



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 145 APRIL 2024

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2024

**We don't "HAVE" a great day,
we "MAKE" a great day!**

TENTATIVE BOARD MEETING DATES

**May 6th and 7th, 2024---Comfort Inn,
Bismarck, ND**

July 22nd and 23rd ZOOM Meeting

2024 DTA MEMBERSHIP FORMS

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

The DTA Membership Roster totals 39 agencies. We have had 28 agencies renew their membership for 2024. Please look and see if you have submitted your form. Thank you!

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FALL CONFERENCE

**September 13, 2024, through
September 18, 2024**

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

REMINDER.....We will be at the Holiday Inn Rapid City Downtown-Convention Center in Rapid City, SD. Phone number **605-348-4000**. Our rooms have been blocked off so please make your reservations now.

DTA 2024 ANNUAL AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

The 2024 DTA Award Nominations are on the website. Please submit the Nomination Form(s) to me no later than June 14th. The agency submitting the nomination(s) will be notified of the winners by July 19, 2024.

TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

Rod Graing 701-845-4300

rod@southcentralseniors.org

We are currently working out details for upcoming classes in Fargo and Northeastern North Dakota. We will post final details and registration deadlines as soon as they are available. Please visit the DTA website www.dakotatransit.org for updates on this class.

If you have drivers/staff in need of training or re-certification and would like to schedule a class, please contact Rod using the information listed above.

Interested in becoming a PASS trainer? PASS Train the Trainer certification can be done online through CTAA or at this summer's CTAA Expo, June 9th-12th in West Palm Beach, Fla. If you or someone from your agency is interested in becoming a certified PASS trainer, please contact Rod at 701-845-4300.

DRUG and ALCOHOL CONFERENCE

Terry Hoffman

CTWSI Co-Executive Director

Everything you need to know about drug and alcohol testing and regulations was on display and up for conversation at the 17th annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Conference in Atlanta, GA, April 2-4. The free three-day conference provided attendees with a background on 49 CFR Part 655 (Prevention of Alcohol Misuse and Prohibited Drug Use in Transit Operators) and 49 CFR Part 40 (Procedures for Transportation Workplace

Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs). The conference included training for beginner Drug and Alcohol Program Managers, an update from the Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance, information about DOT oral fluid testing, and various other sessions catered to running a compliant drug and alcohol program.



Stephanie Weed (Peoples Transit), Terry Hoffman (CTWSI), and Kathy Holman (CTWSI) attended the conference at the Hilton in downtown Atlanta.

Classes included Best Practices for Random Testing, Building a Compliant Drug and Alcohol policy, Employee Onboarding, Oversight, Role of the MRO, MIS Reporting and Testing Trends, DOT Test Refusals, Reviewing Your Collection Sites, Return-to-Duty Process, Records Retention Requirements and Best Practices, Dual Mode Employers (FTA & FMCSA), Dual Mode Employers (FTA & FMCSA), DOT and Non-DOT Testing, Oral Fluids Testing and more.

My favorites session was Beating the Cheaters presented by Chuck Marting, Colorado Mobile Drug Testing LLC. He said the methods being used to cheat the system is always evolving. Does the client appear nervous, do they have their hands shoved in their pockets, how do they react when told they have tested positive for drugs, alcohol or both. What do you do when they refuse to admit they have failed their test and are likely to lose their job? Marting's told tales of devious attempts by employees (and individuals who want to be employees) who could not pass the tests without a little help from a friend.



The FTA audits approximately 60 grantees and states each year to assess compliance with Part 655 and Part 40 to provide

technical assistance. Selection of grantees is based on a variety of factors including but not limited to the time since last audit, proximity to other selected grantees and potential “Red Flag.”

Other sessions of note discussed Oral Fluid testing, post-accident testing and reasonable suspicion guideline.

LATE FOR SCHOOL

Rod Grafiing, Transportation Coordinator
South Central Adult Services

One of the greatest challenges we face in public transit is educating the general public about who we are and what we do. The stigma of the “senior bus” or the “handicapped bus” is still very persistent in the minds of many. Even after extensive print, radio, online and visual campaigns, we still get calls on a regular basis asking if one has to be a senior citizen or have special needs to ride the bus. Many younger passengers have the false impression that you have to be from a lower income household to be eligible to ride.

However, there is one young man I’ll call Joseph. Joseph’s dad, a single parent, has to be at work before school starts, so the local school bus service was Joseph’s ride to and from school every day. As many of us with kids know, they don’t always like to get up for school in the morning. This was the case with Joseph, and he missed the bus regularly. His dad was not impressed. Dad was not only paying for the school bus, but he was also late for work himself each time Joseph missed the

bus. Dad had used South Central Transit Network's services in the past, so like any good parent; he came up with a solution. He purchased a ride card from us and gave it to Joseph with the understanding that he was now in charge of getting himself to and from school every day.

This was a game changer for Joseph. Once he realized how easy public transit is to use, he took full advantage of it. Now, Joseph is a regular rider. He calls dispatch every morning and afternoon when he's ready to go. If he wants to stay on the playground a little longer after school, he can because he's in control of his own transportation needs. On the flip side, if he oversleeps in the morning, he may still be a little late for school (which doesn't make dad so happy) but at least he still gets there.

Joseph is too young to know or be influenced by any stigma surrounding public transit; he is unaware and has no preconceived bias. What he does know is that his local public transit service has solved a problem for both him and his dad while also giving him the ability to get from point A to B and back again with a process so simple, even a kid can do it.

So, what's the point of this story? Listen to your dad, don't be late for school or public transit is easy to use? Maybe all of those but this story actually leaves me with more questions than answers. What's the best way to impart what Joseph already knows to our current demographic of potential riders? It seems if they could see things through Joseph's eyes, younger riders would be booking rides in droves. Is generation Alpha, defined as those born from 2010 to 2024 and subsequent generations to follow, more inclined to use public transit? With less

disposable income and so much pressure to reduce their carbon footprints, my assumption is that they are and will be. Are we in the public transit sector ready for a substantial increase in younger riders over the next 2 to 5 years? What changes and considerations may be necessary to better attract and serve them?

Tidbit Articles:
Please contact me with articles for your agency.

Recycle:
Please share your Transit Tidbit with your staff and any interested persons.

Address:
Directors, please check with your bookkeepers as well as the rest of your staff to assure they have the correct DTA Mailing Address.

Thanks to all!



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