap program.

The conference was well-attended by Stratagen customers and technology experts from across the country as well as Canada and Finland. The forum provided great network opportunities and invaluable face time with Stratagen and Digital Dispatch personnel.

*Ruben Prieto  
Systems Analyst*

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## Rider Comments

"Driver Raphael was completely courteous, pleasant, helpful, kind, perfect gentleman, and made her stress free. Driver opened the door for her, held her purse and oxygen, so nice."

*Phyllis, Tarzana*  
 Rider since 2013

"Dora (Reservationist from CTI) was very professional and patient.."

*Stanley, Los Angeles*  
 Rider since 2012

## October Helping Hand Winner



Join us in congratulating Ms. Janice Collins of Sylmar, CA our Helping Hand winner for the month of October 2013.

Ms. Collins has been a member of Access since 2006 and frequently uses the service to travel around her neighborhood. While speaking with her, she expressed her appreciation and gratitude for the professional services and support

she receives from all Access drivers and the Customer Service Team.

In the past months, Ms. Collins has:

- Traveled 169 times with no late cancellations or no-shows
- Enjoys using the service and commending drivers on their good works
- Hobbies are attending book sales at the Library's

Ms. Collins is originally from Michigan and has been a San Fernando Valley resident since 1967. She enjoys visiting friends on her free time and taking care of her pet cat.

We have the honor of presenting this wonderful customer with the Helping Hand pin at the end of the month.

*Hamilton Franco*  
 Operations Supervisor

## District 2 Resource Fair

Along with our local advocate, David Gershwin, I presented at Los Angeles City Council District 2's first resource fair for seniors last Thursday night. The event, organized by Councilmember Paul Krekorian and Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, was attended by two dozen constituents looking for information from city, county and

community agency representatives about the variety of services available to the senior community. I gave a brief overview of Access Services and then assisted several seniors after the event who were interested in applying for Access.

*Andre Colaiace,*  
 Deputy Executive Director, Planning and Governmental Affairs