Celebrating Thirty Years Of the ADA

Thirty years ago, this month, President George H.W. Bush signed landmark legislation aimed at increasing access and opportunity for people with disabilities, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). At the signing, he stated: “every man, woman and child with a disability can now pass through once-closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence and freedom.”

In the 30 years since, the ADA has made a positive difference in the lives of those with disabilities by providing better access to transportation, office buildings, restaurants and more. The ADA imposed specific requirements for public transportation systems and, over the decades, accessibility on vehicles and at facilities has made progress. Kneeling buses, low floors on light-rail cars, handrails, driver or automated stop announcements, smartphone apps and tactile strips along platform edges are just a few of the technological advances that have helped make public transportation more accessible for people with disabilities.

In this issue of Passenger Transport, APTA members discuss their perspectives on what this legislation means to them, and how it has changed the way they live, work and play by answering this question: “As the public transit industry reflects on the 30th anniversary of the passing into law of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), how has the increased mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities in America impacted you and your work in the industry?”

30 ADA AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 1990-2020

APTA has created an ADA toolkit for its members that includes an adaptable logo, facts-at-a-glance and sample social media posts for use as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of this landmark legislation: www.apta.com/americans-with-disabilities-act-toolkit.

A Shift in Focus from Accessibility to Inclusivity

BY RON BROOKS
VP Transit Market Development
American Logistics
Former Chair, APTA Access Committee

I HAVE BEEN WORKING IN THE PUBLIC transit industry for nearly as long as the ADA has been in existence and have been honored to observe the industry’s evolution in serving the travel needs of people with disabilities.

In the early days, our entire focus was meeting ADA requirements, leaving little bandwidth to do more. In 1993, when I started my career at BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), most public transit agencies were still implementing their initial ADA paratransit plans. Rail systems were working on accessibility retrofits, and many bus fleets were only partially accessible. Stop-announcement technology was in its infancy, and most transit systems struggled to meet customer needs.

In those early days, the work was hard but rewarding. Progress was achieved on a near daily basis, and every year, things looked better. I remember working with BART planners and engineers on the implementation of BART Key Station, ticket-machine and faregate upgrades and other accessibility improvements, watching customers with visual impairments in San Francisco testing an infrared signage technology called Talking Signs which is so obsolete today, it’s almost funny. I remember a cool sunny morning in Oakland in 1995 when staff from BART, AC Transit and our providers celebrated the grand opening of the East Bay Paratransit Consortium, which oversees paratransit in the East Bay region of Northern California.

Throughout my career, I’ve had a front-row seat for a myriad of changes unimaginable to the advocates and transit leaders of 1990: virtually 100 percent bus and rail fleet accessibility in most public transit systems, automated transit route and stop announcements that work most of the time, transit facility design criteria that fully incorporate accessibility, paratransit systems beginning to deploy mobile technology, and on-demand service models affording passengers with disabilities the ability to live with independence and spontaneity.

Best of all, I have witnessed an attitudinal transformation of transit leaders. In the early days, I remember awkwardly standing around after panel presentations while conference attendees asked questions of all the panelists

ONE QUESTION: RON BROOKS
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Project Connect: A Bold Investment in Public Transit
Moving Austin Forward During Extraordinary Times

Like most metropolitan areas across the country, Austin is faced with many challenges. We are living in a time gripped by a deadly pandemic. We are being called to confront generations of systemic racism and we are faced with record-high unemployment. We are no doubt living in extraordinary times.

W e must act now to end racial injustice and inequity. We also must continue to protect our citizens from COVID-19 and provide solutions that address food insecurity, affordability and job loss. Meanwhile, the effects of climate change remain a threat, and we know Austin’s notorious traffic will return, due to our region’s rapid growth.

These are all tall orders, but if we work together, we can find solutions to take action and move forward.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a great example of how our country came together to change the future through ACTION. A grassroots initiative led to the passage of a landmark civil rights legislation aimed at ending discrimination against millions of disabled Americans. While the ADA has been successful, there is more work to be done.

This is why we are extremely enthusiastic about our recent accomplishment for Project Connect—Austin’s transformative plan to expand Capital Metro’s local public transit system to support the region’s exponential growth and community needs—needs that are rooted in providing more sustainable and equitable transportation choices to all our customers.

Major U.S. highway projects historically segregated many urban communities and as a result, increased congestion, harming air quality and fueling racial injustice. A bold investment in transit, if done right, will do the opposite.

Rather than pushing communities of color out of sight, a significant investment in transit, if done right, will do the opposite. A Bold Action to address millions of disabled Americans. While the ADA has been successful, there is more work to be done.

A grassroots initiative led to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) aimed at ending discrimination against millions of disabled Americans. While the ADA has been successful, there is more work to be done. The system plan is transformational, as every part of the project connect is a high-capacity, regionally connected regionally comprehensive public transit system. After two years of tireless work by the staffs of Capital Metro and Austin City Council unanimously approved the Project Connect System Plan.

Project Connect is a high-capacity, regionally connected system that will help ease Austin’s road congestion and reduce our carbon footprint. It will also serve as a critical equitable investment, providing more transportation options for our residents—giving everyone access to all Austin has to offer—a region that ranked the number-one city in the U.S. by Newsweek.

The system plan is transformational, as every part of the community benefits from the investment and better access to transit. It is more than a collection of individual projects; it is an integrated network that ties together all parts of our burgeoning region.

Over the past two years, Capital Metro collected feedback from nearly 60,000 community members through hundreds of public meetings and worked closely with city staff to design the Project Connect system plan. When the pandemic hit, our instinct was to move forward. We acted quickly and hosted eight community virtual meetings during the month of May with more than 17,000 people participating.

While our ridership has increased 17 straight months before the pandemic, we expected it to drop during the health crisis due to stay-at-home orders. However, we still successfully moved more than 40,000 transit-dependent folks who do not drive cars, cannot afford cars or do not want cars. They included many of our brave essential workers who don’t have the option to work from home—market workers, first responders, nursing home staff and hospital and hospice workers, to name but a few.

I will finish with a great story about a Capital Metro paratransit customer and front-line worker named Donna McGregor. Donna is visually impaired and takes Metro-Access every day to her job at Austin Lighthouse, a local nonprofit where she and her co-workers manufacture products for the U.S. military, such as hand sanitizer for the National Guard.

Donna was unable to work because of a sinus infection and missed two weeks of a much-needed paycheck. In need of groceries, she contacted her friends at CapMetro and, thanks to our partnership with a major Texas grocer, we were able to put Donna on the Stay at Home meal delivery list. Now, she is back at work bottling hand sanitizing and proudly serving her country. Meanwhile, Capital Metro and our partners have delivered more than 500,000 meals to Austinites faced with food insecurity during the pandemic.

It’s stories like Donna’s that keep us at Capital Metro focused and fired up. And now with Project Connect in place, we have a data-driven, community-led project that will help create new, good-paying jobs and work to resolve many of our city’s challenges for our citizens like Donna who have so much to give back.
Mountain Line Bus Stop Project Improves Accessibility

MOUNTAIN LINE, MISSOULA, MT, has launched a citywide bus stop improvement project to increase accessibility and improve safety and efficiency along its 12 fixed routes. Improvements include updated signage at all stops and new shelters, benches and trash receptacles.

Some stops will be moved to locations where on-street parking is prohibited and where it is feasible to install a level landing area to improve accessibility for passengers who use a wheelchair or have other mobility impairments.

“This project will make our bus stops even safer and more accessible, while also increasing route efficiency,” said Andrea Davis, treasurer for the Missoula Urban Transportation District Board of Directors, the governing body of Mountain Line.

Other stops are being consolidated for efficiency or moved to a safer access point nearby. A number of stops currently are located upstream of a pedestrian crosswalk or trail crossing, which often causes a bus to obscure the visibility of people using the crossing. To improve safety, several stops will be relocated to the far-side of intersections to reduce vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.

“We are pleased that Mountain Line’s bus stop improvement project will increase accessibility, safety and improve efficiency for our employees commuting to and from work, and for our community members who utilize bus services to access healthcare,” said Sarah Johnson, RN, and sustainability program manager with Providence St. Patrick Hospital.

The project is being carried out in two phases. Phase one construction began the week of July 13, with phase two set to begin later this fall.

New Metrolink Ticket Machines Aid Persons With Disabilities

METROLINK, LOS ANGELES, CA, has installed 133 new ticket machines at its stations across Southern California. The new machines improve the customer experience through a focus on accessibility, improved reliability, and smarter, more customer-friendly features such as touchscreens. The machines comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), featuring voice-enabled technology, a headphone jack and Braille keypads.

“Metrolink trains have always been accessible to all persons and I am pleased that our ticket machines make the buying experience available to everyone,” said Metrolink CEO Stephanie Wiggins.

“The introduction of our new ticket machines with accessibility features comes just as the nation commemorates the 30th anniversary of the signing of ADA on July 26, 1990,” said Metrolink Board Chair Brian Humphrey.

The new machines offer service in English and Spanish, and the touchscreen automatically brightens or dims, depending on outside conditions, to improve visibility.

Uber Acquires Routematch

UBER HAS ACQUIRED TRANSIT software company Routematch in a move aimed at expanding its suite of transportation technologies for cities.

Founded in 2000, Routematch’s software provides a range of services for the transit sector, including ticketing, trip planning and vehicle tracking for fixed-route transportation, demand-response transport planning, as well as payment tools and paratransit services.

“This acquisition brings together Uber’s expertise in on-demand, global mobility technologies with Routematch’s proven capacitive director/CEO of The COMET, ‘RATP Dev brings a unique history of designing, managing, operating, maintaining and modernizing all forms of public transport, and we are looking forward to seeing how we can continue to grow The COMET across the region.’

The COMET Awards RATP Dev Service Contract

THE COMET, COLUMBIA, SC, HAS awarded RATP Dev its fixed-route and paratransit program contract.

The company will be responsible for employing drivers, performing bus maintenance, and other services including paratransit, security, landscaping and bus stop maintenance.

“We are looking forward to this next step with RATP Dev to continue to make mobility accessible and convenient for everyone in the Midlands,” said John Anghel, executive director/CEO of The COMET.

APTAtech: A Focus on The Nexus of Mobility And Technology!

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR APTA’s virtual APTAtech event, Sept. 9-10. Explore how the public can use innovative technologies to better navigate public transit, including emerging technologies in fare payment, connected and autonomous vehicles, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, Mobility-as-a-Service, the Internet of Things (IoT) and big data. Newly emerging challenges related to COVID-19 will also be discussed. Learn more and register at www.apta.com/aptatech.

New CEO Named

ROGERS, STEPHANIE  Wiggins, Metrolink

Rogers, Omnitrans

THE OMNITRANS, SAN BERNARDINO, CA, BOARD OF Directors has named Erin Rogers as the agency’s sixth CEO/general manager. She has served in an interim capacity since Nov. 2019, having first joined the agency in 2017 as deputy general manager.

Rogers has nearly three decades of experience in the public transit industry, including 16 years at the Orange County Transportation Authority, where she held the position of assistant general manager for 10 years and was responsible for oversight and management of all fixed-route bus and paratransit operations. She also served as regional vice president for MV Transportation, Inc., where she oversaw operating contracts with such clients as the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the North County Transit District and Omnitrans.

Rogers is a graduate of the Leadership APTA Class of 2010 and is a member of numerous APTA committees. She is also a member of the California Transit Association Executive Committee.
APTA Standards Public Review and Commenting Period Deadline Soon

THE APTA STANDARDS PROGRAM has advanced three draft security documents for public review and comment. The deadline to submit reviews is Aug. 10. Feedback is sought to ensure all perspectives have been considered prior to moving forward with completion of the documents.

The public commenting period is an essential component of APTA’s consensus-based standards-development process. All bus and rail executive-level administrators, operators, security professionals and others are invited to provide comments or recommendations.

The documents address:
- Developing a Cybersecurity Program that Meets an Agency’s Needs
- Supply Chain Cybersecurity for Transit Agencies
- Sensitive Security Information Policy

View documents and submit any comments at www.apta.com/research-technical-resources/standards/public-review. For any questions or issues, contact standards@apta.com.

APTA Selects Scholarship Recipients

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC Transportation Foundation (APTF) Board of Directors has selected 40 scholars to receive $250,000 in scholarships. The foundation has broken records in both the number of scholars and the amount awarded. The scholars will be recognized at the APTA TRANSform conference and EXPO in March 2021.

Along with the foundation’s 21 named scholarships, several single-year scholarships are being offered for 2020. The foundation partnered again with the Mineta Transportation Institute Scholarship at San Jose State University and MV Transportation/Latinos in Transit to present two single-year scholarships. This year, the APTF also awarded five scholarships under the Frank T. Martin Scholarship fund. These scholars are undergraduate and graduate-level students enrolled at Florida Polytechnic, Fisk and Tennessee State Universities, majoring in engineering, computer science or data analytics with the intent to pursue a career in public transportation.

The APTF scholars will also receive complimentary registration to the APTA TRANSform conference and EXPO and will have the opportunity to participate in the APTF Mentoring Program. In its third year, the mentoring program pairs scholars with industry leaders to help ensure their retention in the industry.

Shofi Azum, 2019 APTF scholarship award recipient and project manager at KCATA, Kansas City, MO, credited the APTF Mentoring Program with guiding him “to the right direction for career growth.”

APTA will announce the names of the scholarship recipients in March 2021.

APTA’s Photo of the Month Returns!

HUNDREDS OF ENTRIES WERE SUBMITTED TO APTA’S 2020 PHOTO Invitational, and twelve photos that epitomize public transportation at work and its importance to the community were selected earlier this year as Photos of the Month for 2020. Here is a look back at the winners for March–July!

Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation – Greensboro, NC
Photographer Jon Eric Johnson (April)

Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority – Atlanta, GA
Photographer Adam Shumaker (March)

Southern California Regional Rail Authority – Los Angeles, CA
Photographer Terrence Martin (May)

Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority – Dayton, OH
Bella Photography (July)

MCI - Des Plaines, IL
Photographer Douglas Little (June)

In Memoriam

GREGORY T. WINTERBOTTOM, champion of equal access in public transportation and the Orange County Transportation Authority’s (OCTA) longest-serving board member, died June 26. He was 73.

Winterbottom, himself a wheelchair user for more than 50 years, was a pioneer of the Dial-A-Ride program to provide door-to-door transportation for wheelchair users and the elderly and managed the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency to provide transportation services for individuals with disabilities—programs that paved the way for OCTA’s ACCESS paratransit service.

Winterbottom served as chairman of the OCTA Board of Directors in 2004 and 2013. Most recently, he served as vice chairman of OCTA’s Transit Committee and as a board member on the Southern California Regional Rail Authority, which operates Metrolink.

“Greg’s commitment and dedication to serving the public was unmatched and he showed unwavering support for our employees,” said OCTA CEO Darrell E. Johnson.

“Orange County has lost a great warrior for the rights of persons with disabilities, and I’ve lost a great friend,” said Stan Oettel, OCTA’s first chief executive officer.

“His contributions to transportation and helping people with disabilities cannot be overstated. The next time you see a bus with a lift, a curb cut for someone pushing a stroller or a wheelchair, or a ramp providing an alternative to stairs in a public building, think of Greg. He worked on those issues for half a century.”

“Metrolink just completed installation of new ticket machines designed to provide easy access to disabled persons; we dedicate this achievement to him [Director Winterbottom],” said Metrolink CEO Stephanie Wiggins.

APTA Annual Report Recipient of Three Awards

APTA’S 2019 ANNUAL Report has been recognized by three major organizations that judge the publications, marketing and websites of associations and the non-profit community: “TRANSFORMING MOBILITY: Connecting People, Places and Possibilities” won the following: the APEX Grand Award (1st place) for Annual Reports—awarded by Communications Concepts; the EXCEL Award (Bronze) for Annual Reports—awarded by Association Media & Publishing; and the TRENDY Award (Bronze) for Annual Reports—awarded by Association Trends.

This marks the first time that an APTA annual report has won three awards from different organizations in a single year, and the 5th consecutive year that an APTA annual report has earned one or more awards.

**Moving Beyond Boundaries**

**BY JAMESON AUTEN**  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer and  
Chief Operating Officer  
Kansas City Area Transportation  
Authority  
Chair, APTA’s Mobility Management  
Committee

“LET THE SHAMEFUL WALL OF  
exclusion come down,” said President  
Bush in 1990.  
That’s exactly what KCATA (Kansas City  
Area Transportation Authority) contin-  
ues to work for; not because the law says  
we have to, but because connecting all  
people to opportunities is our mis- 

Several years ago, KCATA led the  
industry by launching RideKC Freedom  
On-Demand, one of the nation’s first  
app-based ride-hailing services for  
persons with disabilities. By developing  
this service, we created a model that  
was not focused on ourparatransit customers  
first, and then built out to our other cus- 

tomers—the opposite of what typically  
occurs.  
Freedom On-Demand provides mobil- 
ity options, including no more 24-hour  
advance reservations and no waiting for  
unknown amounts of time for pick-ups.  
Finally, our paratransit customers have  
the opportunity to enjoy the same taxi  
service as everyone else, but for less  
money by using their special ADA iden- 
tification number when they make their  
reservation. And if they aren’t comfort- 
able using the app, they can take care  
of their reservation by phone and still  
maximize their benefits.  

Now, more than ever, I’m proud that  
KCATA has always exceeded the federal  
requirements and continues to innovate  
our services for all of our customers. As  
our industry works through the many  
challenges of COVID-19, we must focus  
on providing services that enable all to  
access gainful employment. Programs  
like RideKC Freedom On-Demand, and  
many other ride-hailing programs that  
are now in place across the country, are  
critical to leveling the playing field for  
our customers who need us the most.  

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary  
of the American with Disabilities Act,  
I can’t help but be struck by the irony  
that KCATA’s path has taken. Who  
would have known that just  
five years ago our newly  
hired CEO would be blind,  
bringing an entirely new  
vision to the agency. When  
Robbie Makinen was hired,  
he was driven to transform  
the paratransit system. As  
he often said, just to travel  
to a board meeting in another county he  
feared he needed a passport! In short  
order, Makinen has transformed the  
system with RideKC Freedom and Free- 
dom On-Demand. We went from four  
separate regional entities that were not  
coordinated to a seamless regional sys- 
tem that only required one phone call to  
cross city, county or state lines.  
Reflecting on ADA now, 30 years  
later, it may not be perfect, but there are  
so many tangible reasons to celebrate.  
So many things I am proud of here in  
Kansas City that are moving us forward  
to places of inclusion that I’m really  
happy to see. We are not at our final  
destination, but we will keep fighting.

**One Public Transit System, Inclusive for All**

**BY MARLENE CONNOR**  
Principal/Manager  
Marlene Connor Associates, LLC

**AT MARLENE CONNOR ASSOCIATES,**  
we have always pro- 
moted the thought  
that public trans- 
portation should  
be viewed as one  
system for all; so  
broader mobility  
options for people  
with disabilities is  
something we endorse and strive to  
work to enhance and improve. The abil- 
ity to accomplish these goals has been,  
and continues to be, facil- 
itated by changes in tech- 
nology and their impacts on  
services. Increasingly, the  
ability to order a ride-hailing  
trip and be picked up in a  
timely manner using the  
same app anywhere in the  
country has changed the  
way we all use mobility.  
The public-sector responsibility is to  
ensure equity so that those trips can  
be made similarly by people with dis- 
abilities and all age and income groups  
and can be made without requiring a  
smartphone and bank or credit card  
resources. This results in additional  
activities and complexities that then  
need to be communicated and under- 
stood by agencies and users. Thus,  
we have found that technology, per se,  
is not as important as understanding  
where people want to go and what it  
will take to get from trip beginning to  
trip end.

The landmark passage of the ADA  
was but a first step toward opening  
the door to equal access and mobility  
by programmatically requiring changes  
to infrastructure and systems to be  
accessible to persons with disabilities.  
At that time, the response of the public  
transport industry was to create a sepa- 
rate type of service and system infra- 
structure, and the regulations for how  
these services would be delivered were  
developed based on using this new  
infrastructure, particularly for those who  
could not use the old ‘‘non-accessible’’  
systems.  

What we should have learned over the  
past thirty years is that we need to  
shift from maintaining two separate  
systems into “one system” inclusive for  
all with universal design features and  
supporting technology and communica- 
tions. The ADA has historically focused  
on mobility for people with disabilities,  
but by shifting the system emphasis to  
people and their trip needs, the indus-

try is moving to create the ability for  
all mobility to be communicated and  
connected and understood by all user  
groups. If one person can order a ride  
and be picked up in ten minutes; then  
all persons should have the right to be  
equally served. So, if more paths and  
more systems were accessible for more  
people then there would be less reli- 
ance on separate systems.  

Customers would be better served,  
systems would be better utilized, and  
opportunities for planning and imple- 
menting true innovative mobility would  
be enhanced and rewarded. And that  
would be good for everyone.

**APTA Celebrates ADA’s 30th Anniversary**

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary  
of the Americans With Disabilities Act on  
July 26, I encourage us all to take a moment  
to think about how far  
we have come as an  
industry over these three  
decades. Our initiatives have enhanced  
the lives of many and have given those  
with disabilities access, opportunity and  
independence. However, we can always  
do more. Looking ahead, we need to be  
proactive. With new mobility paradigms on  
the horizon, the onset of electric vehicles  
and new technologies, we will reinforce  
our commitment to serve those who need  
public transportation the most.

— Nuria I. Fernandez  
APTA Chair  
General Manager and CEO,  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation  
Authority, San Jose, CA

I know there may have been concerns that the  
ADA may be too vague or too costly, or may  
lead endlessly to litigation. But I want to reassure  
you right now that my administration and the United  
States Congress have carefully crafted this Act.  
We’ve all determined to ensure that it gives flex- 
bility, particularly in terms of the timetable of imple- 
mentation; and we’ve been committed to containing the  
costs that may be incurred.... Let the shameful  
wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.

— President George H. W. Bush, July 26, 1990

Thirty years ago,  
our nation’s lead- 
ers had the foresight  
to pass the Americans  
With Disabilities Act  
(ADA). Since then, public  
transportation systems,  
and the vehicles and  
facilities they operate,  
have made great strides toward serving all  
people equitably by providing opportunity and access, particularly for those who have  
disabilities. Justin Dart, Jr., an advocate for people with disabilities who was widely  
recognized as the “father” of the ADA,  
offered this observation following passage of the legislation: ‘‘ADA is only the begin- 
ning. It is not a solution. Rather, it is an  
essential foundation on which solutions will  
be constructed.’ As an industry, we must  
continue to build on this critical foundation.

— Paul P. Skoutelas  
APTA President and CEO

Nuria I. Fernandez  
Paul P. Skoutelas

Paul P. Skoutelas

**JULY 27, 2020 | 5**
Thirty Years After the Americans With Disabilities Act, Who Is Driving the Bus Now?

BY CHRISTIAN T. KENT
Principal
Christian T. Kent, Transit Management Consulting, LLC
Chair, APTA Access Committee

AFTER 30 YEARS, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) is not only a very familiar term but also a foundation upon which a better society is being built. Note the use of present tense here, because like most civil rights transformations, the impact and evolution of the ADA will take generations. We can certainly look back to many accomplishments as a result of the ADA, and many of them are easily identified in our daily lives—curb cuts and ramps; wheelchair lifts in buildings and vehicles; tactile and Braille signage; and the ubiquitous “international symbol of accessibility” (formerly known as the “handicapped symbol,” which in itself reveals another accomplishment—changing in how we refer to people with disabilities in our language); and, of course, our friendly neighborhood paratransit services. But there is still plenty of unmet need and under-representation. Therefore, presented on this page is to not only celebrate what has been achieved thus far, but to continue to use the ADA as an instrument of change and to include the disability perspective in our leadership and our intentions for diversity and inclusion.

Personally, I have been motivated to serve the disability community for many years by two things: people with disabilities being blocked from doing things that we take for granted; and decisions affecting people with disabilities being made by those who do not understand their needs or their perspective. Even more motivating has been the revelation that sometimes, I was that person not understanding their perspective. It can be a humbling experience to discover how much you don’t know; but if you are open to learning, it is a tremendous opportunity for growth.

One of the most valuable aspects of the ADA and other civil rights laws is the requirement for public participation by those who would be potentially affected by the establishment of—or changes to—public policy. With each public engagement, people with disabilities became my teachers, and they have enabled me to serve far better in my career than I ever could have done on my own. My teachers with disabilities have also shown me how an accessible environment is a safe environment, and this is a benefit to us all. So, my question is this: why are so few people with disabilities represented in organizational leadership? How do we fix this?

We can start by taking a good look at our leadership and our intentions for diversity and inclusion.

What the ADA Has Meant to Me

BY TAMMY J. HAENFLING
Assistant Vice President, Mobility Management Administration
Dallas Area Rapid Transit

MY FIRST RECOLLECTION of the ADA was when I started working with HandiRides, DART’s (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) paratransit services department, in the early 1990s. Being new to the department, I wanted to make a good impression. So, while visiting family, I took the regs with me. My intent was to read all of 49 CFR Part 37. I got through three pages before I became totally bored and quit (the reading, not the job).

Over the years, I became intimately familiar with the regs, one small piece at a time. It was the beginning of including people with disabilities into everything we do as transportation providers. It reinforced my conviction that people with disabilities are entitled to have the same mobility opportunities as those who are temporarily able-bodied. Although my primary focus has to do with transportation, it has made me look at everything in a different way. When I go to a restaurant, hotel or other establishment, one of my first thoughts is accessibility. If I do not immediately see a way for a person using a mobility device to access the facility, I look for it. The same goes for public restrooms, the size of the stalls and doors and the height of the vanities and paper-towel dispensers. It makes me smile when it is done right.

My personal experiences involved my father. In the late 1990s, he became ill and had to have a leg amputated. Shortly after, we went to one of his favorite restaurants. To make a space available to him was a huge ordeal, and then everyone stared at us as we made our way to the table. I stared right back, waiting for someone to say something. It was eye opening though, that with the ADA almost 10 years old at that point, that seeing someone out and about with a disability seemed strange to some.

My father lived in an apartment complex that was not accessible because there were stairs leading up to his door. Initially, he used a walker so it was okay; however, once he progressed to a wheelchair, he couldn’t easily get in and out of his apartment. The apartment complex refused to make my father’s unit accessible to him, so some of his friends built a ramp so that he could easily get in and out by himself. The apartment complex destroyed the ramp and took it away. Although the facility was built pre-ADA, I never understood why they would not do the right thing and just leave it.

The changes effected by the ADA have benefited not only people with disabilities, but through universal access, have helped all of us. We have come a long way but still have work to do! As the disability community likes to say, “nothing about us without us”.

The Americans With Disabilities Act

July 26, 1990. ADA signed into law by President George H.W. Bush.

1994. All ADA regulations in effect

1999–2002. Changes from the judiciary. On the upside, the Supreme Court (Olmstead) ruled that “unjustified institutional isolation of persons with disabilities is a form of discrimination.” On the downside, the High Court narrowed the definition of disability in two cases (“Sutton Trilogy” and Toyota).

2008. Following several years of advocacy and research, the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) was passed in 2008.

2009–2014. Additional updates to regulations and standards ensued, including more involvement by the Department of Justice in enforcing rules against discrimination and unequal access to information and services.

THIRTY YEARS AFTER THE ADA

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

ONE QUESTION: RON BROOKS

ONE QUESTION

What the ADA Has Meant to Me

what you want?

Who is driving the bus?

What the ADA Has Meant to Me

BY TAMMY J. HAENFLING

Assistant Vice President, Mobility Management Administration
Dallas Area Rapid Transit

MY FIRST RECOLLECTION of the ADA was when I started working with
HandiRides, DART’s (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) paratransit services department, in the early 1990s. Being new to the department, I wanted to make a good impression. So, while visiting family, I took the regs with me. My intent was to read all of 49 CFR Part 37. I got through three pages before I became totally bored and quit (the reading, not the job).

Over the years, I became intimately familiar with the regs, one small piece at a time. It was the beginning of including people with disabilities into everything we do as transportation providers. It reinforced my conviction that people with disabilities are entitled to have the same mobility opportunities as those who are temporarily able-bodied. Although my primary focus has to do with transportation, it has made me look at everything in a different way. When I go to a restaurant, hotel or other establishment, one of my first thoughts is accessibility. If I do not immediately see a way for a person using a mobility device to access the facility, I look for it. The same goes for public restrooms, the size of the stalls and doors and the height of the vanities and paper-towel dispensers. It makes me smile when it is done right.

My personal experiences involved my father. In the late 1990s, he became ill and had to have a leg amputated. Shortly after, we went to one of his favorite restaurants. To make a space available to him was a huge ordeal, and then everyone stared at us as we made our way to the table. I stared right back, waiting for someone to say something. It was eye opening though, that with the ADA almost 10 years old at that point, that seeing someone out and about with a disability seemed strange to some.

My father lived in an apartment complex that was not accessible because there were stairs leading up to his door. Initially, he used a walker so it was okay; however, once he progressed to a wheelchair, he couldn’t easily get in and out of his apartment. The apartment complex refused to make my father’s unit accessible to him, so some of his friends built a ramp so that he could easily get in and out by himself. The apartment complex destroyed the ramp and took it away. Although the facility was built pre-ADA, I never understood why they would not do the right thing and just leave it.

The changes effected by the ADA have benefited not only people with disabilities, but through universal access, have helped all of us. We have come a long way but still have work to do! As the disability community likes to say, “nothing about us without us”.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

July 26, 1990. ADA signed into law by President George H.W. Bush.

1994. All ADA regulations in effect

1999–2002. Changes from the judiciary. On the upside, the Supreme Court (Olmstead) ruled that “unjustified institutional isolation of persons with disabilities is a form of discrimination.” On the downside, the High Court narrowed the definition of disability in two cases (“Sutton Trilogy” and Toyota).

2008. Following several years of advocacy and research, the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) was passed in 2008.

2009–2014. Additional updates to regulations and standards ensued, including more involvement by the Department of Justice in enforcing rules against discrimination and unequal access to information and services.

ONE QUESTION: RON BROOKS

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except me. Today, I am leading and contributing, and my opinions and actions are judged on their merits. Better still, I see more people with disabilities entering the transit industry, and even joining the executive ranks.

For 30 years, we’ve been focused on accessibility, and while we need to maintain rigorous ADA compliance, we can aim higher by focusing on inclusivity. This means inviting all perspectives, hearing all voices and designing services and systems that address the needs of all customers, regardless of who they are, what they look like and whether they have apparent disabilities or not. And when we do this, we will be able to embrace the ADA’s birthday as one more reason to eat cake and celebrate the amazing progress we have all made together.
**The Art of Listening to the Customer**

**BY BRANDON POLICICCHIO**
Chief Customer and Business Development Officer
Greater Dayton RTA

**OVER MY PAST 10 YEARS IN THE public transit industry, there has been progress in providing more accessible mobility services. More recently, our work has also shifted to not only focus on improving fundamental areas of the business like creating more-accessible bus stops, but also to ensuring the use and development of universally designed technologies and mobility services. As we enter into a world where customers are provided Mobility-as-a-Service, we must continue to ensure that existing and new technologies, as well as mobility services, are fully accessible.

For example, crowd sourcing for bus capacity is becoming more prevalent. What if the information provided not only displayed the capacity of the bus in real time, but how many mobility device spaces were available, too? This would not only allow the customer to make a decision on how best to plan their travel, but it could signal when space is not available to other mobility providers, and that there is a need for this customer to be provided transportation. Of course, there are logistical items and equipment needed to make this happen, but the technology is usually the easiest part.

Another space that we have made great progress is in the delivery of demand response services, like paratransit. Over the past several years, paratransit has been of great interest to me as I believe this service can be more on-demand than it is today. Outside of some cities which run high passengers-per-hour numbers, many cities have the capacity and space to offer.

**ONE QUESTION: BRANDON POLICICCHIO CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**

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**THIRTY YEARS AFTER THE ADA**


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**The ADA Is a Catalyst for Conversation**

**BY JUDY SHANLEY, PHD**
Assistant Vice President, Education & Youth Transition
Easterseals Director, National Center for Mobility Management

**THE AMERICANS WITH Disabilities Act (ADA) has created an opportunity for individuals with disabilities—related to education, employment, housing and healthcare. However, probably the most important opportunities are those afforded through Titles II and III of the ADA and its provisions regarding transportation and mobility. Without these services, individuals could not access the many life settings that empower us to be independent and productive community citizens.

I would like to think that public transit agencies don’t perceive the ADA’s requirements as a punitive measure. Rather, the ADA regulations are an educational tool for transportation planners, administrators and providers. ADA guidelines reflect the minimum in accessible features and services that agencies provide—and the public transit industry should embrace the opportunity to welcome a diverse group of riders in its services. The legislation creates a foundation for coordination across human services and transit, partnerships across public and private sectors, and dialogue regarding innovative ways to provide high-quality and inclusive transportation service.

The ADA has been a catalyst for our conversations about alignment across modes of transportation, efficiency by providers of transportation and continuums of service from paratransit to fixed route. These conversations could not happen if there was not the recognition that accessible, affordable and reliable service was the right of us all. Regardless of whether I use a wheelchair, or am supported by a service animal, or need universally designed communication methods because of my cognitive disability, I ride public transit because we have an enlightened and informed transit workforce that relies on the ADA to guide service decisions. Better yet, some transit agencies go above and beyond what is required, giving people with disabilities several options to get from place to place.

Easterseals has been at the forefront of the policies and practices that the ADA requires for over 100 years—long before the ADA was conceived. We use our passion and experiences to ensure that the ADA influences those sectors such as education, employment, housing, healthcare and transportation that will enable individuals with disabilities to thrive inclusively in all life domains. As the 30th anniversary of the ADA

**ONE QUESTION: JUDY SHANLEY CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**

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MV to Provide ADA, Fixed-Route Services For St. Lucie County

MV TRANSPORTATION, INC. HAS been awarded a five-year contract to oversee all operational activities associated with on-demand Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant paratransit and fixed-route bus services for St. Lucie County, FL. MV will be responsible for service delivery, maintenance, reservations, scheduling and dispatch.

“We look forward to our partnership with St. Lucie County and appreciate the confidence its leaders and board have placed in MV,” said Steve Trinkle, MV senior vice president, who will oversee operations. “We are confident that we can enhance the experience the county provides its passengers with our proven operational expertise and innovative solutions.”

Cincinnati Metro Honors Employees With ‘Metro Strong’ Bus

“A hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.” Those are the words inscribed across the top of two new “Metro Strong” buses in recognition of the dedication shown by Cincinnati Metro and Access workers in service to the Greater Cincinnati region amid COVID-19. The two buses feature the names of all Metro and Access employees.

“The entire Metro and Access team work hard every day to serve our region and these special buses are just another way Metro is saying ‘thank you’ for their commitment to our community during this challenging time,” said Darryl Haley, CEO & general manager. “This experience has proven more than anything that we are ‘Metro Strong’ and can tackle tough times when we work together.”

Increasing Service and Accessibility

Improvements depart at the heart of Metro’s commitment to providing more and better service. More people are making use of these services through our operational models, and the technologies that help schedule and deliver the service. Yes, we can meet the ADA requirements while also delivering more on-demand service to our customers. Just think of the space we have available on a daily basis due to cancellations and no-shows. This space could be made available to provide customers a same-day trip to the pharmacy, grocery store, or even be made available to the general public, which could help draw in additional revenue to help support running a same-day service.

At the end of the day, it always comes down to the customer and what will make their travel experience free of any obstacles, which can be solved through more-effective communication, policy, service, equipment and technology. As we reflect upon the past 30 years, we should always remember that successful change comes from listening to our customers with disabilities, their advocates, and using the resources available to us to support people with disabilities.

SEATTLE, WA — King County Metro General Manager Rob Gannon will step down at the end of July to take a position in Missoula, MT, as chief financial officer for the city. Deputy General Manager Terry White will serve as interim general manager starting Aug. 1.

“I want to thank Rob Gannon for leading King County Metro with his steadfast service, his core commitment to providing transit where needs are greatest, and his vision for an agency devoted to overall mobility,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine. “When Metro won (APTA’s) Best Large Transit Agency in North America during Rob’s tenure, it recognized what King County residents already knew: that one of the great advantages of living here is a safe, equitable and sustainable mobility agency that connects all our residents to community and opportunity.”

Prior to becoming general manager in Oct. 2016, Gannon served as Metro’s deputy and interim general manager from 2013 to 2016.

People On The Move

FLINT, MI — Ed Benning, CEO of the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA), is celebrating 40 years of dedicated service to public transportation. Under Benning’s leadership, the MTA has transitioned from a city operation to a county-wide and regional transportation system, has converted its vehicle fleet from diesel to alternative fuels, and has partnered with state and local entities to develop a systematic approach to provide non-emergency medical transportation throughout the community.

DENVER, CO — The Regional Transportation District (RTD) has selected Melanie J. Snyder as general counsel. Snyder brings more than 15 years of experience representing and advising a variety of clients in both the public and private sectors, including more than a decade of service with the Colorado Attorney General’s Office, most recently as chief deputy attorney general.

SAN DIEGO, CA — Former Escondido Police Chief Craig Carter has been named the interim director of the Automated Regional Justice Information System (ARJIS). In his new role at SANDAG, Carter will oversee ARJIS and lead major public safety initiatives. Carter has extensive experience leading and managing the region’s law enforcement community including 28 years of service with the Escondido Police Department and serving as an associate member of the SANDAG Public Safety Committee from 2013-2019.

SAN ANTONIO, TX — Art Reinhardt, former interim deputy director of the Transportation and Capital Improvements department for the City of San Antonio, has been named the San Antonio office lead for transportation at WSP USA. In this role, Reinhardt will work collaboratively to expand all markets in transportation and infrastructure, support diversification and growth, drive strategic direction and support the firm in its growth goals in the San Antonio and surrounding region.

LAKERTRAN, OH — Lake TRAN Board Members Jon P. Marten and Lane H. Sheets, along with Board President Brian Falkowski, have all been sworn in to serve an additional three-year term expiring May 15, 2023. This appointment marks Sheets’ second term serving LakeTRAN. Marten’s reappointment begins his first full term with the agency. Marten was first appointed in March 2018 to fill a vacant seat. Falkowski begins his fourth term on the board, serving the agency since 2011. He is a member of APTA’s Transit Board Members Committee.

WASHINGTON, DC — Zachary M. Radford has joined Northeast Maglev as vice president of government relations. In this capacity, Radford will play a key advocacy role for the organization’s 311 mph Superconducting Maglev train. Prior to joining Northeast Maglev, Radford served as director of external relations for the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission. He also served as senior policy advisor & counsel for Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and as federal relations officer for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

ONE QUESTION: BRANDON POLICICCHIO

continued from page 7

more service. However, this can only be achieved by changing how we deliver these services through our operational models, and the technologies that help schedule and deliver the service. Yes, we can meet the ADA requirements while also delivering more on-demand service to our customers. Just think of the space we have available on a daily basis due to cancellations and no-shows. This space could be made available to provide customers a same-day trip to the pharmacy, grocery store, or even be made available to the general public, which could help draw in additional revenue to help support running a same-day service.

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ONE QUESTION: JUDY SHANLEY

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approaches, we are encouraged by the strides we have made, but are realistic about the journey ahead. Our partnership with APTA, through varying means, including our work on national projects such as the National Center for Mobility Management, is integral to this journey. We stand ready to continue on the path to promote inclusive transportation service for all.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and AMTRAN.

Proposals are due by 2:00 PM ET, Friday, August 14, 2020. For bid documents, contact Josh Baker at 444-9047 (phone), 418-941-2733 (fax), joshbaker@amtran.org (e-mail).

Josh Baker
Deputy CEO

The City of Detroit affirmatively assures that no proposer will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

The planning area for transportation includes the 12 counties of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise. NCTCOG also serves as a designated recipient for Federal Transit Administration funds.

The agency offers generous benefits, a friendly atmosphere with open communications for cooperation and decision making, and challenging opportunities. The environment encourages both individual and team growth, responsibility and work-life balance.

Palm Tran Director, Operations

Salary Range: $94,460 - $166,052 Annually, negotiable DOQ

Department: Palm Tran, Inc.
Location: 1701 Oasis Way, West Palm Beach, FL

Hours: 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday - Friday, with occasional weekends, as required

Other: Valid Florida Driver's License and Forklift license in accordance with Department's policies.

Palm Tran, Inc., Palm Beach County's transit provider, is seeking a highly experienced Director to lead its fixed route bus operation. The Palm Tran Director, Operations, is responsible for all operational activities of the Fixed Route Bus System including: Fixed Route Buses, Field Operations, Operations Dispatch and Communication Center, Safety and Compliance. Vehicle Maintenance, and all Para-Transit Operations. The Fixed Route Bus System covers all of the County, operates over 155 fixed-route routes, and maintains ridership exceeding 26,000 passengers daily. Palm Tran's commitment to excellence includes Performance Management, ADA compliance, monitoring of resource allocation and productivity for fixed route services; organizational planning and programming activities. This position models and holds responsible for exemplifying customer service through open communication, employee participation, professional development including technical and professional development, leadership, and a commitment to excellence in the development and implementation of bus training programs to meet agency goals. Assist in the identification and implementation of continuous improvement opportunities and customer satisfaction opportunities. Develops labor contracts, including management, labor contract negotiations. Develops, monitors, and administers a 50M annual operating budget. Directly manages the bus operations associated with the operation of approximately 400 buses comprising a diverse fleet of vehicles. The position is directly supervised by the Executive Director. This position requires extensive knowledge and understanding of the Fixed Route System, including its contractual relationships with labor organizations, and its operational policies and procedures. The position reports to the Executive Director. This is an at-will employment position.

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