

## Awards for North & South Dakota 2020 DTA Conference

The award nomination forms, Driver of the Year, Friend of Transit, etc., for the fall conference will be placed on the website by January 2020.

We have made a change to one of the awards. We have removed the words “Innovative Agency” and replaced them with Agency of the Year.

You can submit your award winner(s) anytime throughout the year. There will be a closing date on the forms. I will send out an email when everything is up and running.

- Jacque Senger, DTA Executive Director



### this issue

FTA Updates	P.2
Difficult People	P.3
Grants	P.4

## A Life of Honor

Robin Werre, the 2005 UGPTI Lifetime Achievement recipient, passed away last Wednesday, October 16, 2019.

Werre was instrumental in spearheading the **Bismarck-Mandan transit system** for the elderly and people with disabilities and also served as its director for the first quarter century.

Werre began working to develop a transit system in the mid-1980's, even before the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. She was a pioneer in this field.

She retired from the Bismarck-Mandan transit after 25 years in 2005 and that same year she was honored with the UGPTI Lifetime Achievement Award.



# FTA Updates and Regulations

## David Beckhouse, Deputy Regional Administrator

Karrie Mikkelsen

Cavalier County Transit - Langdon, ND

FTA agenda topics addressed: Who is FTA, What Does FTA Do, Upcoming Funding Opportunities, What's New at FTA, Performance-based Planning & Programming, Transit Safety Requirements, and Oversight & Program Management.

Region 8's office is located in Denver, CO. Region 8 consists of 16 Staff, 6 States, 25 Urbanized Areas, 22 Tribes, 60+ Grantees, and \$1.2B in funds.

FTA conducts workshops, provides training materials, procedural guides, and other materials to assist grantees in preparing for their Triennial and State Reviews.

Compliance date for Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) is July 20, 2020. Do not wait to begin development of your agency's safety plan. FTA cannot waive or extend the compliance deadline. The PTASP Rule does not apply to operators of a public transportation system that only receives financial assistance under Formula Grants for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310) and/or Formula Grants for Rural Areas (5311). PTASP rule defers applicability for 2,000 small and rural (non-urban) operators because these operators pose a lower safety risk.

David Beckhouse encouraged DTA agencies to contact the Region 8 office at 303-362-2400 if you have any questions and continue to take advantage of the competitive grant programs that become available.

Visit FTA's website  
[www.transit.dot.gov](http://www.transit.dot.gov)

**Training Update - Linda Freeman, PASS Coordinator**  
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A great big thank you to all of you at Rosebud Sioux Tribe Transit for all you did to make our class there a success.

At present, the DTA Board is working on making changes to the training to help meet the needs of transit providers in both states, so please watch the web site and the tidbit for updates.

# Dealing With Difficult People, Employee Issues and Stress Management

## Michael Kutzke

Terry Hoffman

Watertown Area Transit, Inc. - Watertown, SD

I'm sure there are more prolific, dynamic speakers in the Midwest, but I cannot imagine anyone has been better received than Michael Kutzke during his appearances at the Dakota Transit Association's fall conference.

He has also worked as a police officer for 17 years where his experiences included patrol, investigations, and administration.

Formerly a law enforcement officer in the Moorhead, MN area, Kutzke has been presenting training courses professionally for over 15 years and has covered a wide-range of topic areas. He has taught multiple academic courses at several colleges and has specialized training in personal and organizational growth and development, change management, supervision, social impact variables, and adult learning theory. Taking pride in his ability to blend humor, information, and adult learning principles.

Every transit system has those clients we like to refer to as "difficult." They try our patience as administrators, they frustrate our drivers to the point of being a distraction which creates safety issues and they irritate other riders. These same people, however, are often some of our most loyal riders and we must find a method of dealing with their personalities and quirks.

Easier said than done you say? You are correct. Kutzke addressed these concerns Sunday morning with drivers and dispatchers. His session on "Dealing with Difficult People" was specific to those clients and his presentation

offered possible methods of how to better understand their actions – not necessarily how to overcome their often-annoying traits.

"Transit is the greatest job in the world if you didn't have to deal with people," quipped Kutzke. "Unfortunately, your business depends on those people and a large number out there have issues."

Many of those problem riders have issues you can't even begin to comprehend and most people have given up on them added Kutzke. His message was don't add to the problem, be part of the solution and continue to try and work with them because they aren't going to change.

"Drivers see the problems, the rage which can take the issue to a new level when things aren't right," said Kutzke. "We all have triggers, learn theirs, you spend as much time with them as anyone. Hear their problems, sometimes they just want you to listen and the situation goes away."

Kutzke's encore performance on Monday to the conference attendees dealt with employee issues and stress management. Making a concerted effort to take full advantage of today's many forms of technology, Kutzke suggested making your next company meeting all digital.

"Most employees have cell phones, take advantage of this, put the entire meeting on line and force them to use technology," said Kutzke.

**See PEOPLE, page 4**

# People

## Continued from Page 3

“Place agenda’s, notes, communications all on line, no paper copies. Give them the link and let them get on line.”

Listen, listen, listen said Kutzke. Listen to your employees concerns and actually hear what they are saying. Be sincere in what you tell people, do not tell them what they want to hear. Learn the names of the people in your employment. Know what your workers are about, what their interests are, show them you care. “Find the humor in your stressful situations,” said Kutzke. “Change is everywhere, its’ inevitable, embrace it.”

Kutzke’s final session of the conference was directed at those who find themselves in stressful situations in the workplace. Everyone has a view and everything has a story. We can’t change that and we need to stop trying said Kutzke. Accept things for what they are and adapt.

“Who is driving your future?” he concluded. “You are, change doesn’t have to be difficult. Control what you do in the moment.”

## Grant Seeking and Grant Writing Training

Randy Hartman

Sioux Area Metro - Sioux Falls, SD

During the DTA Conference held in Dickinson, North Dakota September 16<sup>th</sup> through September 18<sup>th</sup>, I had the opportunity to attend the Grant Seeking and Grant Writing training seminar presented by Megan Laudenschlager. Megan presented the topic (Grant Seeking and Grant Writing), which could normally be considered painful and boring, with enthusiasm and energy that kept everyone’s attention during the training session.

Megan was very thorough when explaining all areas of grant writing which included: “10 Commandments of Grant Writing, Organizational Expertise and Needs Statement, Selling Your Program, Program Evaluation and Proposal Budgeting Basics.”

During the training session Megan distributed handouts including a copy of her Power Point presentation, Grant Writing Manual and several other handouts that will be beneficial and valuable tools when writing grants.

The training session proved to be very valuable to those who write grants on a regular basis and definitely valuable for those new to the grant writing experience. And, as Megan stated during the session, “Grant writing can be very intimidating, but the more you write grants, the more confident you become.”

Job well done! Thank you, Megan!

*Thought for the  
Month of November...*

*People will come and go in life,  
but the person in the mirror will be  
there forever. Be good to yourself!*

**DTA**  
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Thanks to all!

- Jacque

[www.dakotatransit.org](http://www.dakotatransit.org)