



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 133

MARCH 2023

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2023

*****Hard work spotlights the
character of people*****

DTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

Just a Reminder----Your 2023 Dakota Transit Association Membership Form has been sent out. As of March 16th, I have received 22 membership renewals.

Happy St. Patrick's Day



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2023 DAKOTA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

FYI---The 2023 DTA Conference will be held in Minot, ND, September 15, 2023, through September 19, 2023. The Sleep Inn & Suites will be the host hotel, phone number 701-837-3100. Mark your calendars.

DAKOTA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

The 2023 DTA Awards Nomination forms have been sent out. Please feel free to return the nomination forms early.

16th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program Annual Conference



Terry Hoffman
Co-Executive Director
Community Transit of
Watertown/Sisseton, Inc

Drug and alcohol training may not be the most exciting topic of training but spice it up with a warm weather destination and the potential for a fun-filled and educational break from reality is there.

Seven members of the Dakota Transit Association from North and South Dakota made the trek to San Diego, CA March 14-16 for the 16th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference. The event, free to attendees, drew 600-plus transit professionals to San Diego with approximately the same amount taking in the conference virtually.

Dale Bergman, Grand Forks, ND, joined South Dakotans Adam Sharkey and Mallory Meier of Pierre; Travis Bortnem, Brookings; Mike Niles, Spearfish, Terry Hoffman, Watertown and Stephany Weed, Huron to represent the DTA.

The three-day conference will provide 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).

Attendees chose from a variety of sessions to customize their experience for the specific needs of their employer and knowledge level of the regulations. The conference included training for beginner Drug and Alcohol Program Managers (DAPMs), an update from the Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance (ODAPC), and various other sessions catered to running a compliant drug and alcohol program. Networking opportunities including access to FTA and other federal drug and alcohol compliance experts was available.



Left to Right – Dale Bergman, Stephany Weed, Terry Hoffman, Mallory Meier, Adam Sharkey, Travis Bortnem and Mike Niles

Post-accident Programs, Compliant Policy Building, Beating the Cheaters, Role of the MRO and MRO Assistant were among the breakout sessions offered. Others included Return to Duty Processes, Challenge and Best Practices for Small Transit Operators, the FTA Audit Process, Reviewing Collection Sites, Employee Onboarding and more. Instruction provided was excellent despite the extremely large sessions.

With any conference, there is also the fun side and San Diego has no shortage of tourist attractions. DTA attendees' outings ranged from a comedy act at a nearby nightclub to a trolley tour of the city, a tour of the Midway Museum, Petco Park, Balboa Park, Coronado Island, San Diego Seal Tours, The Whaley House (America's most haunted house). Perhaps the most scenic outing was right in front of 24-hours a day. The host hotel was situated on San Diego Harbor and the sights and sounds of the city were exhilarating.



Not everything was peaches and cream including the weather. Albert Hammond's tune from the 70's about never raining in southern California did not ring true. Rain began Tuesday evening and continued for most of Wednesday. Sunny skies and sunshine were wrapped around the adverse conditions, and we all reminded ourselves of what we left behind and what awaited us when we returned.

TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

Rod Grafing 701-840-1405

Email address

rod@southcentralseniors.org

"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts" – Harry S. Truman

We are looking at conducting PASS training in western North Dakota this summer. There are no specifics at this time other than classes will most likely take place sometime in June or July of 2023. If you have drivers or staff in need of training or recertification, please email or call Rod using the contact info above.

North Dakota is in need of PASS trainers. If you or someone from your agency is interested in becoming a certified PASS trainer, please contact Rod at 701-840-1405.

2023 CTAA Emerging Leaders Academy

Gayle Kludt, Transit Director
People's Transit

Gayle Kludt, Executive Director, People's Transit, Huron, SD; Stacy Strickler, Transit Coordinator, ROCS, Wagner, SD; and Kristi Slominski, Mobility Manager, CAT, Grand Forks, ND have successfully completed the 2023 CTAA Emerging Leader Academy Cohort 5 in Washington, DC March 6th –

10th. The academy was restructured this year based on feedback from the four previous academies.



Prior to travelling to Washington, DC we were asked to read the book Your Leadership Edge-Tools and Strategies for When Everyone Leads by Ed O'Malley and Amanda Cebula. In addition, we were each charged with submitting a leadership challenge we are currently facing in our agencies. Included in our pre-training information was a day by day dress code. (More to come on that 😊)

On Sunday night CTAA hosted a dinner at a local restaurant for the ELA participants to get to know each other in a casual setting. This set the tone for what was coming.

Monday morning we met for our training at the CTAA office in Washington, DC. We were introduced to our instructors Dioane Gates and Michael Noel. Our morning consisted of getting to know each other than diving into the Cornerman Leadership Playbook. We used the playbook (handbook) to tie in the information from Your Leadership Edge. That afternoon we broke into our

Leadership Challenge Consultation Groups. That afternoon, part of the day Tuesday and Wednesday, we worked in our groups sharing our leadership challenges. We followed a process for each challenge that included observing (gathering data and our observations), interpreting (generate multiple interpretations), and intervening (brainstorm possible interventions). By implementing this process we were able to help each other with our leadership challenges.

On Wednesday afternoon we were honored to have FTA Executive Director Matt Welber brief us the public transportation industry profile, the history of public transit, historical funding programs of public transit, and today's FTA Mission: Improve America's Communities through Public Transportation. FTA will accomplish their mission through financial assistance, technical assistance, research, and oversight of safety, civil rights, funding and project.

And this is where the dress code came in to play. Our first two days we were told we could be casual and relaxed, jeans were fine. Wednesday needed to be business casual. The biggie came on Thursday when it was impressed upon us that we needed to dress business professional with comfortable shoes. That is because CTAA coordinated teams of CTAA staff, CTAA board members and ELA participants to meet with their senators and legislators, also known as Hill Day. I was humbled to be in the Capitol and by the opportunity to meet with Senator Thune and Rounds' staff and in person with Representative Johnson. Certainly this opportunity gave the perspective that the senators and representative want to know what is going on from our perspective.

Thursday evening we convened at the CTAA office to socialize and reflect on our day on the Hill. We wrapped things up on Friday with final instruction from Dioane and Michael. The ELA participants were awarded plaques for successfully completing the

Emerging Leaders Academy. In other words, we graduated!



South Dakota Contingency: Andy Sharp, Operations Supervisor, River Cities Public Transit, Pierre, SD and CTAA Upper Midwest Regional Director; Stacy Strickler, Transit Coordinator, Rural Office of Community Services, Wagner, SD; Gayle Kludt, Executive Director, People's Transit, Huron, SD; Barb Cline, Executive Director, Prairie Hills Transit, Spearfish, SD and CTAA National Director.

The week was packed with great information, great instruction, great networking opportunities and motivation to go back to our agencies and do great things for our communities!

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!



Jacquie Senger, Executive Director, DTA

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