RTAP
BULLETIN
FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
WINTER—VOL. 13, NO. 4

2 TD LEGISLATIVE DAY

2016 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AND SAFETY SUMMIT

3 SPOTLIGHT—DIANA BYRNES

4 CTD UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

2016 FLORIDA TRIPLE CROWN ROADEO

5 2015 & 2016 UPCOMING EVENTS

FPTA/CTD ANNUAL TRAINING

2015 Transportation Disadvantaged Awards

This year the Florida Public Transportation Association and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged combined their annual conferences and workshops. The FPTA/CTD 2015 Annual Training and EXPO was held in Daytona Beach on October 25-28, 2015.

As tradition, the highlight of the CTD portion of the workshop was the annual Awards Banquet, at which the 2015 Transportation Disadvantaged Awards were presented. The 2015 award winners included:

Elected Official of the Year: Nancy Harris, Putnum County Commissioner

Dispatcher/Scheduler of the Year Award: Towanna Pompey, Manatee County Area Transit

Driver of the Year Award: James Hamilton, Manatee County Area Transit

Driver of the Year Award: Timothy Smith, Calhoun County Transit

Safety of the Year Award: MV Transportation, Inc., Alachua County CTC

Volunteer of the Year Award: Joseph R. Leacock, Volunteers in Motion

Volunteer of the Year Award: Laurence (Larry) P. Osband, Palm Beach County

Innovation of the Year Award: Manatee County Area Transit

Planning Agency of the Year: North Central Florida Regional Council

Outstanding Local Coordinating Board of the Year: Charlotte County

Operator of the Year Award: Big Bend Transit, Leon County

Rural CTC of the Year Award: Suwannee River Economic Council, Inc., Bradford, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette and Union Counties

Urban CTC of the Year Award: Jacksonville Transportation Authority, Duval County

Sheila Winitzer Shining Star of the Year Award: Sheryl Hartzog, Clay Transit, Clay County

William G. & Budd Bell Lifetime Achievement Award: Vanita Anderson, Apalachee Regional Planning Council

FDOT

CUTR

USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

Save the Date: Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day, January 21, 2016

The 2016 Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day is scheduled to take place at the State Capital Building in Tallahassee on Thursday, January 21, 2016. 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, call FACTS at (800) 983-2435 or email FACTS at *factsassoc@gmail.com*

Save the Date: 2016 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety Summit

Close to 250 transit professionals are expected to be in attendance at the 2016 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety Summit, which will be held at the USF Embassy Suites in Tampa on June 6-8, 2016. This annual workshop and summit is jointly sponsored by the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

The fourth annual Florida Transit Safety Summit, hosted by the FDOT Florida Transit Safety Network (FTSN), will be held on Monday, June 6th. State and national safety experts will provide informative presentations on a wide variety of topics related to transit safety.

The two day professional development workshop, conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday, will offer unique professional development opportunities for Florida's public transportation supervisors, front-line employees, and other key staff in operations, maintenance, marketing, planning and administration. The one-stop workshop provides public transit professionals with an excellent opportunity to learn from industry experts, attend professional development training, learn about research updates, and network with their peers.

RTAP BULLETIN
Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program

Vol. 13 No. 4, Winter 2015

The ***RTAP BULLETIN*** is produced by the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research.

Please direct all questions or comments to:

RTAP BULLETIN

Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue, CUT100
Tampa, FL 33620-5375
(813) 974-3120, fax (813) 974-5168
email: *jaygoodwill@cutr.usf.edu*
website: *www.floridartap.org*

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.

Editor: Jay Goodwill Designer: Stephanie Lewis

SPOTLIGHT— Diana Byrnes, CUTR

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 Diana Byrnes, Certified Substance Abuse Program Administrator at the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

Name: Diana Lyn Byrnes

Title: Certified Substance Abuse Program Administrator (CSAPA)

Birthplace: Doylestown, PA

Professional History: I began my career in transportation as an account manager for a Third Party Administrator of USDOT drug and alcohol testing programs, in Pennsylvania. My primary role was in the administration of transportation workplace testing programs and FDOT was my favorite client!

Years Working with Current Agency: In June of 2003 I moved to Florida with my husband and daughter and began to assist FDOT's Central Office with the oversight and monitoring of transit agency compliance to FTA and USDOT testing program regulations as a Substance Abuse Management Specialist at the Center for Urban Transportation Research.

Years Working in Transit Industry: I've worked with the transit industry since 1999, however for the past 12 years; I've had the most interaction with transit agencies and others in the industry, as a trainer and presenter. I absolutely love to deliver training to safety-sensitive employees, supervisors and other transit agency personnel. Fortunately, my passion for training is shared by Victor Wiley, Transit Safety Programs Manager at FDOT Central Office. His understanding of the importance of a good transit safety culture has allowed CUTR to increase the FDOT sponsored training offerings.

Personal Background: As a Pennsylvania native, I had a hard time adjusting to the "less intense" change of seasons, here in Florida. For example, Christmas just doesn't feel quite as festive to me when its 80 degrees outside! However I do enjoy teasing my family and friends "up north" when they are shoveling snow and we are boating on the Gulf!

The year that our family moved to Florida, my daughter Caroline entered 2nd grade. She is now in her sophomore year at Florida State University, studying advertising. My husband and I were very fortunate that Caroline excelled in high school and earned a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. While the scholarship doesn't cover all of her expenses during these college years, it will still allow her to graduate debt-free, which of course is a great start to her "bright future". I am immensely proud of Caroline's accomplishments as a student and also in her strong character. She has grown into a remarkable adult.

Childhood Ambition: When I was a child, I would imagine becoming a singer or an actress. I used to say that I'd be a great singer if only I could sing! In other words, I just loved being on stage and entertaining people. I suppose that being a trainer satisfies some of that childhood ambition in that I am "on stage" in front of trainees. Hopefully I'm a little bit entertaining when I'm educating!

Favorite Book: Unfortunately I'm not able to read for pleasure as often as I would like. When I do get the chance to read, I prefer Jodi Piccoult and John Grisham novels. One of my favorite books of all time is entitled "On the Corner of Bitter and Sweet", by Jamie Ford; a love story set during WWII.

Favorite Color: Believe it or not, I have been loving the color gray lately! We recently renovated our home and I chose to change the color scheme from earth tones (beige, brown, red, green) to shades of blue and gray. However, finding the perfect shade of gray to paint on our family room walls was quite an undertaking. I had so many little sample squares painted on the wall, my husband referred to our wall color as "50 shades of gray".

My Motto: Attitude is everything! I wholeheartedly believe that we can handle any situation with the right attitude. I also love the Eleanor Roosevelt quote: "You have to accept whatever comes and the only important thing is that you meet it with courage and with the best that you have to give."

Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Unveils New Website

Just prior to the 2015 FPTA/CTD Workshop and EXPO, the Florida TD Commission unveiled its new, updated web site, which can be found at: *www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd/*

The website was redesigned to make it more convenient and easier to access and use–allowing all information to be accessed within three clicks.

The six primary tabs for the website include:

About Us: All information provided focuses solely on the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged mission, programs, governance, assessments, studies and multi-year plans.

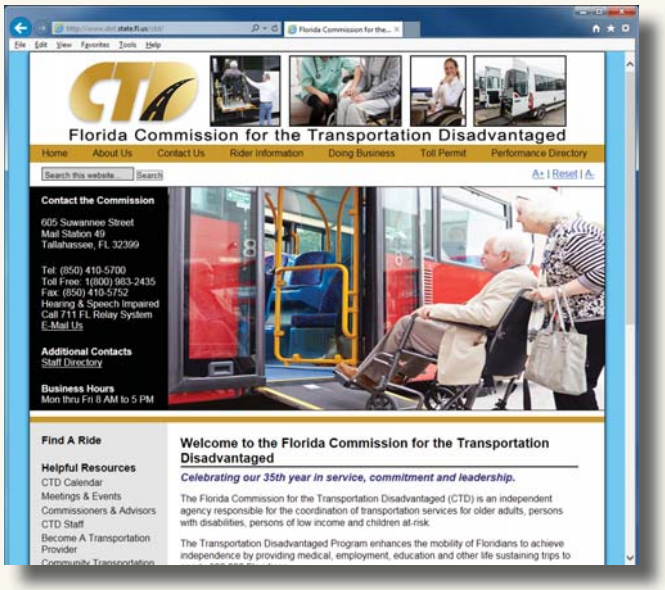
Contact Us: Provides contact information for the CTD Omnibus Hotline, CTD phone numbers and address, and related information

Rider Information: Customer focused subject area for people seeking information on services and how to Request a Ride, Community Transportation Coordinators, Commission Ombudsman, Customer Rights and Responsibilities.

Doing Business: All materials in this category is geared towards service providers, CTCs and Planning Agencies, one-stop location for all business information when seeking documents, forms, guidelines and templates.

Toll Permit: Customer focused subject area for people seeking information, applications and brochures on the Florida Disabled Toll Permit Program.

Performance Directory: This subject area is focused on operating and performance reports for all of Florida's 67 counties based the state fiscal year July through June. Three years of Annual Operating Reports are available in this directory.



Save the Date: 2016 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo April 1-2, 2016

On April 1-2, 2016, Florida's best bus drivers and technicians will gather in Fort Myers to participate in the 2016 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo. The Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo combines the FPTA and RTAP roadeos into a single, colossal weekend honoring all of Florida's bus maintenance technicians, paratransit and fixed route operators.

The year's event is a joint effort of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), the Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Florida Association of Coordinated Transit Systems (FACTS), and hosted by the Lee Tran.

There will be training opportunities for the participants. The bus operator participant's skills will be tested with a written test and the on-course competition. The maintenance technicians will face similar challenges with a written test and a series of diagnostic tests.

As always, the event concluded will conclude with the Awards Banquet that crowns and recognizes the 2016 champions in the paratransit van and cutaway divisions, the fixed route bus division, and the maintenance technician's team competition.

The first place finishers in both the Cutaway and Mini-Van divisions will represent Florida at the May 22nd Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) National Roadeo in Portland, Oregon.

Registration for the 2016 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo is expected to open in late January or early February.

2015 & 2016 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.*

December 14-17, 2015
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies (FT00456)—Tampa, FL

January 11-15, 2016
Transit Supervisor Certification (FT00545)—Tampa, FL

January 21, 2016
Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day—Tallahassee, FL

April 1-2, 2016
2016 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo—Ft Myers, FL

June 6, 2016
2016 Florida Transit Safety Summit—Tampa, FL

June 7-8, 2016
2016 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop—Tampa, FL

Combined FPTA-CTD Annual Training and EXPO A Success!

The Inaugural Joint FPTA/CTD Annual Training and EXPO, combining the annual conferences and workshops of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) proved to be a huge success! Held from October 25-28, 2016 in Daytona Beach, the event attracted over 500 transportation professionals.

The 2016 conference was an interesting and enjoyable event with a substantial and diverse program including topics for everyone in the industry, whether they provide fixed route or paratransit services. There were sessions on planning, operations, maintenance, marketing, financial management and professional development. This was also an EXPO year – with a wide variety of transit products, services and vehicle featured in a joint trade show.