



The Road Ahead

Volume 10, Issue 1

February, 2011

Our mission is to support providers of travel instruction for the purpose of teaching people with disabilities and seniors to travel safely and independently.

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Save The Date!

"Are You In the Game?"

ATI's Eleventh annual conference will be held **August 12-14, 2011** at The Holiday Inn Historic District in **Philadelphia, PA**

Join us for the latest in winning strategies in the field of travel instruction. Enjoy learning from a wide variety of experts in their field as well as networking with your peers. It is also the perfect time to explore the numerous historic sites and enjoy a Philly cheesesteak.

Take advantage of the Early Bird Registration fee of \$175 for Members and \$250 for Non-Members. Make your plans now and look for more details on the upcoming event including registration forms and hotel reservation forms on our website soon. For more information on the conference, please call Peggy Schmidt at 215-699-2733 or Cecile Charlton at 610-892-9440.

Check out the call for papers inside this issue! Deadline for presentation proposals is April 1, 2011.

See Inside For:

- 2011 call for papers!
- Mobility Management Programs
- Tips on motivating your travel training staff
- Erie, PA's new state-of-the-art travel training bus
- How travel training creates new opportunities for our customers

The Road Ahead Staff:
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 Terry Moakley

www.travelinstruction.org



2011 Call for Papers

The Association of Travel Instruction announces a Call for Papers for its 2011 Educational Conference. The focus of the Conference will be sharing information, innovations and current topics of interest in the field of travel instruction. Some suggested topics include:

- ◆ **New technological innovations in travel instruction**
- ◆ **Evaluating travel trainers**
- ◆ **The training process for new instructors including what to cover, documentation nuts and bolts, and essential competencies**
- ◆ **How to market your travel instruction programs**
- ◆ **Travel training at community colleges**
- ◆ **Train the trainer curriculum**
- ◆ **Travel trainers who do ADA paratransit certification**
- ◆ **Travel instruction for senior citizens**
- ◆ **Communication strategies - how to discuss travel instruction with parents, caretakers, educators, job coaches**
- ◆ **Innovative travel instruction programs**
- ◆ **Developing and maintaining program partnerships**
- ◆ **Teaching techniques**
- ◆ **Funding travel instruction programs**
- ◆ **Future concerns and issues**
- ◆ **Travel instruction from a legislative point of view**

You may submit a proposal for a presentation dealing with any of the topics suggested or any other area that addresses programs, policies or strategies that reflect the principles of travel instruction for persons with disabilities and senior citizens, other than those with blindness.



2011 Call for Papers

Presenter Information Form (also available at www.travelinstruction.org)

Name of Presenter:

Additional Presenters:

Title and Organization:

Address:

Work Phone:

E-mail:

Fax:

Title of Presentation:

Please describe your presentation in 300 words or less:



2011 Call for Papers

Presentation Format: This year presenters will be asked to do a 30 minute lecture style presentation with a 15 minute question and answer period to follow. Presenters will be asked to be respectful of the time limit in order to be fair to other presenters on the same program. Accepted proposals will be acknowledged by mail, e-mail or phone. *If you have a presentation that would last longer than 30 minutes please do not hesitate to submit it. The organizers will work with you to provide an acceptable format.*

Conference Preparation: In advance of the conference, presenters will be given an approximate number of attendees of their session as well as the name and phone number of the moderator of the session. All conference presenters are requested to provide the moderator with a resume that can be used as an introduction and a sample copy of any handout materials that will be used at the conference. In addition, presenters must plan on bringing their own audio/visual and computer equipment/accessories.

On the Day of the Presentation: Please make sure your presentation can be accessible to participants with low vision or blindness with a few copies of any handouts or PowerPoint slide information in large print and on disk. ATI would also like a print copy and disk of handout materials for the ATI archives.

Deadline for Submissions: April 1, 2011

Please submit your presenter form and abstract to: ATI Papers
PTMA
134 N. Main Street
North Wales, PA 19440

Or submit by email to execdir@ptma-mc.org. Please place ATI Papers in subject line.

Questions?

Cecile Charlton, Conference Co-Chair
ccharlton@dctma.org
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Peggy Schmidt, Conference Co-Chair
execdir@ptma-mc.org
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Midcoast Ridefinder Links People to Transportation

By Michele Manley
Rockland, ME

Whether you are looking for a ride to a medical appointment, need to go shopping or want to charter a plane to the islands, a new directory can help.

The *Midcoast RideFinder* is a user-friendly print and online, www.midcoastridefinder.com, directory profiling all the transportation providers in Knox, Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties and the towns of Harpswell and Brunswick, Maine.

The Midcoast RideFinder profiles volunteer driver programs, carpools, taxis, charter buses and ferries, highlighting which providers are free, which accept MaineCare (the state subsidized health insurance) and which are handicapped accessible. This is the first time all this information has been profiled in one place. MCH, formerly known as Methodist Conference Homes, is the first nonprofit in Maine to develop a mobility management program. Mobility management is an innovative national model, to help more people understand and access existing transportation options. The program grew out of MCH's 30 years of experience operating Coastal Trans which helps seniors, the disabled and low-income people get to medical and social service appointments. Coastal Trans will be distributing 5,000 printed guides to local service agencies, libraries, chambers and doctor's offices.

The Midcoast RideFinder, the first project of MCH's mobility management program, was made possible by grants from the Maine Community Foundation, the Francis Hollis Brain Foundation and the JTG Foundation.

"One transportation system cannot meet all of the diverse needs in this rural service area," explains Michele Manley, the mobility manager for Coastal Trans. "It is essential to collaborate with non-profit and for profit transportation providers as well as social service agencies to make transportation more accessible."

MCH is working with the Midcoast District Public Health Coordinating Council to distribute the RideFinder, teach individuals how to use it and help MCH access gaps in existing service.

The website www.midcoastridefinder.com will be constantly updated. If you are a transportation provider or have questions about the Ridefinder, please contact Michele Manley at 207-596-6477. Follow the Midcoast Ridefinder on Facebook and Twitter to stay connected and receive information about our developing mobility management program.



The Kennedy Center, Inc. Adds a Regional Mobility Manager to its Mobility Services Program

By Jonathan Rubell
Trumbull, CT

The Kennedy Center, Inc. joins a national movement in improving transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans with the addition of a Regional Mobility Manager to its existing Mobility Services Program.

Through a competitive process, The Kennedy Center was awarded a two-year \$200,000 Federal New Freedoms Initiative grant to hire and oversee the work of the new Regional Mobility Manager. The Kennedy Center's Regional Mobility Manager will serve as a resource for all forms of transportation that benefit seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans residing in the Bridgeport/Stamford Urbanized Zone.

The Mobility Services Program of The Kennedy Center, which is headquartered in Trumbull and has satellite offices throughout the state, has a long history of helping people with disabilities and senior citizens access public transportation. "Travel training," which The Kennedy Center has offered since 1991, teaches people with disabilities and seniors the skills necessary to safely and independently utilize regular bus and train services throughout Connecticut. Since 1991, The Kennedy Center has instructed over 3,500 individuals to access various forms of transportation for work, school, worship and leisure activities.

According to Martin D. Schwartz, President and CEO of The Kennedy Center, "I am very proud of the accomplishments our talented Mobility Services staff has achieved over the past 20 years as statewide leaders in this field. At the same time, we are honored to receive national recognition and funding for this important regional project that will ultimately improve transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans in Southwestern Connecticut."

The creation of the Regional Mobility Manager position is the result of years of planning conducted by The Bridgeport/Stamford Urbanized Area's Locally Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Committee, "LOCHSTP" for short. The LOCHSTP committee consists of representatives from area planning agencies (South Western Regional Planning Agency, Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency, Valley Council of Governments), municipal social service officials, transit districts, and area senior and human service providers. Based on a federal mandate to improve transportation coordination for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals, the committee was formed in 2006 and charged with developing programming for the region's allocated funding made available through the Federal Transit Administration's New Freedom Program. The project is also supported by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, which generously provided matching funds.



The Kennedy Center, Inc. Adds Regional Mobility Manager to its Mobility Services Program

In the early years of the LOCHSTP planning process, gaps were discovered in existing transportation services that did not meet the needs of seniors and people with disabilities. Some new bus services were added as a result of this early research, but most were subsequently stopped due to low ridership. The new Regional Mobility Manager will be responsible for conducting research studies to gain greater insight into service gaps. Existing transportation services will be evaluated and other, new destinations currently not accessible for people with disabilities and seniors will be determined.

In addition to researching gaps and potential solutions, the Regional Mobility Manager will publicize existing transportation services to seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans in Southwest Connecticut through seminars, workshops, and other public outreach events. The creation of a web site and the use of social media are planned to disseminate transit information and keep interested stakeholders updated about the progress of the Regional Mobility Management Project. Technology will track existing services to identify when vehicles are not being used, which could potentially address identified gap in services.

Craig Lader, Senior Transportation Planner at The Southwest Regional Planning Agency in Stamford said, “We are excited at the prospect of developing new and meaningful programs and services from this ambitious regional transportation project. The creation of a Regional Mobility Manager presents us with a unique opportunity to address the issues specifically faced by those with special transportation needs in the Bridgeport and Stamford regions of Connecticut. Some of the important work assignments that will be completed include: the creation of a “Mobility Handbook,” tracking barriers that prevent services from being effectively used by potential riders, and determining the need for new services and programs.”

In addition to providing a single point of contact for information about transportation services, the Regional Mobility Manager will also report to the LOCHSTP committee about gaps in service identified throughout the project. Area transit providers, regional planners, and human service agencies will then work together to address these gaps.

The Kennedy Center is a nationally accredited, non-profit, community-based rehabilitation organization that currently serves over 1,800 individuals annually.

For further information, please contact Jonathan Rubell, Mobility Services Director at The Kennedy Center, jrubell@kennedyctr.org, (203) 365-8522 Ext. 265.



Travel Training with Mobility...Your Ticket to Independence and Freedom

**Submitted by Vastina Holland-Brown
Baltimore, MD**

MTA Mobility is excited to announce a new program – Travel Training “Freedom in Transit”. Funded through the FY 2011 Federal Transit Administration New Freedom grant, Mobility has developed a travel training program for people with disabilities, senior citizens and Students transitioning into the work force.

A formal definition of travel training is a short-term, intensive, individualized or group course of instruction designed to promote the independent travel of people with disabilities and older adults. Translation ...Customers will learn to travel on fixed route public transportation using Local Bus, Metro Subway and Light Rail Services to frequent destinations throughout the entire Maryland Transit Administration’s (MTA) service area.

What’s the purpose?

Travel Training will empower our customers to be confident and self sufficient when using public transportation. Comprehensive training, planning, and assessments for our customers will increase independence and greater freedom throughout day-to-day activities. It is an opportunity to move around with more flexibility by not having to call and make advance reservations or rely on family and friends. Millions of people use public transportation as their primary mode of travel to and from work. Because many people with disabilities don’t drive, one of the largest barriers to employment is ready access to public transportation services.

Is Mobility working with any other agencies in this effort?

Mobility has partnered with other government agencies, area educational facilities and our colleagues in the non-profit human service sector to develop the program. Since we often share the same customer base, it makes sense for us to collaborate.

Qualified instructors with extensive experience in public transportation and disability issues will lead the training.

Who can participate and is there a fee?

The disability community, senior citizens and students in transition are welcome to participate. There is no cost for participation.



Travel Training with Mobility...Your Ticket to Independence and Freedom

How does travel training work?

Travel Training includes two components – classroom instruction and practical field training. Prior to training, participants are individually evaluated to determine the required level of training instruction needed. Once that has been achieved, participants will attend one day of classroom instruction (more if needed) followed by practical field training. Field training instruction varies in length of time based on the individual's skill set.

What can I expect to learn in travel training?

Participants will learn practical skills necessary to travel with confidence and safety. Here are some examples:

- Learn how to read a bus/rail schedule and route map
- Purchase tickets
- Recognize bus numbers
- Use proper boarding and departure procedures
- Determine appropriate routes as well as how to transfer from one route to another
- Read transit signage and identify landmarks
- Learn proper street crossing skills
- Develop contingency plans in case of an emergency
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior when riding transit and much more

Travel training opens doors to opportunities for employment, education, social/recreational interaction, increased freedom and greater independence. Your ticket awaits!





Opening a Whole New Door

By Sarah Green
Grand Rapids, MI

I met Rachel DeMaagd in April 2010. She was hoping to move into the **Rapid** service area and into a more independent life. She runs a successful micro enterprise business called ‘Rachel’s Little Coffee Shop’. Too often the transition partners laying the groundwork look at only housing and employment. Taking advantage of all the opportunities of community living is dependent on the knowledge, skills, and opportunity to use public transportation.

Rachel had some experience using public transportation in her transition program but it had been sometime since she lived inside the service area. She was excited to be moving back into the community and learning to get around it on her own. Rachel loves to walk, had a cell phone and e-mail to communicate with, and many skills that made her a great travel training candidate. The first place we learned to go was from her work site within the service area to a medical appointment across town. She used the Hope Network (a large nonprofit agency) van to get to and from another business site and to and from her residence.

After she moved into an apartment complex in the community we began travel training. Though there was a long term street closing (resulting in a long detour), she handled it and the transfers with ease. As a business woman she sometimes has to meet with suppliers so she found information regarding what bus to take to meet with her coffee supplier. Regarding this discovery, Rachel said: *“I was shocked when I did it on my own the first time. I was scared to death. Sometimes I am still a little nervous but I’m getting used to it. But it is like opening a whole new door.”*

“I’m going to the bank by myself. I’m going to work by myself. And someday I want go to the movies, the malls, and go to coffee shops and restaurants on my own.”

Hope Network transportation is still being utilized for her business site that is outside the service area of fixed route service one day a week. Once the skills and confidence are present and travelers become more aware of their surroundings, they help grow the local economy and participate in life on their own terms. Public transportation can work in tandem with other modes including nonprofit services to help attain access to the wider community.





Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority's New Travel Training Bus Hits The Streets

Submitted By Tom Decker
Erie, PA

January 20, 2011 (ERIE, PA) - The Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority's (the "e") commitment to educating the Erie community on how to utilize its public transportation system continues to grow thanks to the unveiling of a new travel training bus.

The 1997 40-foot New Flyer bus has been completely remodeled and seats 19 passengers along with 2 wheelchair positions. Upgrades to the bus can be seen in the attached fact sheet.

"We really put a lot of effort into remodeling this bus to ensure that is not only comfortable and appealing to the eye, but includes a number of impressive technological instruments which will allow us to train any and all who are interested to the best of our ability," said marketing manger, Tom Decker.

The "e" Travel Training program is a free service for those who want to learn to travel independently using the fixed bus route service. The goal of the Travel Training program is to increase mobility by making it as easy as possible to travel on transit. Riding the "e" can provide increased independence, support an active lifestyle, reduce traffic congestion, help protect the environment, and provide greater access to the community.

"To be able to provide this service for free and teach those who want to learn to ride the bus is beneficial to everyone involved," said executive director Dennis Solensky. "We are very proud of this program and are excited to see this beautiful bus being put to use."

The "e" has also included a special section of its website (www.ride-the-e.com) dedicated to travel training. Users can learn more about the travel training process, view the inside of the actual travel training bus and see exactly how much money they would save taking public transit as opposed to driving their car thanks to our new transit calculator.

In-addition to the travel training section, the website allows users the opportunity to view a new how to ride video which is used in all training sessions. This video demonstrates the basics of using the public transit system and gives new riders all the tools to help make their transit experience a pleasant one.

Since its unveiling on October 13, 2010, the new travel training bus has been involved in training over 150 new riders.





MOTIVATING YOUR TRAVEL TRAINERS

By Michael McDermott

St. Louis, MO

One of a supervisor's responsibilities is to inspire their staff to give their best efforts to achieve their potential in the workplace. We all know about modeling good efforts, giving clear expectations, using praise, etc. Here are a couple of other suggestions.

I give my 5 travel trainers a \$20 gift certificate at Christmas time to Appleby's Restaurant. I look at the gift as a small token of my appreciation for all their efforts during the previous year.

Another thing I've done a couple of times is have a plaque made for a staff person honoring their efforts. One staff received the "Metro Award for Excellence" for his outstanding performance. Another staff person received the "Metro Spirit Award" for all she does to enhance morale. I can get a beautiful 8.5" X 11" plaque made for less than \$30.

If you have a few extra resources, these ideas might assist you in cementing relationships to enhance productivity.





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