



# Transit Tidbits



## Awards Reminder

The 2019 Award Letter and Nomination Forms were sent out in March. I hope each of you are working diligently on finalizing your forms.

We have a multitude of wonderful transit employees out there to pick from. I am anxiously awaiting to read what you have written.

Jacque Senger,  
DTA Executive  
Director

On May 21, 2019 Lisa Johnson, Operations and Information Director at Prairie Hills Transit based in Spearfish, SD, graduated from the Emerging Leaders Academy. This training is offered by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), a nationally-recognized organization just began training its third class this year.

Lisa began her journey with an intensive two-day training program through CTAA last June in Pittsburgh. "The Emerging Leaders Academy helped give me insight into my own leadership style and tools to turn challenges into personal strength as well as a network with colleagues that I collaborated with and learned from."

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## Emerging Leaders Academy

Barb Cline, Director

Prairie Hills Transit - Spearfish, SD



Pictured L-R: K. Jane Williams,  
Lisa Johnson, Scott Bogren

# Leader

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The two-day intensive consists of a variety of diagnostic assessments to highlight personal leadership styles. Throughout the year, telephone-based study groups focus on leadership topics. In addition, participants continue peer-coaching and support. Participants benefit from having a mentor to reach out to for guidance and support. Connie Garber from Sanford, Maine who was the Transportation Director at the York County Community Action Corporation for 35 years was Lisa's mentor.

This training is geared specifically to transit training programs that are relevant, and facilitators that are knowledgeable and well respected in the industry. The program begins by placing all participants in Peer Groups for follow-up study and mentoring by a recognized transit leader. Each of the 24 participants selected a project that they work on for the next 12 months. The projects continued to encourage the participants to keep in touch and share ideas.

The baseline in-person training set the stage for the ensuing twelve months of independent study, leadership projects and periodic updates with the training staff and mentors. The availability of staff with leadership experience in the transit industry is a vital part of this program. The knowledge, advice, guidance and support is only a phone call away and has helped sustain the program and keep it fresh all year.

Lisa selected Prairie Hills Transit of Lemmon as her project. The project focused on the consolidation of resources when Lemmon merged with PHT after having been Arrow Public Transit for many years. Lisa did an excellent job of outlining the challenges and successes in her final project presentation.

The PHT Governing Board is extremely grateful for Lisa's willingness to commit a full year to this project and is happy to have been a part of giving her this opportunity.

PHT Executive Director Barb Cline surprised Lisa, in front of her peers, at a recent meeting in Pierre by acknowledging her graduation as an Emerging Leader. "Lisa has done a remarkable job and is one of only 40 ELA graduates in the nation. Thank you."

## Last Day of School

Carleen Schill, Transportation Supervisor

Cavalier County Transit - Langdon, ND

The last day of Preschool with driver Carleen Schill!

Cavalier County Transit transported 15 preschool students back and forth to school during the 2018-2019 school year.



# Good-Bye

Channell Walby, Project Director  
Southwest Public Transit - Bowman, ND

Dear DTA Members and Associates-----

The four southwest counties of North Dakota: Adams, Bowman, Hettinger, and Slope are being served by a private non-profit agency, Southwest Public Transit. Chanell Walby has been the Project Director since 2013 and will be leaving the position in July of 2019. Chanell is also the Director of Parks and Recreation in Bowman and knows both positions are too much responsibility. Transit is growing and it needs a director who can help it grow with dedicated time and effort. Tamara Hofland will be the Project Director. Tamara was hired as the Assistant Director for the organization in January 2019. Hofland is a native of Scranton, ND and has several years of experience in healthcare and banking.

This part-time challenging position fits her life now and the 6-month training period has proven to be very effective. As the readers of this article are well aware, a lot happens in the first 6- months of the year with reporting, grant writing, and the wonderful random quarterly reporting requirements. I am very confident in Tamara's ability to direct transit for the benefit of the customer and the well-being of Southwest Public Transit.

Tamara is very detail oriented, efficient, and customer oriented. The company is in good



hands. I have been waiting for the right person to come along, as I should have resigned five years ago. But, this industry is so important to our residents, our aging, our veterans, our youth, and others who do not have transportation to get to where they need to go. This agency needs a person in charge who keeps those ideals at the forefront. Tamara was a standout candidate because of her time served at the Community Cupboard Food Pantry in Bowman. She was the president of that organization and I could tell how much she cared about feeding those that are hungry without passing judgment. Caring for people is the most important part of transit.

We are a team at Southwest Transit and the director relies on the veteran staff, like Cheryle Urlacher, a 26-year employee, who coordinates the scheduling of out of town rides for the agency. We also rely on Skip Walby and Bob Kudrna for maintenance records of the vehicle fleet, and we are also thankful for the Drivers: Dennis Bentsen, Skip Walby, Dennis Schaff, Galen Strand, Jessy Slater, Silvia Engle, Janel Hoff, and Bonnie Schwarzwalter for their professionalism, their dedication to the rider, and their positive attitudes while on the job.

I am very thankful to have worked with a wonderful Board of Directors. Our agency is very fortunate to have board members who have dedicated time to help improve transportation to the area residents.

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## Director

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I look forward to seeing Southwest Public Transit continue to maintain a high quality of life for our citizens. Please make sure to welcome Tamara into the fold of DTA and please know that I will miss all of you. I cannot end my tenure in transit without thanking Barb Cline. She was a friend and fellow softball player who coaxed me into the industry and I am so thankful for that introduction. I am also grateful to Donna Schaff for training me and helping out when asked.

You are great group of people and I will miss you all. Keep those wheels turning comrades!!

## CTAA Through the National Bus Roadeo

Tom Wanttie, Ride Line Manager

Aberdeen Ride Line - Aberdeen, SD

I attended the CTAA again this year. Several people had suggested that since I am the Roadeo Marshall for DTA, I should consider helping with the National Bus Roadeo. I arrived in Palm Springs on Friday evening and checked in. Setup for the Van Course and the Body on Chassis Course began bright and early the next morning. I must say, we have the set-up process down easier than the CTAA group.

Once we had both courses set up, we got to take a break until we had to be back for the Judge's meeting later that evening. I even convinced my wife to help out again. We both ended up judging the Van Course.

Sunday started early with breakfast, followed by the walk through of the drivers. When everyone was done, the competition began. There were 60 Body on Chassis drivers and 19 Van drivers. It was fun watching the drivers show their skills. Thank you to all the drivers who made the trip to show your skills and to those that helped judge on either course. In the end, I would say we are doing the DTA Roadeo the right way. We ended the day with a banquet honoring all the drivers and the winners in each division.

The rest of the week was the regular conference with intensive classes, workshops in four different areas of emphasis and the vendor show. I know the other North and South Dakota attendees all took something different away from the event and went to many different classes and workshops throughout the rest of the week, all hoping to take something new home to their agency.

I enjoyed my time in Palm Springs, but was glad to be back home. It was fun to visit, but I could never live there (too much sand).

Next year the CTAA Expo will be held in Louisville, KY.

# A Few Words from the Executive Director

Jacque Senger, DTA Executive Director

Greetings everyone! I hope you are all enjoying your summer activities outside of work. Just a few reminders for all of you. The 2019 Award Nomination forms are due by July 8, 2019. I have received from only one agency as of this writing.

I am hoping each of you have put this very important part of the DTA Conference on your calendars. Remember, all your employees make up your great organizations. We would love to honor them at the DTA Conference in Dickinson.

Also, your DTA Board of Directors are working hard to put together a memorable conference. It is not too early to fill out the registration forms. All the information you can obtain on the DTA website.

## Training Update - Linda Freeman, PASS Coordinator

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### Upcoming Session:

Dickinson, ND: July 25-27, 2019

July 25--8:00am to noon: Maltreatment Awareness Class

July 25--1:00 pm to 5:00 pm (at latest): Defensive Driving Class

July 26-27—8:00 am to 5:00pm (at latest) both days: PASS Class

July 27—8:00 am to 5:00 pm (at latest): PASS Recertification Class

All sessions will be held at Dickinson Public Transit, 361 26<sup>th</sup> St. East in Dickinson. Hotel Block is set up at the Dickinson Comfort Inn, 493 Elks Drive—Phone number: 701-264-7300. Be sure to state that you are making your reservation under the Dakota Transit Association block to get state rates. Register for classes on the DTA website.

As of now, there are no scheduled classes in South Dakota. Please let me know if any of you are interested in holding a session.

**A big thanks to Rod Grafing for doing the class in Valley City. Also, thanks so much for helping with the securement training in Bismarck!**

### Bismarck, ND: June 3-5, 2019

Our Bismarck class was a big one (pictured).

Also, a great big thanks to Ellen & Carol at West River Transit for the snacks, etc. and all the shuffling they had to do to make arrangements for busses and wheelchairs for the securement part of the classes.



# Non-Emergency Medical Transportation: Beyond Medicaid

Carleen Schill, Transportation Supervisor  
Cavalier County Transit - Langdon, ND

Scott Bogren and Alex King presented a one-day intensive training on NEMT: Beyond Medicaid. I found it very interesting to find out that NEMT is not in the Medicaid statutes. The Medicaid benefit for NEMT became available through a court case in the 1960's.

The subject of Uber and Lyft came up and the response that Scott had was "Do you want your Mother's next dialysis trip provided by someone who is a "side-hustle"?"

The social determinants of health are trending and are increasing the awareness of inconsistent health care visits, nutritional needs and medication usage or lack thereof. The triple aim of improved health, better care and lowering costs is catching the interest of medical facilities, insurers (including Medicaid and Medicare Advantage) and foundations and other funding sources.

My take away of this training is that the healthcare industry needs to realize that transition from fee-for-service reimbursement to value-based reimbursement will help lower health care costs. As rural transit agencies we are proud of the quality of care that we provide our passengers on a daily basis.

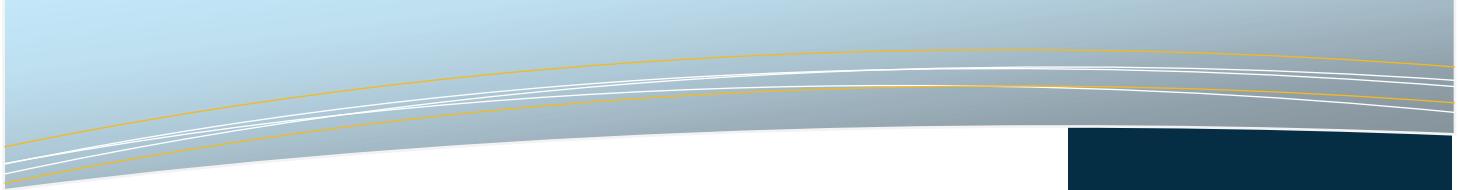
One of the panelists on the Transportation Success Stories Discussion was Harmony Lloyd, Chief Operation Officer of Planning and Innovation of Flint, Michigan Mass Transportation Authority. I was impressed by Flint MTA's recent implementation of their "Rides to Wellness" program which is operated with four partner agencies to offer free rides to health and wellness destinations within Genesee County outside the normal fixed route bus service. They started with a couple dozen daily riders in September 2016 to now more than 1,000 each day. They take value-based care very seriously.

## Board Members who attended CTAA

Pictured L-R:  
Brian Horinka (Minot City Transit), Tom Wanttie (Aberdeen Ride Line), Karrie Mikkelson (Cavalier County Transit) and Terry Hoffman (Watertown Area Transit)

Not Pictured: Kathy Holman (Community Transit)





## *Thought for the Month of June...*

*"If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be!"*



**Jacque Senger  
DTA Executive Director**

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Thanks to all!

- Jacque

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