



ACHIEVEMENTS IN TRANSIT TRAINING

The National Transit Institute

is pleased to sponsor the

2015

Achievements in Transit Training Awards

***Highlighting the important role of training
in the successful performance of a transit organization***



Model Program Award

The Model Program Award recognizes training initiatives that apply innovative concepts to meet a specific agency objective. Nominations can range from a single, narrowly focused program to a multifaceted, organization-wide effort. Awards were based on the following criteria:

Needs Assessment: Indication that the nominated initiative was an appropriate response to an identified problem or need.

Design Process: Identification of how this program was different or innovative in its design or implementation relative to other agency programs and/or traditional approaches for addressing the program content or delivery.

Impact: Estimated impact on employee and organizational performance.



The 2015 Model Program Award goes to:

Management Excellence Program (MEP)
Central Puget Sound Regional
Transit Authority (Sound Transit),
Seattle, Washington

After the 2008 approval of a major system expansion, including an additional 40 miles of light rail and station infrastructure, and incorporating the use of the middle lane of a 1.25 mile floating bridge, The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) identified a need for greater interdepartmental coordination, cooperation, and consistency in staff management in order to meet the challenges of this new, nearly 15 billion dollar project. After assessing various external training programs, Sound Transit decided it would be more cost effective and efficient to establish an in-house training program, that would also bring together agency employee peers, many of whom had never met, to connect, share experiences, and help each other. The Management Excellence Program (MEP) was born.

MEP provides participants with over 100 training hours on management skills, conflict resolution, continuous process improvement and emotional intelligence. To be eligible for this program Sound Transit Employees had to have been employed at the agency for at least one year, hold a manager level position or one with equivalent responsibilities, have received a rating of "successful" or above on their most recent performance evaluation, and be available to meet the program's rigorous schedule. Prospective participants had to provide a recent resume and an essay explaining their interest, before being accepted into the program by the Agency Executive Leadership Members (ELT).

The first 25 managers to participate in the MEP, chosen from an applicant pool of 29, represented nearly all departments in the agency and successfully completed the program in nine months, after a collective 2,500 hours of training. Their curriculum included:

- Intensive Leadership Week
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Negotiation Master Class
- Continuous Process Improvement
- Relationship Master Class
- Nature of Strategic Thinking

Participants learned a great deal more about the agency as a whole, developed an appreciation for the roles of others, gained greater self-awareness, and established a more open approach to staff and project management. Four of the initial participants applied and were selected for higher level management positions in the agency. Feedback from staff managed by MEP participants revealed that they observed their supervisors' greater willingness to listen to and be open to their concerns, noted they worked more collaboratively to resolve issues, and more frequently acknowledged staff efforts. The program was so successful that applicant participation in the program's second year increased by over 30%.

Sound Transit is proud of their MEP, and having built this program from the ground up, are uniquely situated to assist other transit providers in developing similar programs. Their success and proven investment in enhancing the management and leadership skills of their staff is what makes the MEP a Model Program.

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The 2015 Model Program Award goes to:
**National Innovative Transit Training
Learning Model
Southern California Regional
Transit Training Consortium**

The National Innovative Transit Training Learning Model is the collaborative effort of 30 transit agencies and 17 community colleges, universities, and other partners that comprise the Southern California Regional Transit Training Consortium (SCR TTC) to provide coordination, development and delivery of training for the technical and supervisory workforce in the area.

The National Innovative Transit Training Learning Model was developed to enhance the skills and abilities of transit employees and to provide area transit agencies, which collectively serve over 750 million boarding passengers on more than 6,000 transit vehicles traveling 200 million vehicle service miles, with more efficient and effective training. Their industry-driven and competency-based curriculum and training meets both present and future needs for transit maintenance and supervisory staff, while also providing consistency in work methods and standards.

The new model and focus on consistency and establishing standards has been particularly beneficial in training bus and rail service technicians, who now require new technological skills to inspect, maintain and repair vehicles which increasingly use alternative fuels, or are hybrids or electric.



Over the past 10 years, the SCR TTC Learning Model development program has produced 62,932 hours of training, developed 22 instructor-led courses, and 4 distance learning programs. They have trained nearly 63,000 students with a staff of over 300 certified instructors. The consortium was granted non-profit status under Federal and California law and has developed a Five Year Strategic Business Plan to help guide their strategic objectives and performance metrics in the years ahead.

This new learning model has sparked the interest of several transit organizations outside the Southern California region who have request-

ed adoption of the program positioning the National Innovative Transit Training Learning Model to become a national model. The program's success in fostering collaboration between agencies and in enhancing the management and leadership skills of their staff is what makes the MEP a Model Program.



Training Professional of the Year Award

The Training Professional of the Year Award recognizes the exceptional contribution and sustained impact of a transit training professional on his or her organization and the industry. Awards were based on the following criteria:

Impact: Evidence of the nominee's impact on his or her organization and its employees.

Leadership and Innovation: The extent to which the nominee applies original concepts and/or innovative approaches to achieve desired results.

Professional Development: The extent to which the nominee seeks to continually enrich his or her skills and knowledge.

Shared Learning: The extent to which the nominee shares his or her experience, knowledge, and insight with colleagues, both inside and outside his or her organization.



The 2015 Training Professional of the Year Award goes to:

Lesa Pinker
Training Manager
Ride Connection, Portland, OR

Lesa Pinker has served as Training Manager for Ride Connection in Portland, Oregon for the past thirteen years where she has set the strategic direction of Ride Connection's training department, managed all training programs, and developed and designed all the training curricula, both instructor-led and online. With a background in Speech Communication and Education and a recently-earned Master's degree in non-profit management, Ms. Pinker embraces a holistic approach to safety, wellness and training that engages her students and helps them to better process



and relate to the information presented. Her instructional style has been described as both "innovative" and "down to earth" and has incorporated unique elements into her training sessions, including trust walks, hard of hearing exercises, visual impairment challenges and other simulations to help drivers become more compassionate and empathetic towards their riders with disabilities.

In addition to delivering over 55 training workshops annually that reach almost 700 people a year, Ms.

Pinker manages the statewide DMAP driver training contract, in which she supervises field trainers and ensures the successful completion of another 96 trainings annually. She has led the workplace Safety Committee for the past 10 years and has also shown her commitment to efficiency and the environment through the development and leadership of Ride Connection's "Green Team." She created social business opportunities by marketing and delivering courses to agencies outside the Ride Connection network and also served on the National RTAP Product Review Board from 2010-2013.



Ms. Pinker's training efforts have produced a measurable effect for Ride Connection; the drivers who have taken her classes have fewer collisions and citations than the ones who have not, with instances of accidents and tickets steadily declining to less than 2 percent. Her commitment and dedication to training and continuing education make her the 2015 Training Professional of the Year.

