

RTAP

BULLETIN

FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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Non-Emergency Stretcher Training Courses Were a Success!

The safe handling and transporting of stretcher passengers is of utmost importance to Florida's paratransit service providers.

The Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) offered two Non-Emergency Stretcher Transport (NEST) Train-the-Trainer workshops in the fall of 2014. The first workshop was hosted by JTrans in Marianna, Florida on August 21st and 22nd, with the second workshop hosted a month later by Lake County Transit in Tavares, Florida on September 23rd and 24th.

The two day NEST workshops, conducted by Dave Cyra and Tim McClendon, were designed to accomplish several training goals, including:

- On overview of the safe handling and transporting of stretcher clients presents transit operators with a broad spectrum of challenges.
- Discussing the meaning of the terms non-emergency and emergency conditions.
- Raising the awareness as how professionalism relates to roles of the non-emergency transport of stretcher passengers and review all aspects of the request for transport.
- Examining the utilization of various equipment types, practices.
- Understanding patient assessment procedures and the collection process of the patient's vital information.



Training attendees participate in a hands-on demonstration.

- Other skills such as sensitivity issues, review of proper vehicle control procedures, and operations in defensive driving will be discussed.

Upon completion, each attendee received a course manual, associated training aids, and a certificate of training for completion of the two-day NEST training course.

To view a complete list of upcoming training courses sponsored by Florida RTAP is available on the Florida RTAP website www.floridartap.org.



National RTAP— A Brief Overview and History

Millions of rural and tribal citizens are unable to drive for health, economic or lifestyle reasons. Transit is a real solution to maintaining a high quality of life in rural areas—providing access to jobs, healthcare, education, shopping and numerous other activities. Since 1979, FTA has provided formula funding to states, under the Section 5311 Non-urbanized Transit Program, to establish and maintain transit systems in communities with populations under 50,000.

Soon after, program founders recognized that community transit drivers, dispatchers, maintenance workers, managers and board members needed special skills and knowledge to provide quality service to their diverse customers across large service areas. As a result, the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) was created in 1987.

The Formula Program for Rural Areas (MAP-21's new name for the Section 5311 program) provides funding for the RTAP program. A portion of the funding is reserved for National RTAP; the remainder is distributed to the states by formula.

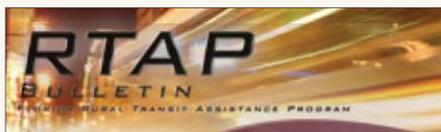
The goals of the RTAP program are to promote the safe and effective delivery of public transportation services

in rural areas and to facilitate more efficient use of public transportation resources. To meet those goals, the program focuses on the following objectives:

- Improving the quality of training and technical assistance resources available to the rural transit industry
- Encouraging and assisting state, local, and peer networks to address training and technical assistance needs
- Promoting the coordination of transportation services
- Building a national database of information about the rural transit industry

Since its inception, National RTAP has contributed to the achievement of these objectives at the national level by developing and distributing training materials, providing technical assistance, creating web-based applications, producing reports, publishing best practices, conducting research, and offering peer assistance for rural and tribal transit providers and state RTAP programs.

For more information on the National RTAP program go to www.nationalrtap.org



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OUR MISSION

The Florida RTAP provides training, continuing education, and technical assistance to those who provide or assist in the provision of public transportation services in rural and small urban communities in order to promote the coordinated delivery of safe, efficient, and effective transit services.

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SPOTLIGHT—Ivan Maldonado, StarMetro

Each SPOTLIGHT edition highlights one of our many energetic Florida RTAP transit professionals and allows these individuals to introduce themselves in their own words. In this issue, the SPOTLIGHT is on Ivan Maldonado, StarMetro Transit Director/General Manager.



Name: Ivan Maldonado

Title: Transit Director/General Manager

Birthplace: Bronx, New York

Education: Master's in Business Administration; Certified Public Manager; Completed the Florida Operations Network Transit Trainer certification and multiple FTA/NTI's

courses. One of the first 12 Florida transit managers to complete the FDOT's Transit Manager Certificate Program.

Professional History: Director/General Manager of StarMetro, the public transit system in the city of Tallahassee. Over 20 years of management and supervisory experience with an extensive background in human services having served as a division director at the Osceola County Council on Aging. Currently, serves as a member of the Florida Department of Transportation Safe Mobility for Life Coalition, the Florida Autonomous Vehicle Statewide Workgroup, and previously served as a member of the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Continuous Quality Improvement team.

StarMetro provides over 4.5 million annual fixed route trips, including shuttle services to two university campuses. Over 160,000 demand response trips are provided annually through Dial-A-Ride paratransit transportation, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) services in Leon County, and the Lake Jackson Flex route service. StarMetro also operates a four-county Regional Mobility Coordinator program along with a One Call/One Click Center to serve the elderly, disabled and low income citizens of the Capital region with a toll free number (1-855-One-Ride).

Years Working with Current Agency: 4 ½ years with StarMetro

Years Working in Transit Industry: 11 years in transit and paratransit services. Previously worked as a commercial driver delivering products in the private business sector.

Biggest Surprise in Paratransit: How much this service is needed, and how little funding is allocated for this essential service.

Biggest Challenge in Paratransit: Meeting the continuous increase in demand for services, and the gradual decrease in funding necessary to operate paratransit services.

Personal Benefit of Working in Paratransit: As a current transit director, having previously worked as a paratransit superintendent, has helped me understand the importance of creating services (whether fixed route or demand response) that meets the growing demand of elderly and disabled riders.

Personal Background: I am happily married, have five children and three grandchildren. I am actively engaged in church activities as a minister and volunteer chaplain at two correctional institutions. My personal hobbies are weightlifting and track and field events. Recently I won first place in the 50-54 age categories for discus and shot put in the Tallahassee Senior Games.

Childhood Ambition: I wanted to be a cop when I grew up; tried it twice after leaving the US Army, but realized that it was not my calling. That has not been the case with transit or paratransit; I love them both.

Inspiration: My Christian faith – I am energized by positive people around me. Because of my faith and inspiration, I strive to be a positive influence for people both professionally and in the ministry.

Favorite Book: The Bible; I read it daily.

Favorite Color: Cobalt Blue

Favorite Candy: Zagnut

My Mottos: Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you.

Florida RTAP's
Website Address
www.floridartap.org

Transportation Voucher Pilot Project for Floridians with Developmental Disabilities RFP Unveiled

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (FDDC) have joined together to fund two pilot projects for the development of transportation voucher pilot programs to serve Florida's residents with developmental disabilities. The agencies just announced the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from eligible Florida agencies for the development and implementation of transportation voucher pilot projects that will enhance the mobility options for Florida's residents with developmental disabilities.

Eligible Florida agencies are limited to public agencies, government entities and not-for-profit agencies. It is anticipated that two pilot projects will be approved with funding for each up to \$150,000. To be considered, proposals must be submitted on or before Wednesday, February 4, 2015.

Accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation is a critical component to community inclusion. Having access to the community is the key to many aspects of independence and self-sufficiency. Florida's transportation delivery system is very complex. Multiple funding streams from various federal, state, and local agencies; differences in provider service hours, coverage, and the type of transportation services available; issues related to provider jurisdiction; and limited transportation options are just a few of the

things that make it difficult for people with disabilities to access and utilize available transportation services within their communities.

Alternative methods of providing transportation to people with disabilities are needed. Initial research conducted on the transportation voucher model indicates that there are examples of successful implementation of this model within the United States. A voucher based transportation model may be a viable option to providing more consumer choice and control over individual transportation needs. This could be particularly true in rural areas of the state where transportation options are extremely limited.

Background information on voucher based models for delivery of mobility services can be found in the April 2010 FDDC report entitled: "Innovative Approaches for Increasing Transportation Options for People with Disabilities in Florida." This document can be found at www.cutr.usf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NEW_FDDC_low.pdf

To access a copy of the Transportation Voucher Pilot Project Request for Proposals please visit: www.floridartap.org/pages/announcements.html. For questions or additional information contact either FDOT's Elizabeth Stutts at Elizabeth.Stutts@dot.state.fl.us or CUTR's Lisa Staes at staes@cutr.usf.edu.

Save the Date: Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day—March 3, 2015 (Tentative)

The 2015 Annual Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day is tentatively scheduled to take place at the State Capital Building in Tallahassee on Thursday, March 3, 2015. This event, which is hosted by the Florida Association of Coordinated Transportation Systems (FACTS), is a gathering of transportation vehicles, mobility advocates, and the transportation disadvantaged community to bring awareness and support to the transportation disadvantaged program.

It is so important for legislators to hear from the actual people this program helps! Food and entertainment will be provided to all attendees.

Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns on any of the information above, call FACTS at (800) 983-2435 or email FACTS at factsassoc@gmail.com



2015 UPCOMING EVENTS

The classes and conferences listed below are sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida in Tampa. If you would like to attend any of the courses, you will find a course announcement and registration form for each course at www.floridartap.org in the Training Calendar section. Click on the course name to download or view training class details. If you have an idea for a training course or would like to host a course, please contact Lisa Staes at staes@cutr.usf.edu.

January 13-14, 2015

Risk Assessment for Transit Capital Projects—
Tampa, FL

January 26-30, 2015

Instructor's Course (FT00562)—Tampa, FL

February 23-27, 2015

Transit Industrial Safety Management
(FT00457)—Tampa, FL

March 3, 2015 (Tentative)

TD Legislative Awareness Day—Tallahassee, FL

April 10-11, 2015

Triple Crown Roadeo—St. Petersburg, FL

May 30-June 5, 2014

Community Transportation EXPO—Tampa, FL

June 1-2, 2015

FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development
Workshop—Tampa, FL

October 25-28, 2015

FPTA/CTD Annual Conference and EXPO—
Daytona Beach, FL

2015 Roadeo, Workshops and Conferences Scheduled

The Florida RTAP community and transportation professionals will have ample opportunity to participate in a variety of major training opportunities, workshops and conferences in 2015.

Here is a recap of the major events that you will want to pencil in on your 2015 calendars:

Triple Crown Roadeo—the combined Mega Bus, Paratransit and Maintenance competition will be hosted by the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) in St. Petersburg on April 10-11, 2015. Once again the Florida RTAP Paratransit Roadeo will be held in conjunction with the fixed route roadeo.

FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop will be held at the USF Embassy Suites in Tampa on June 1-2, 2015. This annual training opportunity focuses on managers and supervisors and is a must attend experience.

Community Transportation EXPO 2015, the Community Transportation Association of America will hold its annual conference and EXPO at the Tampa Marriott Waterside and Tampa Conference Center in Tampa from May 30 to June 5, 2015. A unique opportunity for the Florida paratransit community.

Joint FPTA/CTD Annual Conference and EXPO will be hosted by Votran at the Daytona Beach Hilton and Ocean Center on October 25-28, 2015. For the first time, this 2015 event will combine the Florida Public Transportation Association and Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged annual conferences into a single event.