Study Recommendations Support Volunteer Driving Programs for Seniors

Seniors need adequate transportation, not only to maintain their health and vitality, but also to stay active in the community and fully participate in life. Transportation is the essential link to basic services needed by the aging population. CUTR recently conducted a study that addressed the general lack of transportation options suitable for seniors who are no longer able to drive, particularly those who are too frail to use public transportation.

In the United States, many people over the age of 65 live in suburban and rural communities with limited or no public transit service. As people age and lose the ability to drive cars safely, they become isolated from lack of transportation. The senior population is increasing, both in absolute numbers and as a proportion of total population; this shift is especially prominent in Florida. Seniors are living longer and many prefer to age in place. Seniors have generally not planned for their future transportation after driving cessation. The next generation of volunteer driving programs provide mobility options for seniors who no longer drive.
seniors, the “Baby Boomer” population, also is not planning for their future transportation needs.

Over the past several years, many communities nationwide are addressing this issue by establishing driving programs for senior citizens. These programs pair volunteer drivers with senior citizens to provide rides to the grocery store, doctor’s office, and other destinations. Volunteer driving services are provided by a variety of groups, including faith-based organizations, social service organizations, and local government para-transit agencies. The services can be offered informally through a coalition of interested organizations, or more formally, through the development of a nonprofit organization formed for the express purpose of providing volunteer passenger car rides to seniors.

This study found that volunteer driving programs strive to meet the needs of a particular market of seniors. These seniors generally are on a fixed income, which limits their transportation options. Seniors represent a broad range of physical abilities, and many develop disabilities in their later years. While travel generally decreases overall in later years, seniors have travel needs that still may include longer distance trips across jurisdictions. Many seniors have difficulty navigating the various available transportation options and their associated eligibility, application, and advance reservation requirements to arrange a ride.

Community leaders lack general awareness of the magnitude of the problems faced by older seniors when they can no longer drive; the value of volunteer driving programs and the operational challenges these programs face are not on the “radar screens” of community leaders. In addition, providing quality transportation through volunteer driving programs for the growing number of seniors who need it requires the collaboration of transit agencies, commuter assistance programs, Area Agencies on Aging, the volunteer driving programs and community leaders. Support at the state and federal levels will further advance volunteer driving programs for seniors. Generally, communities that put the resources of interested organizations together can address program issues.

The study examined volunteer driving programs nationwide and identified service delivery models. The selection of an appropriate service model constitutes one of several best practices in tailoring a program structure that most closely matches (1) the nature of the seniors’ transportation needs, (2) the aim that a program and its volunteers wish to accomplish, and (3) the combined resources (or lack thereof) of the seniors and the program. Each service model places priority on a different service or operational characteristic.

While the issues facing volunteer driving programs are varied, the primary problem is insufficient numbers of volunteers. Also, while insurance and liability were cited as serious problems by only one program interviewed for this study, previous studies conducted in Florida contained numerous references of problems faced by volunteers and volunteer driving programs nationwide with regard to

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**Providing quality transportation through volunteer driving programs for the growing number of seniors who need it will require the collaboration of transit agencies, commuter assistance programs, Area Agencies on Aging, the volunteer driving programs and community leaders.**

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obtaining insurance. As a result, this study also concentrated on liability and insurance. Protecting the safety of riders and drivers and properly insuring a program are fundamental to the success of a volunteer driving program. Liability and insurance profoundly influence how a program operates.

The available evidence suggests that most volunteer driving programs for seniors have excellent safety records. The programs interviewed demonstrate strict attention to detail in managing risk. Regardless, insurers are influenced by perception of risk, specifically that volunteer drivers may lack training and that riders are an especially vulnerable group. In fact, seniors are much more likely to sustain serious injuries in an auto accident than are younger people. Therefore, the concern by insurers may be less the frequency of accidents and more the potential for any one accident to have severe consequences.

Study results include detailed recommendations to volunteer driving programs for enhancing risk management, recruiting volunteers, and supporting their organizations. Recommendations are also offered to public transit agencies and commuter assistance programs on how to coordinate with volunteer driving programs as well as help seniors postpone their need to use volunteering driving services.

Finally, the report presents multiple options for action by policy makers, including legislative remedies to enact liability reforms. Prepared by an attorney with expertise in public health, an analysis provides the historical context needed to fully understand the complexities of the liability issue and the rationale for several of the legislative remedies recommended in this report. Also provided are examples of state safety requirements for transportation for vulnerable populations. These examples contain ideas to consider as part of potential administrative and operational reforms that could set the stage for better balancing the liability borne by volunteer drivers and volunteer driving programs.

Community leaders may hesitate to establish volunteer driving programs due to the various issues identified in the study. However, the hundreds of volunteer driving programs in operation across the nation demonstrate that these issues are manageable. Volunteer driving programs address a critical transportation need. This report proposes an agenda for action to bolster volunteer driving programs and the important transportation services they provide.

The National Center for Transit Research sponsored this study with funding through a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation Public Transit Office and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The findings of this study concentrate on conditions in Florida but should have broad applicability to senior driving programs nationwide.

For more information, contact Sara Hendricks, Senior Research Associate at CUTR, hendricks@cutr.usf.edu, (813) 974-9801.
Outline of Recommendations for Volunteer Driving Programs

**What Volunteer Driving Programs Can Do**
- Provide Support for Volunteers
- Seek out Support for the Organization
- Maintain a Simplified Operation
- Explore Funding from Philanthropic Organizations
- Maintain Local Fundraising Efforts
- Eliminate Driver Distractions
- Define Driver Duties to Manage Liability and Protect Drivers
- Shop for a Helpful Insurance Broker

**What Transit Agencies and Commuter Assistance Programs Can Do**
- Harness the Power of a Social Network
- Provide Incentives to Carpool Drivers
- Provide Special Needs of Senior Patrons
- Partner with Volunteer Driving Programs and Area Agencies on Aging
- Pursue the Development of Regional Transit Service

**What Area Agencies on Aging Can Do**
- Exercise Leadership in Coalition Building in Support of Volunteer Driving Programs
- Raise Public Awareness of Individual Responsibility to Plan Ahead
- Develop a One-Call Telephone Number, One-Stop Intake Process through local ARC Coalition
- Raise Awareness through the National Council of Nonprofit Associations
- Seek Endorsement from Florida State Office of Insurance Regulation

**What Policy Makers Can Do**
- Increase Funding for Public Transit and Paratransit
- Clarify Legal Distinction between Carpool and Taxicab
- Consider Establishing Minimum Standards for Volunteer Screening, Training
- Enact Liability Reforms at the State and Federal Levels
- Limit Volunteer Driving Program Liability for Damages
- Further Explore Federal Role to Cover Liability Costs
- Explore Federal Tax Deductions for Volunteering
- Publicly Recognize Volunteering
Message from the NCTR Director

As I write this in late 2008, the world of public transportation is in the midst of what some people call “the perfect storm.” The costs of diesel fuel have risen dramatically and quickly over the past two years, causing major challenges for transit agencies that establish budgets on an annual basis and operate with minimal reserves and contingencies. Revenues from all sources—property taxes, general sales taxes, or gas taxes—all have declined. While costs have risen sharply and most revenues have declined, demand for public transportation services has increased. In many cases, transit agencies have not been able to provide the capacity that is suddenly needed more than ever as people are under financial strains of their own due to higher costs for fuel, food, and other necessities. More and more people are choosing public transit and other alternative means of travel to save money, but they also are learning that there are other personal and community benefits to using transit. Commuter assistance programs that facilitate ridesharing and encourage flex hours and telecommuting are also seeing major increases in interest and utilization.

It is impossible to predict what the cost of fuel will be in the near future, especially given the current economic slowdown that many fear could turn into a global recession. What is becoming clearer is that public transportation and alternative means of transportation are becoming more attractive to more and more people. Transit ridership is going up, while overall vehicle miles traveled is going down. The theme of the National Center for Transit Research is to make public transportation and alternative forms of transportation safe, effective, efficient, desirable, and secure. These goals are more significant than ever before; it is time for public transportation in its many forms to become far more prominent in the overall management of mobility in our country. NCTR is perfectly positioned to help the industry serve more people and more communities in ways that further the national goals of energy independence, global and community sustainability, improved mobility options, and congestion reduction. This is accomplished at NCTR by conducting applied and advanced research, energetically disseminating the results, and expanding the workforce of transportation professionals through education and training to address the challenges and opportunities of the future.

In the course of the past year, NCTR has completed multiple research projects that are helping transit agencies and commuter assistance programs enhance their performance and increase their relevance in their communities. We have facilitated conferences and webinars attended by hundreds of professionals around the country. Our listservs connect almost 4,000 public transportation professionals and students around the globe who are able to share information and develop solutions to the many issues they face. Our Journal of Public Transportation has over 2,000 subscribers from almost 60 countries. Our students continue to contribute to meaningful research and, upon graduation, become leaders in public and private transportation-related agencies.

I would like to express my gratitude to the officials at U.S. DOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation for their continued support of the program at NCTR. We are honored to respond to our nation’s desire for transportation solutions that address what is most important to individuals, local communities, our nation, and the world.

Joel Volinski, NCTR Director
Program Overview

Funding
NCTR has now completed its 9th year, having been approved for funding in September 1999. The federal funding for this program helps to significantly expand the area of public transportation research already conducted by CUTR researchers over the last 20 years. Federal funds for the program are matched with a greater than 100 percent cash match from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), creating more than a doubling of total program funding.

NCTR Advisory Committee
The NCTR Advisory Committee was created during the first six months of the program and consists of 14 experts in the public transportation community with knowledge in the areas of public transportation research and transit planning and operations. The members and their affiliations are as follows:

Joe Calabrese
General Manager
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority

Mike Baltes
ITS Program Manager
Federal Transit Administration

Tim Garling
Executive Director
Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

Ed Coven
State Public Transit Office Manager
Florida Department of Transportation

Dr. Minnie Fells-Johnson
Public Transportation Consultant

Dr. Wendell Joice
Director, International Telework Assoc. & Council

Richard Long
Director, Office of Research
Florida Department of Transportation

Perry Maull
Operations Manager
Indiana University Campus Bus Service

Bill McCloud
Senior Vice President & C.O.O.
Veolia Transportation

Jose-Luis Mesa
Director, Miami-Dade MPO

Louis Sanders
Director of Research and Technology, APTA

Eric Schreffler
Director of Research, TDM Institute
Association for Commuter Transportation

Donna Vlasak
Senior Program Officer
Transportation Research Board

Joel Volinski
Director, NCTR

Year 9 Accomplishments

Research
The 9th year of the NCTR program has supported 15 projects approved by the NCTR Advisory Committee. These projects consist of 5 core programs that will be conducted throughout the life of NCTR and 10 newly-selected research projects that explore methods to accomplish the goals of the U.S. DOT and the center in enhancing the performance of public transportation.

Core program areas included continued development and maintenance of:
- National Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Telework Clearinghouse
- STEP (Student Transportation Education Program)
- ongoing production of teleconferences and webcasting
- graduate student professional development
- Journal of Public Transportation
In FY08, in addition to projects that fall into these core program areas, research topics were solicited from public transportation professionals throughout the U.S. and Canada. More than 100 research ideas were received, and 10 were selected for funding.

- TBEST Model Enhancements—Parcel Level Demographic Data Capabilities and Concepts for Park-and-Ride Modeling (Steve Polzin, CUTR, 778-01)
- Guidebook on Using American Community Survey Data for Transit Planning (Xuehao Chu, CUTR, 778-02)
- Guidebook on Using Automatic Passenger Counters for NTD Reporting (Xuehao Chu, CUTR, 778-03)
- Dynamic Travel Information—Personalized and Delivered to Your Cell Phone (Sean Barbeau, CUTR, 778-04)
- Quantifying Net Social Benefits of Vehicle Trip Reduction Impacts (Sisinnio Concas, CUTR, 778-05)
- Synthesis of Research on Value of Time and Value of Reliability (Sisinnio Concas, CUTR, 778-06)
- Evaluation of Smart Video for Transit Event Detection (Deborah Sapper, CUTR, 778-07)
- Evaluation of Electronic Data Recorder (EDR) for Incident Investigation (Deborah Sapper, CUTR, 778-08)
- Development of Tool for Predicting TDM Impacts on Transportation System Performance (Phil Winters, CUTR, 778-09)
- Top 100 Unconventional Marketing Approaches for Public Transportation (Rob Gregg, CUTR, 778-10)

The following nine NCTR research projects were completed during FY08:

- Creative Ways to Manage Paratransit Costs 776-06
- Testing the Impact of Personalized Feedback on Household Travel Behavior 776-09
- Moving the Bus Back Into Traffic Safely 776-10
- Toolbox for Transit Event Investigation 777-06
- Transit Extraboard Management-Optimum Sizing and Strategies 777-07
- Smart Phone Application to Influence Travel Behavior (TRAC-IT Phase 3) 777-09
- Developing a Printed Transit Information Material Design Manual 777-10
- Development of a Large Bus / Small Bus Decision Support Tool 777-13
- Exploration of a Shift in Household Transportation Spending from Vehicles to Public Transportation

**Education**

During the 2007-2008 program year, graduate and undergraduate students were involved in ongoing public transportation research projects and were supported by funding from NCTR as well as from numerous other clients. The major areas of study of these students are multidisciplinary in nature, including engineering, economics, anthropology, business, geography, and public administration. Through research and professional experiences, NCTR helps develop well-informed, educated individuals, many of whom have gone on to work in public transportation planning, management, and analysis, while others will carry out their career activities with a far richer understanding and appreciation of public transportation.
The academic programs at USF continue to evolve. Enrollment in courses continues strong with a shift to higher shares of part-time, certificate, and distance-learning students and fewer full-time graduate students. Job placement has remained strong in spite of a slowing economy. The program continues to be proud of its placement record, with numerous students finding increasingly prestigious employment opportunities. During FY08, several of our graduate students were recipients of various awards, including two recipients of APTA fellowships and a recipient of the Eno Foundation Award.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the USF College of Engineering, with CUTR assistance, carried out a national search for additional transportation faculty. Two new faculty, Dr. Abdul Pinjari and Dr. Yu Zhang, accepted positions and have joined the faculty. Resources and market conditions permitting, continued growth of the transportation program is anticipated.

Transportation Certificate Program
CUTR’s newest certificate, the Transportation Systems Analysis Certificate, is designed to provide an opportunity for a transportation credential for persons who have an engineering or similar technical undergraduate degree and want to enhance their skills and credentials through additional study. Individuals can complete the certificate via distance learning, making it particularly attractive for continuing education for working professionals. Over the past year, this certificate has experienced a steady stream of inquiries and is one of the factors contributing to growth in distance learning student numbers.

Exploration of Additional Public Transportation Graduate Courses
The first step toward expanding public transportation course offerings has been to increase the frequency and enrollment of the current “Public Transportation” course. NCTR has continued to explore mechanisms that would enable more graduate student in other programs to take the course and have it be easily accepted as credit toward their degree at their primary university.

Other Education Initiatives
Several other initiatives continue to receive attention. The undergraduate course “Transportation and Society,” designed to introduce undergraduates from various disciplines to transportation, remains popular and is now being offered as a distance learning course. CUTR continues to collaborate in a USF initiative for a master’s degree in Urban Planning. In addition to the extensive ongoing training activities carried out at NCTR/CUTR, a week-long management level training program for the public transportation industry was successfully held in Fall 2007 for a major private sector transit management company, which provided an opportunity to develop quality public transportation management educational materials. NCTR will continue to monitor needs and explore possibilities for public transit education opportunities.

2007 NCTR Student of the Year: Monique Ellis
Monique served as an NCTR graduate research assistant and worked on a number of NCTR-funded projects. She received a master’s degree in civil engineering and a graduate certificate in interdisciplinary transportation studies in May 2008. Prior to attending USF, she received a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the Rochester Institute of Technology. At USF, she served as secretary of the student chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and was the recipient of APTA’s Louis T. Klauder Scholarship Award and a Southeastern Transportation Center Student Fellowship. Upon graduation, she began a career in public transportation planning.
Technology Transfer
Excellent research is of limited value if the results are not made available to as many parties as possible that might benefit from the findings. Extensive technology transfer is a key determinant of NCTR’s value. The following sections summarize specific accomplishments in the area of technology transfer over the last year.

Professional Activities
NCTR researchers continue to have significant involvement with partners in the public transportation industry, including serving on 16 Transportation Research Board (TRB) committees and holding leadership positions in the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). This has created an opportunity to tout the NCTR program through solicitation of project ideas from organization members and in the transfer of research results.

Training
During FY08, NCTR researchers were active in either providing or facilitating the following training sessions:

Commuter Choice
- Establishing Program Goals and Objectives
- Measuring Results and Performance
- Introduction to Advanced Traveler Info Systems and 511
- ITS and Traffic Management
- Telework and Compressed Work Week
- Introduction to Bus Rapid Transit
- Managed Lanes Strategies
- Primer on Value Pricing
- Commuter Choice Support Programs
- Rideshare Options
- Parking Management
- Commuter Choice Tax Benefits
- Creative Thinking for Transportation Professionals

CUTR
- 2007 NTD Data Collection and Reporting Training Seminar (FDOT)
- CAMPO Weekend Institute
- Managing Travel Demand to Mitigate Congestion (FHWA)
- Transit Service Options
- Telework and Compressed Workweek
- MPOAC Institute Workshop, FAC County Commissioners Certificate Program
- MPOAC Institute Workshop for Elected Officials
- MPOAC Institute Workshop for Elected Officials, AMPO
- MPOAC Weekend Institute for Elected Officials
- MPOAC Institute for the Central Florida MPO Alliance

Florida Operator Training
- Instructor’s Course in Bus Operator Training
- Stress Management, Conflict Avoidance, and Driver Wellness
• One-Day Instructor’s Course in Bus Operator Training
• Florida Operator Training, Reducing Absenteeism in Transit

**FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop**

• Instructor’s Course in Paratransit Training
• Alternative Fueled Buses: What Are The Real Costs?
• Update on Alternative Fuel Bus Cost Comparison
• Running a Successful Meeting
• Safety Evaluations of Alternative Fuels for Facilities and Equipment
• Successful Business Writing
• E-Mail 101: Best Practices
• Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan
• Best Workplaces for Commuters and Transit Agencies
• TDP Training
• Drug and Alcohol Testing Decisions Road Supervisors Must Make
• Get Ready, Get Set, GOAL!
• Attracting Elderly Drivers to Public Transportation
• Federal and State Transit Funding Programs and Issues
• New Developments in Transit’s Role in Evacuations
• FDOT 1 and 7 Transit Facilities Design Handbook
• Dialogue at Work
• Public Involvement Techniques for Transit
• EDR/Black Box Uses and Tacholink Training
• Using Information Technology in Public Transportation
• Workforce and Succession Planning in Public and Non-Profit Sectors
• Transit Websites
• Google Transit Phenomena
• Upcoming Environmental Regulations for Transit
• Commuter Choice Tax Benefits
• Quantifying the Business Benefits of TDM

**RTAP**

• Instructor’s Course in Paratransit Operator Training
• NTD Paratransit Scheduling/Dispatching
• Non-Emergency Stretcher Transfer Training
• Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies

**Transit Training**

• TSI Transit Bus System Security
• Transit Training, Transit Industrial Safety Management
• NTD Safety and Security
• Substance Abuse Management/Program Compliance
• Reasonable Suspicion Determination for Supervisors
• Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation
• Transit Supervisor’s Certification Course
• TSI Supervisor’s Certification Course
• Transit Terrorist Tools and Tactics
• Veolia General Managers Training in Excellence
Journal of Public Transportation

The Journal of Public Transportation is a respected international journal containing refereed papers on current, original research and case studies associated with public transportation and related policy issues. Topics are approached from disciplines including economics, engineering, planning, BRT, GIS, finance, and safety, and include methodological, technological, and financial perspectives, with emphasis on the identification of innovative solutions to public transportation problems. The journal has nearly 2,200 subscribers from all around the world and boasts a distinguished editorial board.

FLOW Newsletter

In 2007, NCTR initiated a new e-newsletter, FLOW: Moving People and Ideas. FLOW is another example of how NCTR shares the information generated through its research. The newsletter summarizes recently completed projects, provides updates on the NCTR education program and student accomplishments, and directs subscribers on how to access NCTR’s wealth of information.

NetCasts

In FY08, NCTR supplemented its technology transfer efforts by providing more netconferences as more public transportation professionals faced travel restrictions. These netconferences provide more opportunities to collaborate online and to cost-effectively reach large groups of transportation professionals in real-time, using only a telephone, computer, and an Internet connection. All NCTR netconferences are available for on-demand viewing after the live presentation.

To expand its reach, NCTR has partnered with Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) chapters to host netconference-hosting events in their cities for ACT members and non-members alike. These events were held at 15 to 30 locations and attracted up to 200+ “conference attendees.” NCTR sponsored the following four netconferences in partnership with ACT and four “Lunch and Learn” netconferences in partnership with FDOT.

- “Tips for Planning and Operating Successful Shuttles and Circulators”
- “Results from 2007 Employer TDM Program Benchmarking Survey”
- “Climate Change: Tipping Point for TDM or Tipping at Windmills”
- Florida Lunch and Learn: “Challenges and Recommendations for Integrating Transportation Demand Management (TDM) into the Land Development”
- Florida Lunch and Learn: “Emergency Ride Home in Practice”
- Florida Lunch and Learn: “Carsharing in Practice”
- “Safe Routes to School: Why They Matter to Kids, to Communities, and to TDM Professionals”

Links to Public Transportation Research

In addition to the netconferences and on-demand streaming presentations, NCTR provides links to nearly 120 completed research reports. As the following table shows, most NCTR websites are found at or near the top of major search engines when using key search terms reflecting NCTR priorities.
Basic web statistics were designed so systems administrators could determine how efficient the system was in processing requests. The statistics were not intended to count every user. However, such web statistical reports enable NCTR to track basic trends. In FY08, NCTR had 30,495 visits made by 21,465 absolute unique visitors. The individual pages receiving the most pageviews were the NCTR’s *Journal of Public Transportation* and the NCTR National TDM and Telework Clearinghouse.

In the last five months of the fiscal year, NCTR embedded Google Analytics code to improve the tracking of reports. The following were the top five most requested reports, guides and spreadsheet tools during that time period, covering all aspects of public transportation and indicate a diverse audience for NCTR products:

- “Designing Printed Transit Information Materials: A Guidebook for Transit Service Providers” (and final report)
- “Exploration of a Shift in Household Transportation Spending from Vehicles to Public Transportation”
- “Development of a Large Bus/Small Bus Decision Support Tool” (and spreadsheet tool)
- “Economics of Travel Demand Management: Comparative Cost Effectiveness and Public Investment” (and spreadsheet tool)
- “Smart Phone Application to Influence Travel Behavior”

**Peer-to-Peer Exchanges**

NCTR continues to see increases in the number of subscribers across the board from its public transportation-related discussion forums and listservs. These discussion forums and e-newsletters have attracted more than 4,500 active subscribers. In the past year, two new listservs were hosted by NCTR in support of Transportation Research Board committees: Bus Fleet Maintenance and Sustainable Transport Indicators.

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All NCTR abstracts, announcements, and listserv postings also are published as RSS feeds. This method allows NCTR to deliver information to the desktop of transportation professionals and others (e.g., customized Google or Yahoo home page) without cluttering email inboxes. Also, in the past year, NCTR has assisted the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Transportation Research Board Committee on TDM with the creation of a wiki to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, such as the development of research problem statements.

Customer Support via Help Desk

Since 2004, NCTR has deployed a customer relationship management software solution to provide the enhanced communications and continual feedback loops that are central to understanding and addressing the needs of the transportation community. The Help Desk also tracks and reports to the staff the topics that are receiving the most questions and responses.

In late 2007, NCTR expanded its assistance to include the private sector when NCTR stepped forward to assume program management responsibilities for Best Workplaces for Commuters (SM) [www.bestworkplaces.org](http://www.bestworkplaces.org) from the Environmental Protection Agency. The program currently recognizes about 2,000 employers that provide a range of commuter benefits to their employees. BWC creates an opportunity for NCTR to reach nearly 2,000 worksites directly to improve understanding what strategies are effective in increasing use of public transportation.

Year 10 Research Program

NCTR recently completed the process to solicit and select research ideas for the FY09 program year. Requests for research ideas and proposals were sent to all Florida transit agency directors, MPO directors, and FDOT public transit managers. Idea requests also were sent to all public transportation-related committees of TRB/APTA committee chairs and national listservs. From the submission of more than 100 different research ideas, the NCTR Advisory Committee provided assistance in selecting 5 core program and 10 research projects for funding in FY09.

Conclusion

At the completion of its 9th year, CUTR’s National Center for Transit Research continues to produce a large volume of high-quality research of practical value to public transportation agencies throughout the country. The results of the research are being effectively distributed through a variety of means, including new electronic techniques that allow fast and flexible access to the information NCTR is producing. The program is helping to cultivate the next generation of transportation professionals by providing opportunities for students who assist in the research being conducted. The vast majority of them are joining public and private sector transportation agencies upon graduation. The research faculty and students of NCTR look forward to contributing to the rising success of public transportation agencies throughout the nation.
MOT Training Program Developed for Incident Responders

Most current maintenance of traffic (MOT) training programs are typically designed for road construction projects. The training courses offered at different levels in Florida are targeted to either construction contractors or roadway designers. Some incident-responding agencies have specific incident management training and site management, but the coverage of MOT varies significantly. It has been well recognized that successful traffic incident management requires effective planning and consistent MOT setup to ensure the safety of all incident responders and the mobility of the traveling public through incident locations. It is also vital for incident responders to have full communication, coordination, and cooperation during a traffic incident.

Through a USF UCITSS Phase II project sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, the Florida Department of Transportation, and Florida Atlantic University, CUTR has developed a comprehensive and integrated MOT training program specially tailored to the needs of incident responders such as law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency medical service, transportation agencies, road ranger service, and towing service.

The major objective of the project was to develop a comprehensive, integrated, and practical MOT training program to (1) enhance the safety of all incident responders and motorists, (2) improve the mobility of the traveling public through incident locations, and (3) obtain consensus, support, and utilization of the MOT training program from all incident-responding agencies.

MOT Program Development

Several major tasks were undertaken to accomplish the major objectives for the development of a MOT training program. These tasks include:

- **Review literature and obtain input from incident responding agencies**—The CUTR project team reviewed literature, solicited input from incident-responding agencies nationwide, gathered associated information, and determined the content and training materials for the development of the MOT training program.

- **Develop a preliminary MOT training program**—Based on the information obtained in the previous task, a draft MOT training program was developed.

- **Assemble a MOT training advisory group to provide guidance**—To obtain consensus, support, and guidance on the development of the MOT training program, representatives from many incident-responding agencies in Florida were selected, invited, and assembled. They exchanged their experiences and provided associated input to the development of the preliminary MOT training program.
- **Conduct MOT pilot training**—To obtain further feedback from incident responders in the field, a MOT pilot training was arranged for incident-responding agencies in the Tampa Bay area.

- **Finalize the MOT training modules**—After obtaining feedback from the pilot training and FDOT project managers, the MOT training program was finalized, resulting in eight modules.

**MOT Training Modules**

Each training module in the MOT training program is briefly described below.

**Module 1: Introduction & Crash and Safety**

This module presents the objectives of the training course and emphasizes the need to develop a MOT training program to enhance incident-responder safety and motorist mobility through crash statistics and videos.

**Module 2: Legal/Liability Issues and Safety Policies and Procedures**

This module provides incident responders with information on tort liability and guidelines for protecting themselves from liability issues, as well as safety policies and procedures of which they should be aware.

**Module 3: Communication, Coordination, and Cooperation (3C’s) Among Incident Responders**

This module addresses the importance of understanding the differences that exist among incident responders and the roles of incident-responding agencies during a traffic incident. It uses “The Many HATS of Highway Incident Management” video to effectively present the topic.

**Module 4: MOT Concepts**

This module presents common highway terminology so incident responders can communicate effectively during an incident. Basic MOT concepts are presented, including incident definition, types of incidents, highway standards, temporary traffic control zones, highway safety principles, personal protective equipment, and traffic signaling equipment.

**Module 5: Safe Parking**

This module presents safe parking practices, positioning, and principles for incident responders during a traffic incident on access-limited interstate highways and expressways. It also includes safety procedures for the correct use of vehicle lights and vehicle exits.

**Module 6: MOT through Traffic Incident Management Area**

This module presents MOT setups for an effective Temporary Traffic Control area for different scenarios based on Florida DOT Design Standards. The scenarios include shoulder lane closure, one travel lane closure, double lane closure, partial exit ramp closure, curve setup, and highway shutdown. It provides incident responders with practical recommendations during MOT setup.

**Module 7: MOT Examples**

This module provides many examples of MOT setups and safe parking positioning depending on the incident scenario.
and arrival order of each responder. It shows how to improve the setup of a Temporary Traffic Control with the help of oncoming incident responders to the scene.

**Module 8: Tabletop Case Exercises**

This module provides incident responders with several opportunities to apply what they have learned from the course and work as a team to set up proper MOT and safe parking using tabletop case exercises. The participants also learn the roles of other incident responders and how to work together to successfully respond different traffic incidents.

The MOT training program provides incident responders with necessary, effective, and practical tools to keep them safe and provide mobility to roadway users and helps them understand the roles of other incident-responding agencies. It also provides an excellent opportunity for better communication, coordination, and cooperation among all incident-responding agencies.

For more information, contact CUTR Senior Research Associate Pei-Sung Lin, lin@cutr.usf.edu, (813) 974-4910.

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**CUTR welcomes new faculty**

CUTR is pleased to welcome Aldo Fabregas as an Assistant in Research in the ITS, Traffic Operations and Safety program. During his four years as a CUTR graduate assistant, he has developed a body of knowledge of operational research, network modeling/optimization, logistics, and decision making that will enrich CUTR's research in transportation. He is a Ph.D. candidate in the USF College of Engineering’s Industrial and Management Systems Engineering Department and anticipates graduation in August 2009. He received his BS and MS degrees in Industrial Engineering from the Universidad del Norte in Colombia.
CUTR’s 2008 Transportation Award Dinner, held on October 29, 2008, had record attendance and included an unprecedented number of sponsors. Florida DOT Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos participated as keynote speaker, and CUTR Advisory Board Chair Kimberlee DeBosier moderated the program.

CUTR was honored to recognize Bob Burleson, President of the Florida Transportation Builders’ Association (FTBA), as the recipient of the 2008 CUTR Transportation Achievement Award. Bob grew up in the construction industry and has never left it. During high school, college and upon graduation from Virginia Tech in 1970, Bob worked for his dad’s company, Burleson Construction. He spent over 15 years with the Wiley N. Jackson Company, a major southeastern transportation construction company, serving as Vice President for administration and North Florida operations until the company was sold in 1987. He then relocated to Tallahassee to join FTBA.

Bob has been active in the American Transportation Builders’ Association throughout his career and is a past recipient of the ARTBA Award for the contributions he has made to the national organization. He is also a past recipient of Floridians for Better Transportation’s Golden Eagle Award.

Bob and his wife Beverly have three sons, two daughters-in-laws and four grandchildren. His sons honored him this past August with the establishment of the “Bob Burleson Presidential Scholarship,” a part of the FTBA Scholarship program.

In commemoration of CUTR’s 20th Anniversary, special recognition was made of several individuals who were instrumental in the creation of CUTR and its early successes. The late David Kerr and Jack Wilson were recognized for their early leadership as members of CUTR’s Advisory Board. Special recognition also included:

- Senator Malcolm Beard, who sponsored the legislation creating CUTR in the Florida Senate
- Representatives Mary Figg and Vernon Peebles, who sponsored CUTR’s legislation in the Florida House
- Senate President Tom Lee and Senator Jim Hargrett, who worked hard on CUTR’s behalf in the Florida Senate.
- Former Dean of the College of Engineering Glenn Burdick, who advocated forcefully with members of the legislature for the creation of CUTR
- CUTR’s Founding Director, Gary Brosch, who provided leadership during CUTR’s first 13 years
Also recognized at the dinner was Enrique Gonzalez-Velez, a Ph.D. student in the USF Civil Engineering program and a research assistant at CUTR, the 2008 recipient of the Georgia Brosch Memorial Transportation Award. He earned his BSCE and MSCE at the University of Puerto Rico—Mayaguez. He has several TRB presentations to his credit and serves as an officer in the USF student chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

A very special thanks to the 2008 CUTR Transportation Achievement Award dinner sponsors

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Gary Brosch, Barbara Brosch, scholarship recipient awardee Enrique Gonzalez-Velez, CUTR Director Ed Mierzejewski
CUTR faculty researchers Phil Winters, Sean Barbeau, and Nevine Georggi and USF Computer Science & Engineering professors Miguel Labrador and Rafael Perez were selected to receive USF’s inaugural Excellence in Innovation Award for their interdisciplinary research and development efforts in Location-Based Services (LBS) technology. This team has focused on the development of novel, prototype location-aware software applications for GPS-enabled cell phones. Such applications include the TRAC-IT travel diary and personal travel coach that helps travelers understand and change their travel behavior, and the Travel Assistance Device (TAD) to aid individuals with special needs utilize public transportation by giving the transit rider real-time instructions such as “Get Ready…” and “Pull the Cord Now.” Research results have been published and presented in multiple international venues including the Transportation Research Board, Intelligent Transportation System World Congress and the World Conference on Transport Research. The group has 12 patents pending on location-aware technology that it has developed.

The Excellence in Innovation Award is given annually to USF faculty members who demonstrate exceptional achievement in innovation and translational research. The award recognizes the highest levels of technological innovation and entrepreneurial success.

CUTR Director Ed Mierzejewski notes, “This is an excellent example of CUTR’s success in working with USF academic departments to accomplish creative and innovative products.”