

**MAKING CONNECTIONS, MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

◦ **Making**  
**Connections 2024**

◦ **The National Transit Workforce Conference**

◦ **November 11 – 13, 2024 • Baltimore, MD** ◦







# Mentoring

Innovative Models and Best Practices





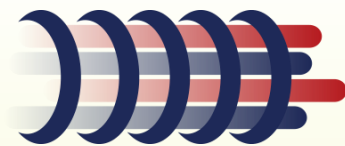
**Karitsa  
Holdzkom**

Senior Policy Analyst



**Maurice  
Beard**

Senior Workforce  
Development Advisor



INTERNATIONAL

**TRANSPORTATION LEARNING CENTER**

# Transit Workforce Center – Mission

Operated by the **ITLC**, the **Transit Workforce Center (TWC)** is **FTA's** first ever national technical assistance center for transit workforce development.



## mission

The **TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER** is the Federal Transit Administration's first ever national technical assistance center for transit workforce development. Its mission is to help urban, suburban, tribal, and rural public transportation entities throughout the U.S. recruit, hire, train, and retain a diverse workforce for now and into the future.

# What is Operator Mentorship?

- After successfully completing initial training class, new drivers are paired with mentors who pass on their skills
- Mentors are selected from among the experienced drivers at your agency
- Drivers volunteer their time to act as mentors
- Program may also incorporate ride-alongs or periodic meetings
  - Mentors are typically paid overtime





# Retention and Skills Development: Mentorship Programs



- Mentorship programs enable peer learning that goes beyond classroom instruction.
- Mentors provide guidance and help their mentees acquire and master new skills
- Most successful when mentorship program is run jointly with full involvement of the frontline workforce or, in a union environment, the union
- TWC-developed mentor training programs



# Benefits of Operator Mentorship

1

Increased retention

2

Increased confidence & morale

3

Reduced absenteeism

4

Increased level of professional recognition for bus drivers

5

Increased recruitment options, including veteran's benefits

6

Strong emphasis on customer service

7

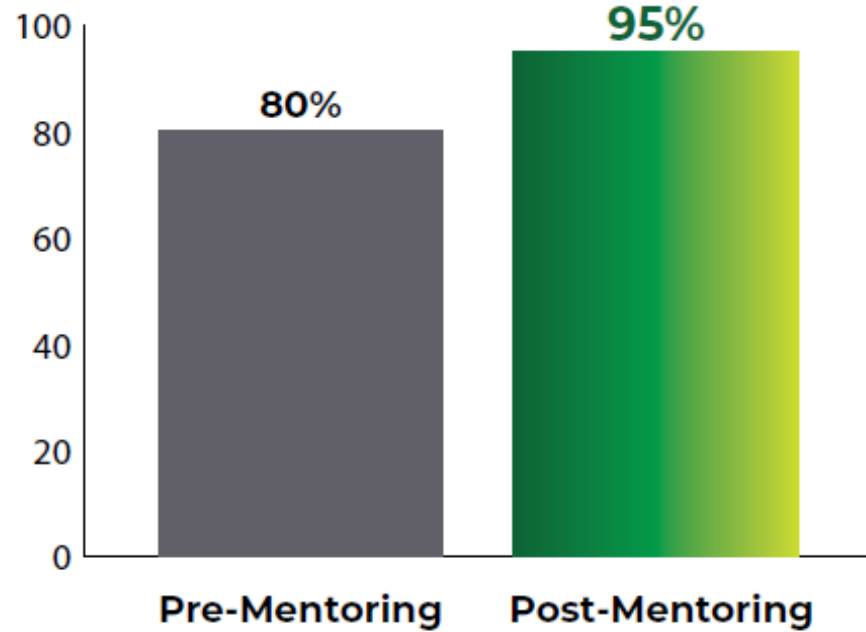
Another tool for reaching out to the communities served



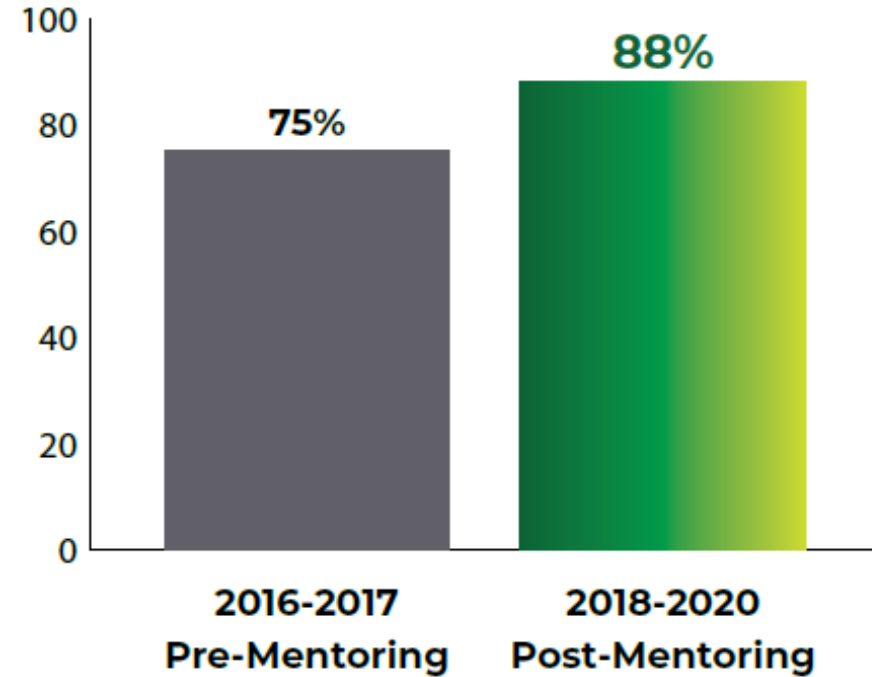


# Tracking Mentorship Program Outcomes

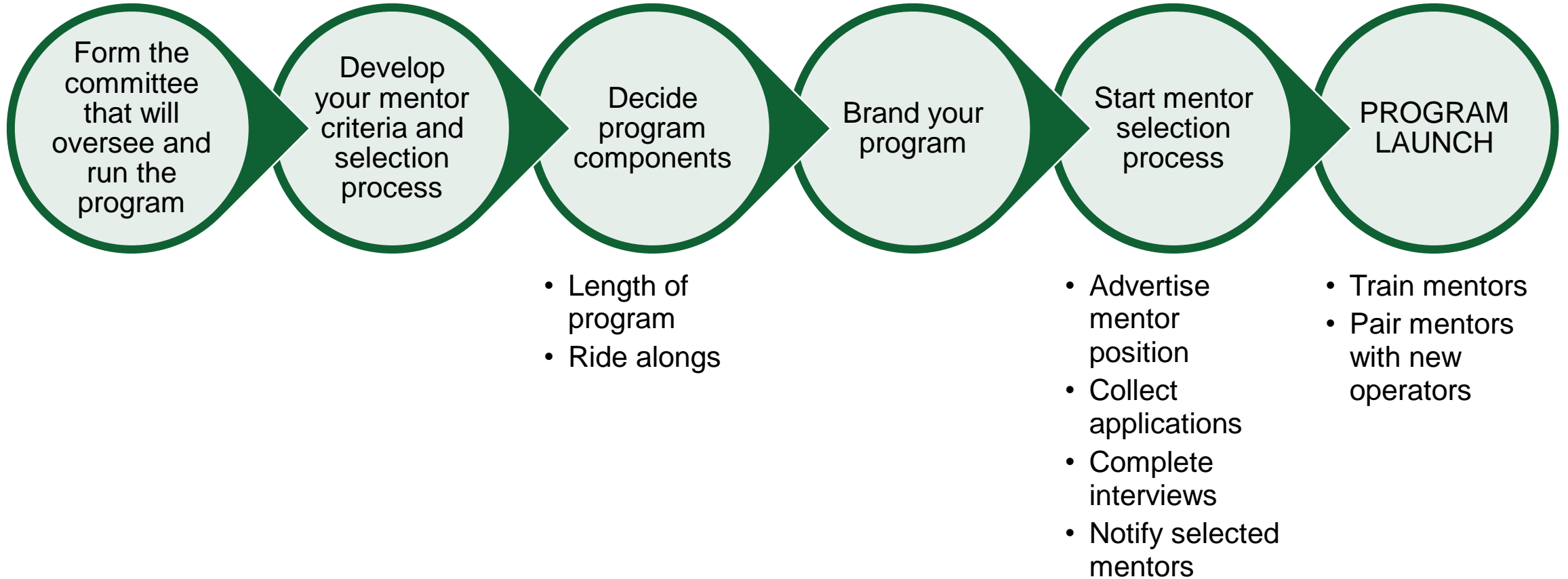
### VTA Retention Rate

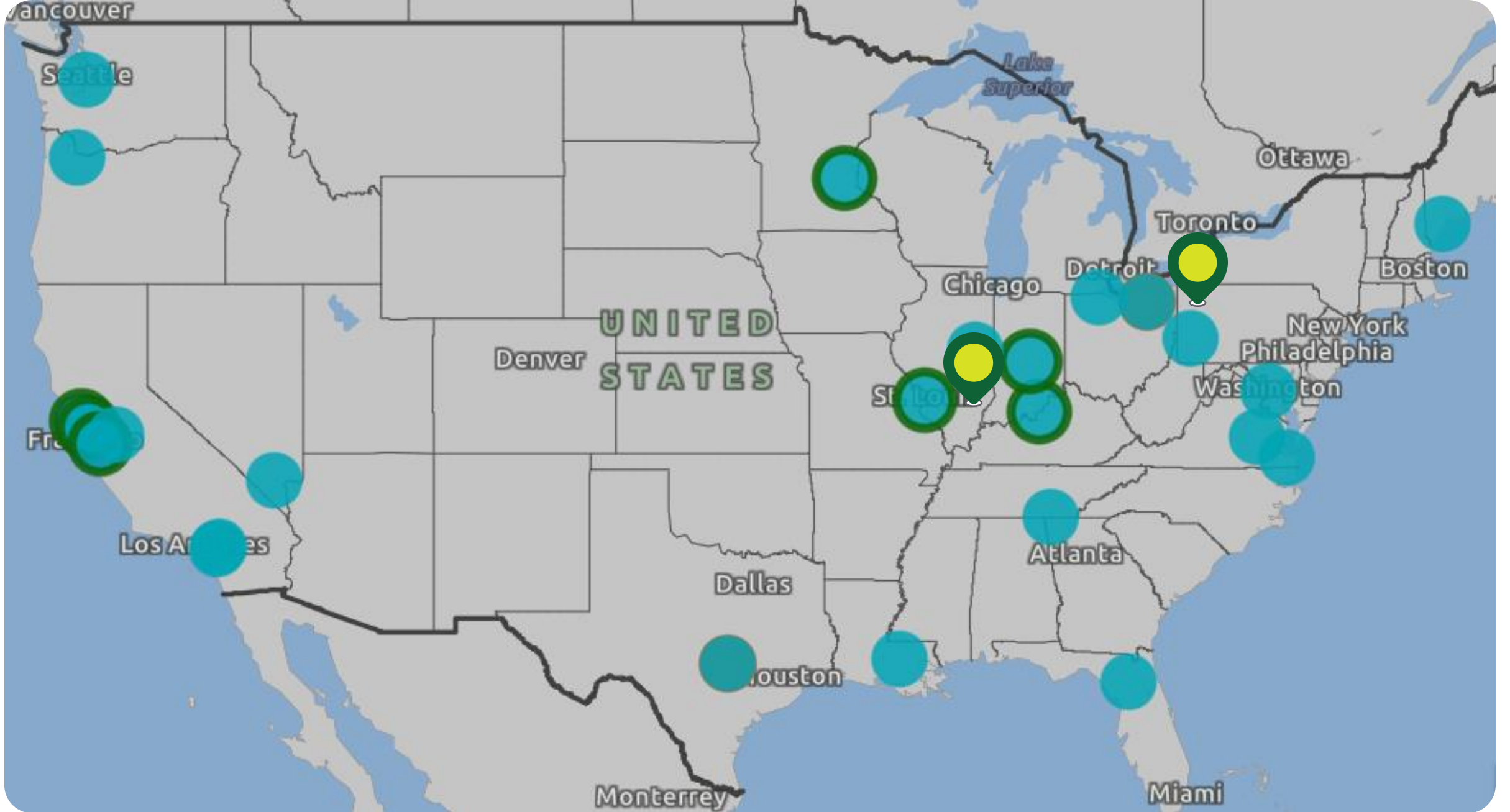


### AC Transit Retention Rate



# Starting your mentorship program!







# Innovative Mentorship Models

CapMetro

- Paratransit mentorship

King County

- Garage-based management and coordinator
- Side-letter with union

Champaign-Urbana  
MTD

- Small rural agency
- Tracking metrics



# Panelist Introductions

**Moderator: George Fields, Deputy General Manager - Human Resources,  
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)**



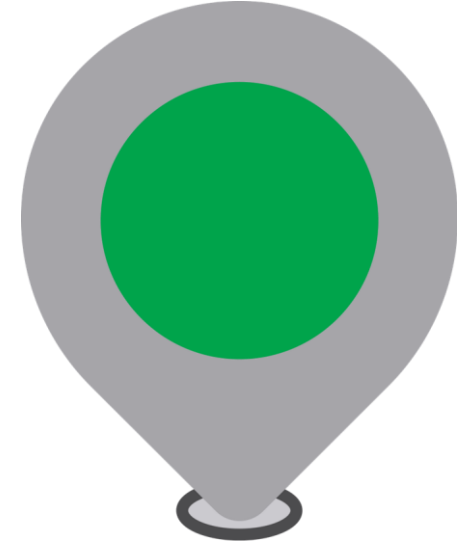
**Ida Marshall**  
Sr. Talent Acquisition  
Manager  
*GCRTA*



**Wendy Talley**  
Training & Employee  
Development Director  
*GCRTA*



**Reginald Howard**  
ATU 788 President  
*St. Louis Metro*



**Trenise Winters**  
Assistant Executive  
Director  
*St. Louis Metro*

# New Avenues for Recruitment & Retention

Presented by Trenise Winters  
Assistant Executive Director of Metro Transit





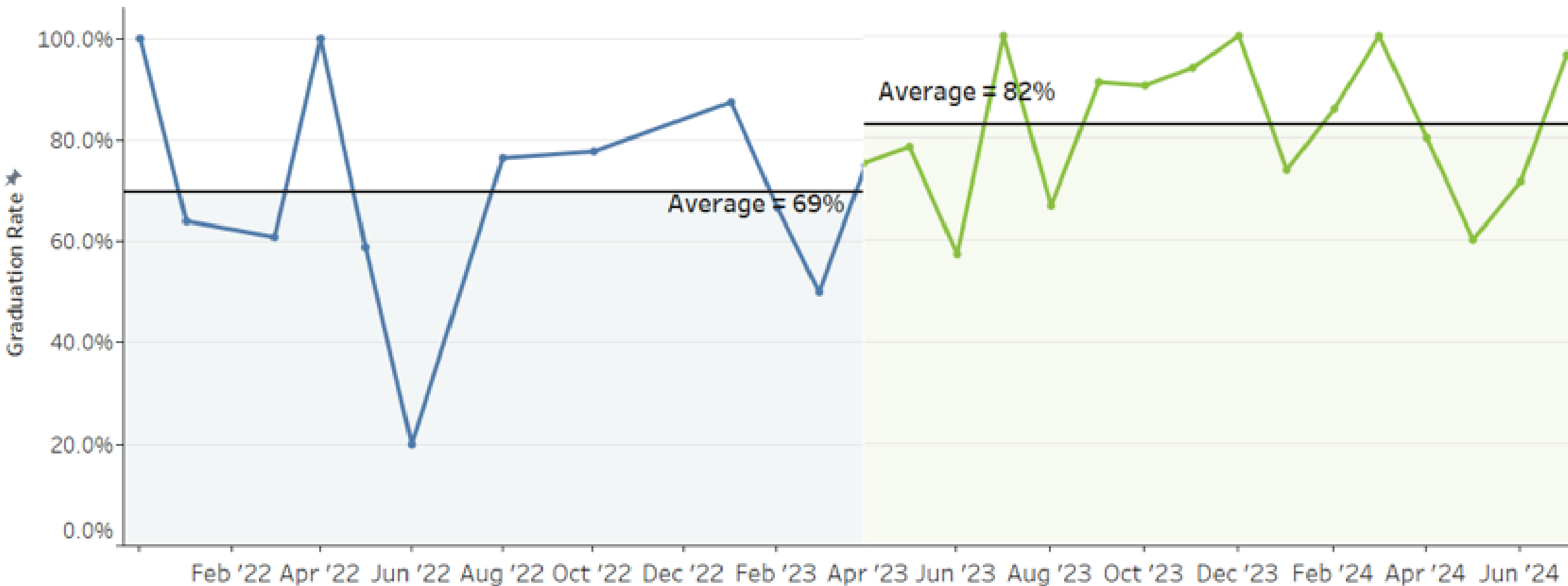
# Impact of Restructuring Training - Bus Operators

## Before Restructure of Training

(12/1/2021 - 3/30/2023)

## After Restructure of Training

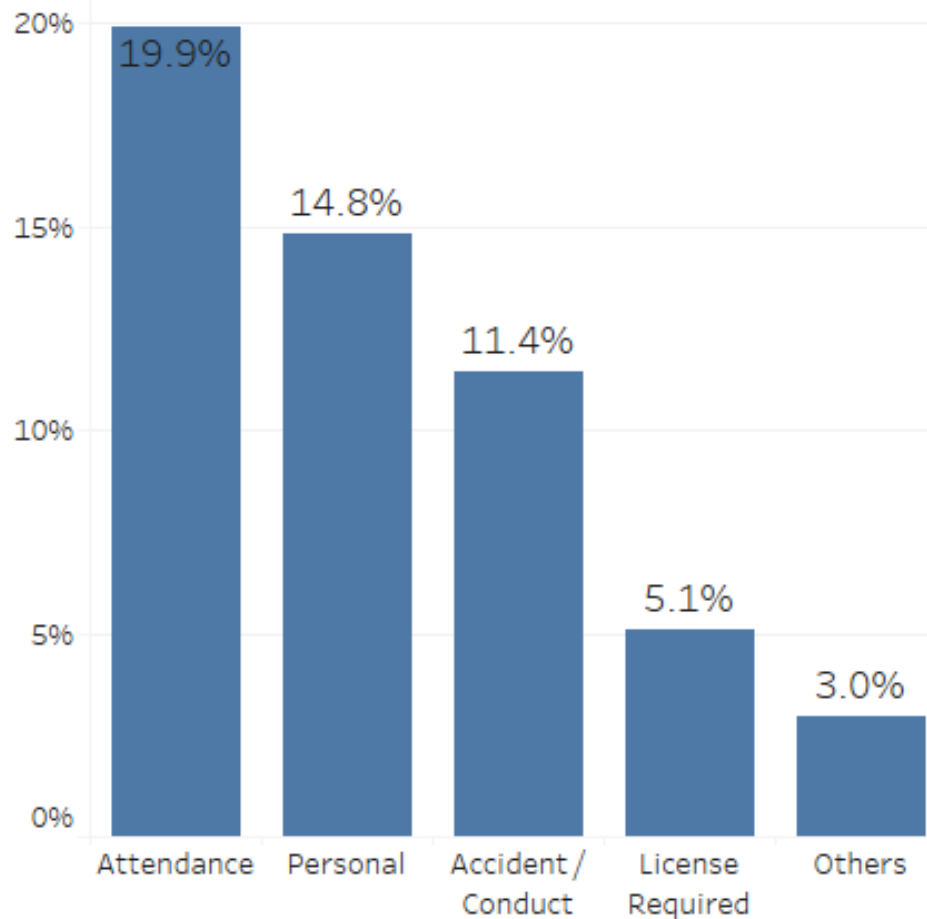
(4/1/2023 - 7/31/2024)



# Leaving Reason - All Operators

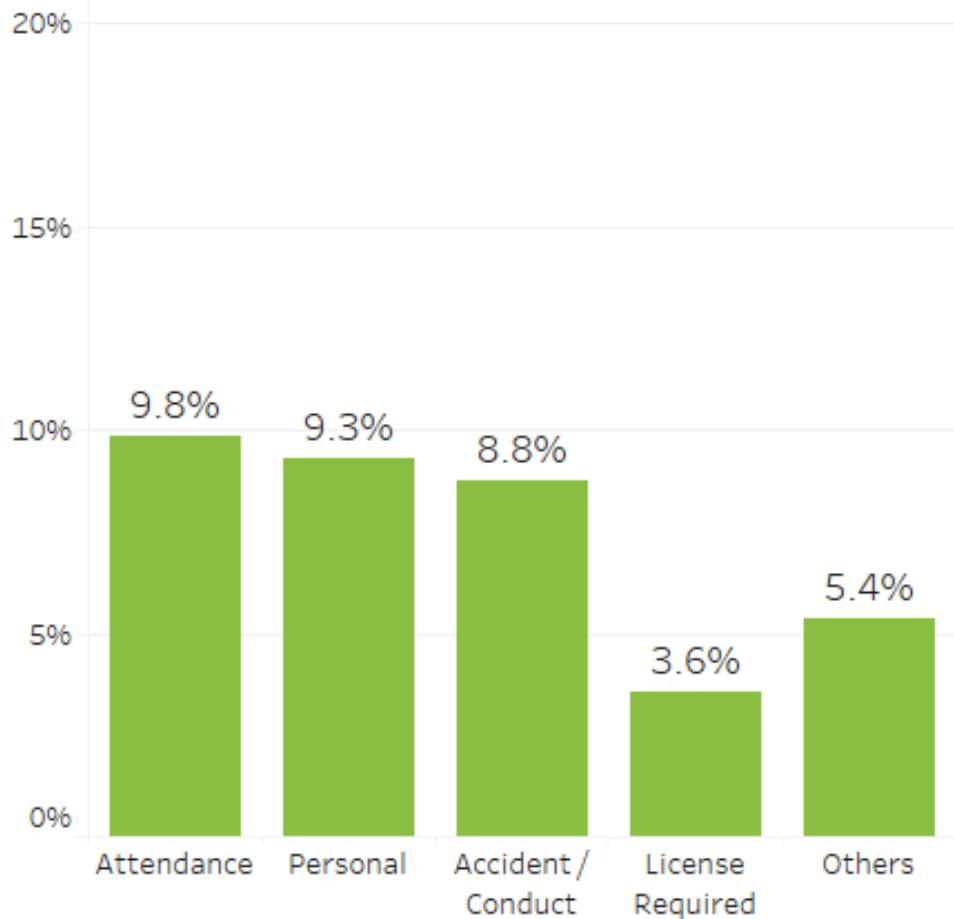
## Before Mentor Program

(12/1/2021 - 3/30/2023)

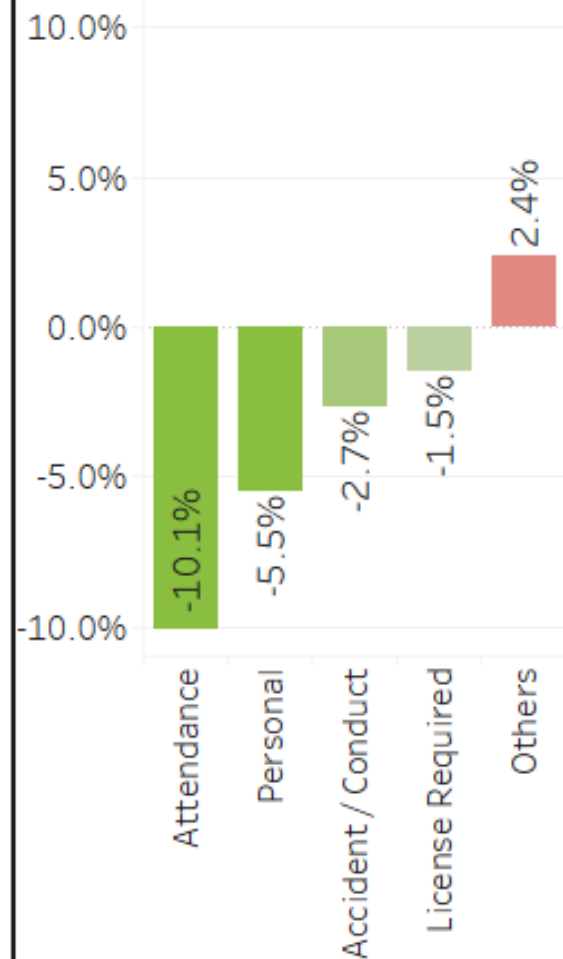


## Mentor Program

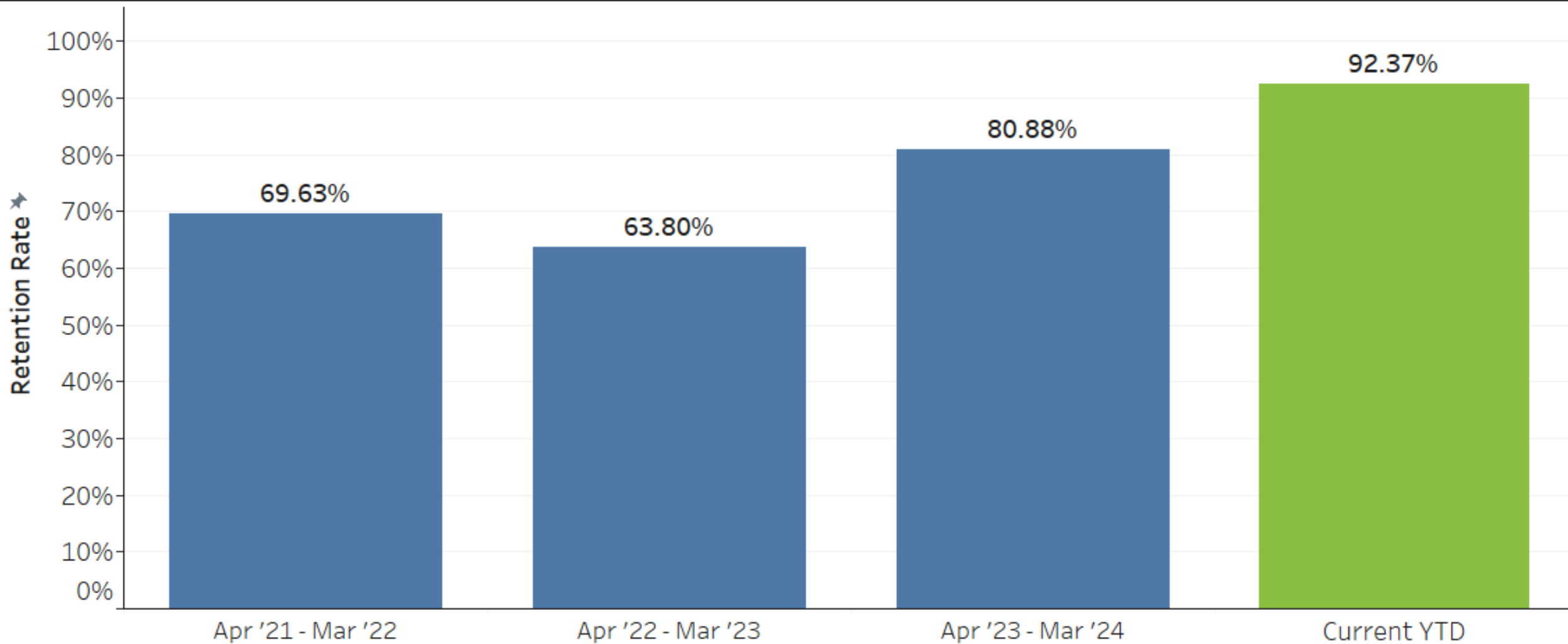
(4/1/2023 - 7/31/2024)



## Difference



# Retention Rate - All Operators





# Thank You

Trenise Winters

Assistant Executive Director of Metro Transit

[TLWinters@MetroStLouis.org](mailto:TLWinters@MetroStLouis.org)





# Innovative Mentorship Models: Panel Discussion

Moderator: George Fields, Deputy General Manager - Human Resources, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)



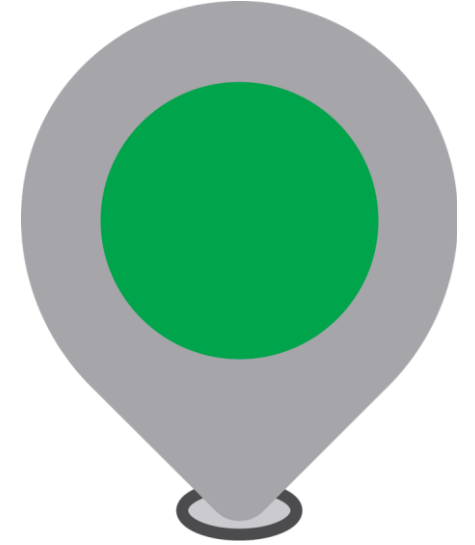
**Ida Marshall**  
Sr. Talent Acquisition  
Manager  
*GCRTA*



**Wendy Talley**  
Training & Employee  
Development Director  
*GCRTA*



**Reginald Howard**  
ATU 788 President  
*St. Louis Metro*



**Trenise Winters**  
Assistant Executive  
Director  
*St. Louis Metro*



+







- **Karitsa Holdzkom**  
Senior Policy Analyst  
[kholdzkom@transportcenter.org](mailto:kholdzkom@transportcenter.org)
- **Maurice Beard**  
Senior Workforce  
Development Advisor  
[mbeard@transportcenter.org](mailto:mbeard@transportcenter.org)