

Meeting of April 23, 2018

April Employees of the Month Honored

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors recognized three employees of the month for April.

Resolutions were presented to:

- Cynthia Guardado, Coach Operator
- Gilberto Anaya, Maintenance
- Kristopher Hewkin, Administration

OCTA Expands Bicycle Capacity on Bus Fleet

OCTA will expand by 50 percent its ability to carry bicycles on all OC Buses with the installation of bicycle racks that hold up to three bikes at a time. The board approved a contract to install the racks on all standard 40-foot buses. Currently, most OC Buses only have room for up to two bicycles on the carrier at the front of the bus.

"Adding bicycle capacity on OC Buses is an important step for helping cyclists around Orange County more conveniently access their first and last mile connections" said OCTA Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett, also the county's Fifth District Supervisor.

OCTA operates its 484 40-foot compressed-natural-gas-powered buses on 65 routes across the county, serving more than 5,500 bus stops.

When buses already have two bikes on board, cyclists have had to wait for the next bus along the route, hoping there is room for their bike. Adding a third slot for an additional bike on each bus will greatly improve efficiency for Orange County's cycling community.

The approximately \$745,000 contract with Complete Coach Works allows for the purchase and installation of up to 484 three-position bicycle racks, and an option to purchase 73 more, if needed. Funding for the project comes from the state's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program.

OC Bus 360° Continues Delivering to Meet Community Needs

The comprehensive action plan developed to help reshape bus ridership in Orange County, continues to show positive results. Despite a nationwide and regional drop in ridership, Orange County has experienced a 12.8 percent increase on routes that have been improved as part of the OC Bus 360° program.

OC Bus 360° efforts include: the implementation of new and faster bus routes, redeployment of services to improve efficiencies, competitively-awarded grants to local agencies for transit services tailored to community needs, promotional fares, the rollout of new technologies such as mobile ticketing and real-time bus arrival information and extensive marketing, public outreach and promotional campaigns.

Another way OCTA is better aligning its services with the needs of riders is through the use of on-demand transit like the new the OC Flex pilot program, set to launch later this year. The pilot program will be available in two, six-mile zones within Huntington Beach, and Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. Likewise, a competitive program through Measure M, allows cities to apply for community-based circulators and shuttles that complement regional bus and rail services and meet needs in areas not adequately served by regional transit. Seven applications were recently received for additional projects and the board is expected to award the funding in June.

Additional efforts underway by OCTA are the Santa Ana College Pass program which allows 49,000 students to ride the bus for free for the first year and pay low fees the following two years. Over 5,500 students have used the pass generating over 573,000 boardings and a ridership increase of approximately 8 percent on adjacent routes.

Overall, Orange County's systemwide 3.7 percent ridership decline is below the nation's 4.9 percent decline in ridership. The trending ridership decline in southern California is because of many reasons highlighted in the Southern California Association of Governments study released, including the rise in car ownership and shifting demographics.