

MAKING CONNECTIONS, MAKING A DIFFERENCE

◦ **Making**
Connections 2024

◦ **The National Transit Workforce Conference**

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





Outreach and Retention for Underserved and Underrepresented Communities



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Transit Workforce Center



Bianca W. Phillips
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Dr. Judy Shanley
Easterseals



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Dr. Charles Husband
Mississippi Dept. of Transportation



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Community Development, Inc.



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Recruiting Top Talent from within the Community

Justice Impacted/Returning Citizens

IndyGo
SM

Presenter

Bianca Phillips

Help 250 Marion County residents access training opportunities that lead to long-term employment and good-paying jobs, primarily supporting the economic futures of coach operator and mechanic trainees

Establish strong community partnerships that are dedicated to addressing the need for a more equitable environment

Incentivize at least 200 employees to share job opportunities that result in an application

IndyGo's Bus Rapid Transit Routes



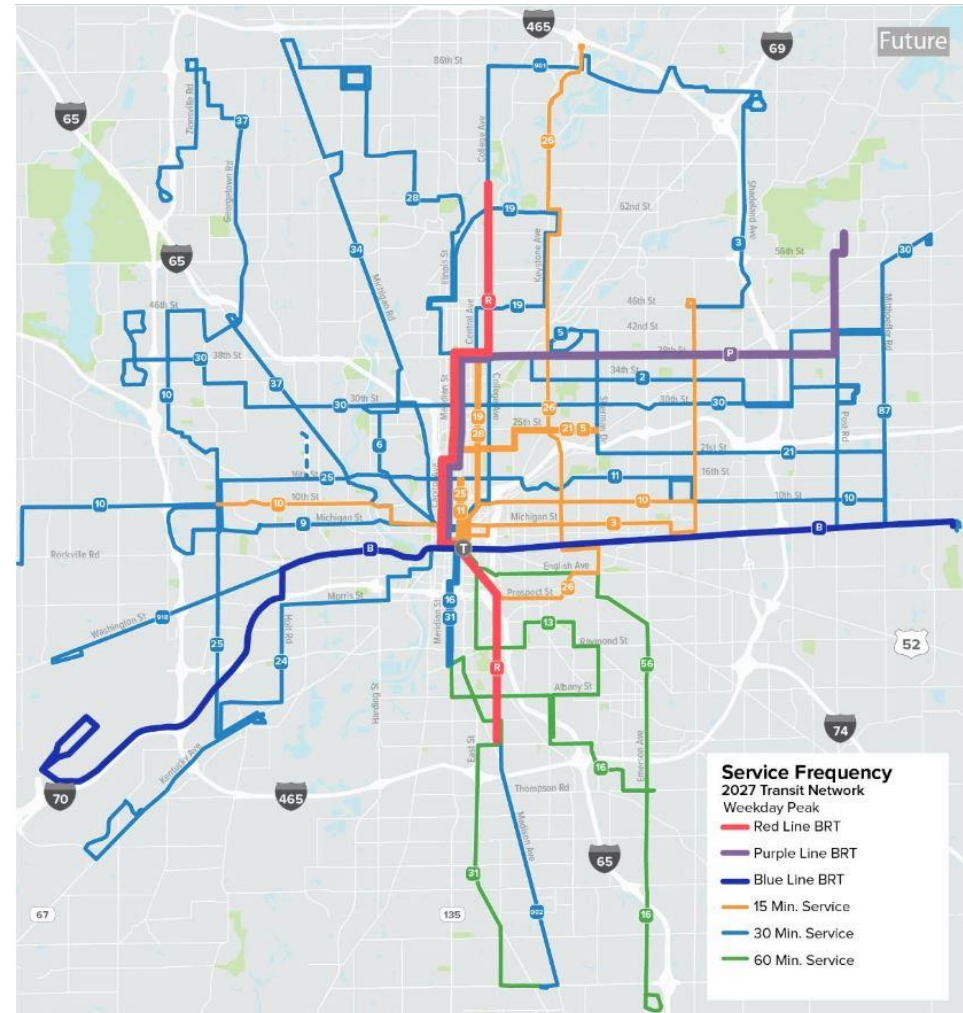
**Current
Revenue Service 2019
13.1 miles**



**Current
Revenue Service 2024
15.2 miles**



**Start
Revenue Service 2027-28
24 miles**



How Do We Get There?

Align our transit system to represent the diverse communities we serve and establish strategic, collaborative relationships and partnerships between entities with shared objectives

- ✓ Community Based and Non-Profit Organizations
- ✓ Centers for Working Families
- ✓ Prosecutor's Office
- ✓ Department of Correction
- ✓ Companies Supporting Foster Care/Unhoused Individuals
- ✓ Companies that assist with job readiness skills and training



Our Mission

To connect our community to economic & cultural opportunities through **safe, reliable, & accessible** mobility experiences.

Our Vision

Advancing mobility as a catalyst for success. We're here to help get you where you're going — in life — because the first thing you're going to need is *a ride.*

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Are there barriers in your current recruitment and/or onboarding process?

YES

- What should we do? Review the job description, assessments/screenings, background check, educational level, filling out information online, offer paid CDL training, research with other transit agencies, etc.

- What are some ways we can better support newly hired Justice Impacted candidates so they make it through training successfully?

- Attempt to address employment barriers before application, offer resources for transportation, encourage new hires to attend meetings for life skills and workplace etiquette, educate on current wrap-around services, etc.

Hiring Process



Step 1: Online Application

Step 2: Screening/Assessment

Step 3: Interview

- *If offered the role, Contingent Offer of Employment*
(Coach Operator Trainee applicants must have at least passed tests for CDL Permit)

Step 4: Drug/Alcohol/DOT Physical Screen

Step 5: Background Check

- *Second Chance Hiring Policy*

Step 6: Final Offer, Onboarding Instructions

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WHAT WE LEARNED

SUCCESSSES

- Employment Pipeline Growth
- Brand Awareness
- Incentive Programs (Signing Bonus/Referral Bonus)
- Boosted Employee Morale
- 125+ New Hires!!!!

CHALLENGES

- Tracking Applicants/Manual Entry
- Process/Procedural/Leadership Changes
- Safe Selection and Stigma
- Lack of Knowledge
- Retention
- Talent Pool (no valid in-state DL or CDL)

READY, CAMERA, ACTION!!!!



*IndyGo*SM

THANK
YOU



Recruit & Retain People with Disabilities in Transportation & Mobility Careers

November 2024
Transit Workforce Center



National Center for Mobility Management

Who We Are

A national technical assistance center funded through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration and operated through a consortium of three national organizations.



Our Mission

To promote customer-centered mobility strategies that advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community.

We work to promote cross-sector partnerships and help communities create/improve transportation options – “mobility management”.

Have you Considered Hiring People with Disabilities?

- Extreme transit workforce shortages
- You know how to provide accessible services – Hiring people with disabilities is an opportunity to apply this experience
- People with disabilities are unemployed and underemployed
 - In 2021, 19.1% of persons with a disability were employed compared to 63.7% of persons without a disability that were employed.
 - [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

It's Not about
Charity or
Meeting an
Equal
Employment
Opportunity
Commission
(EEOC) Hiring
Goals!

Its about the value that qualified and
competent employees can have for your
organization!



Create a Welcoming Workplace in Which People with Disabilities Want to Work

- Demonstrate career paths, upward mobility, and employees with disabilities in key leadership positions
- Implement peer mentor programs
- Ensure your onboarding programs are inclusive
- Offer current educational opportunities for all staff regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), reasonable accommodations, & disability etiquette
- Develop connections with non-profits
- Highlight examples of job accommodations and supports – develop accessible communication materials
- Create a workplace culture that values all employees!

Recruitment Strategies

- Establish and maintain relationships with human services organizations, particularly those with a workforce development program
 - Easterseals, Centers for Independent living (CILs) or State Independent Living Council (SILC)
 - Governors and Mayor Offices and Committees on People with Disabilities
 - Workforce Boards and Councils
 - Higher education organizations – disability services offices
 - K12 Schools and special education departments
- Ensure your recruitment methods are accessible
- Leverage the expertise of current employees with disabilities

Start Early

- Connect with youth transition professionals from K12 schools and vocational rehabilitation professionals from Dept of Labor offices
 - Visit K12 schools on career days and community fairs
 - Invite children and youth into your agency and facilitate awareness regarding mobility and transportation options
 - Be present at community forums that families attend

Always Assess your Progress

- Outputs
 - # of employment inquires
 - # new hires
 - # of employees with disabilities who have advanced in their positions
 - Length of employment
- Outcomes
 - Employee satisfaction
 - Career paths
 - Employees in leadership roles
 - Human services knocking on your door



Tap into Free National Resources



[National Center for Mobility Management](#)



[National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#)



[Shared-use Mobility Center](#)



[Rural Transit Assistance Program](#)



[Transit Workforce Center](#)



[National Center for Applied Transit Technology](#)

National Workforce and Disability Resources

- US Department of Labor, [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#) (ODEP): Disability, Part of the Equity Equation
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)- free consultation on workplace accommodations
- [EARN: Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion](#)
- [National Technical Assistance Center on Transition-The Collaborative \(NTACT\)](#): Connect with High school youth transition professionals
- [Easterseals Workforce Development Services](#)





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CapMetro

Why Vets Should Be a Key Part of Your Workforce

Adam Rosenfeld

Transit Workforce Conference- 11.13.2024

Introduction

- Why hire a veteran?
- Military job equivalents
- Veteran Partnerships
- “There’s always money in the banana stand”
- Conclusion

Why Hire a Vet?

- Veterans are a natural fit for public transit careers
- Over 200,000 vets transition to civilian life every year
- Financial incentives and programs are available to hire/help vets transition to your organization



126 percent of transit workers have to be hired/trained in the next 10 years – what's your excuse to not hire vets? (*actual ITLC quote!!!!)



Why are veterans a great source for public transit employment?



Discipline



Understanding of 24/7 environments



Sense of Service



Easily Transferrable Skills



Deep, quality training



Security awareness



Understanding of federal regulations (think hazmat, OSHA)

Just some of the easily transferable job titles ...



88M (Mike)- Motor Transport Operator (Bus Driver)

88N (Nick) – Transportation Management Coordinator

91B (Bravo)- Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic



91C (Charlie) – Utilities Equipment Repairer

25U (Uniform) – Signals

79R (Romeo) – Recruiter

Anyone that operates vehicular type equipment works with the mechanics!!!



So where do you find these
veterans?

Transition Assistance Programs (TAP)



Work with *transitioning* servicemembers (one year to separation and two years to retirement) and recent alumni

Dedicated career coaches and transition specialists for servicemembers (usually former military)

Program designed for ALL servicemembers

Can build long-term brand-building relationships with transitioning servicemembers

Frequent opportunities to speak privately to servicemembers

On-base, so you have a captive audience

Regional Veteran's Organizations

- In Texas- We have the Texas Veteran's Commission
- Has a larger pool to work with than TAP – soldiers are already settled geographically (most of the time)
- Frequent job fairs- multiple opportunities to reach these vets
- Vets that work with them may have experience outside of military (and familiarity with your agency)



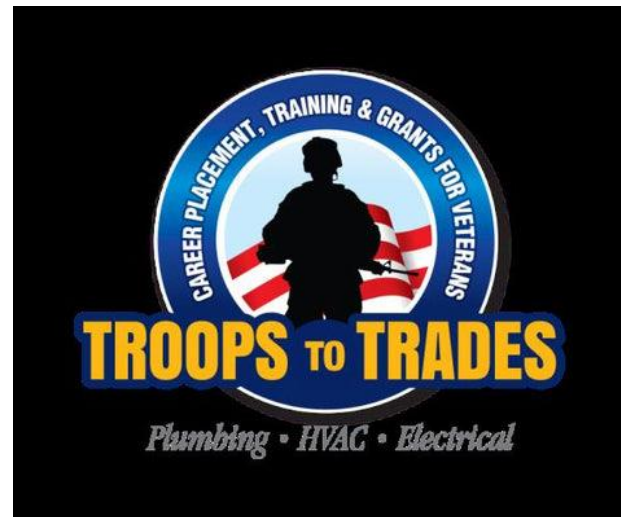
NATIONAL VETERANS
OUTREACH PROGRAM

Veterans Affairs Clinics (VA)

- Over 1,100 clinics/centers in the US
- Vets have Vocational Counselors to work with
- Veterans may be homeless/lack transport (great opportunity to partner with CBO's)
- Job readiness may be an issue



Try Before You Buy



Conclusion

- There are many reasons to hire veterans
 - Solid work ethic
 - Leadership skills
 - Understand commitment
- A transportation background is not necessary
 - Training provided
 - Career progression opportunities
 - Service to the community

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11.13.2024



Developing Responsible Individuals
with Valuable Education

DEVELOPING RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH VALUABLE EDUCATION (D.R.I.V.E.)

Through the innovative and effective use of MHC Emergency Solutions Grant Funds training is made available to homeless individuals to reduce homelessness and help alleviate the serious driver shortage that is facing transit agencies within the state.



DRIVE HISTORY

- In 2020, the **Mississippi Home Corporation (MHC)** and the **Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)** began a partnership to increase ridership on public transportation and enhance the employability of individuals who were homeless or at risk of being homeless across the state.
- To address this need, **MHC, MDOT** and other providers joined forces to identify, train and hire individuals for additional drivers of public transportation vehicles utilizing **Emergency Solution Grant (ESG)** funds could be used to cover the costs of employment training activities.
- In 2021, a strategy to assist homeless persons to become gainfully employed was developed and new partners from **Grace House** and **CDI** joined the effort to help identify candidates.
- From these efforts, the **Developing Responsible Individuals with Valuable Education (DRIVE)** Program was born.
- The program has since been expanded to include trades in the healthcare industry as well.

NEED FOR DRIVERS

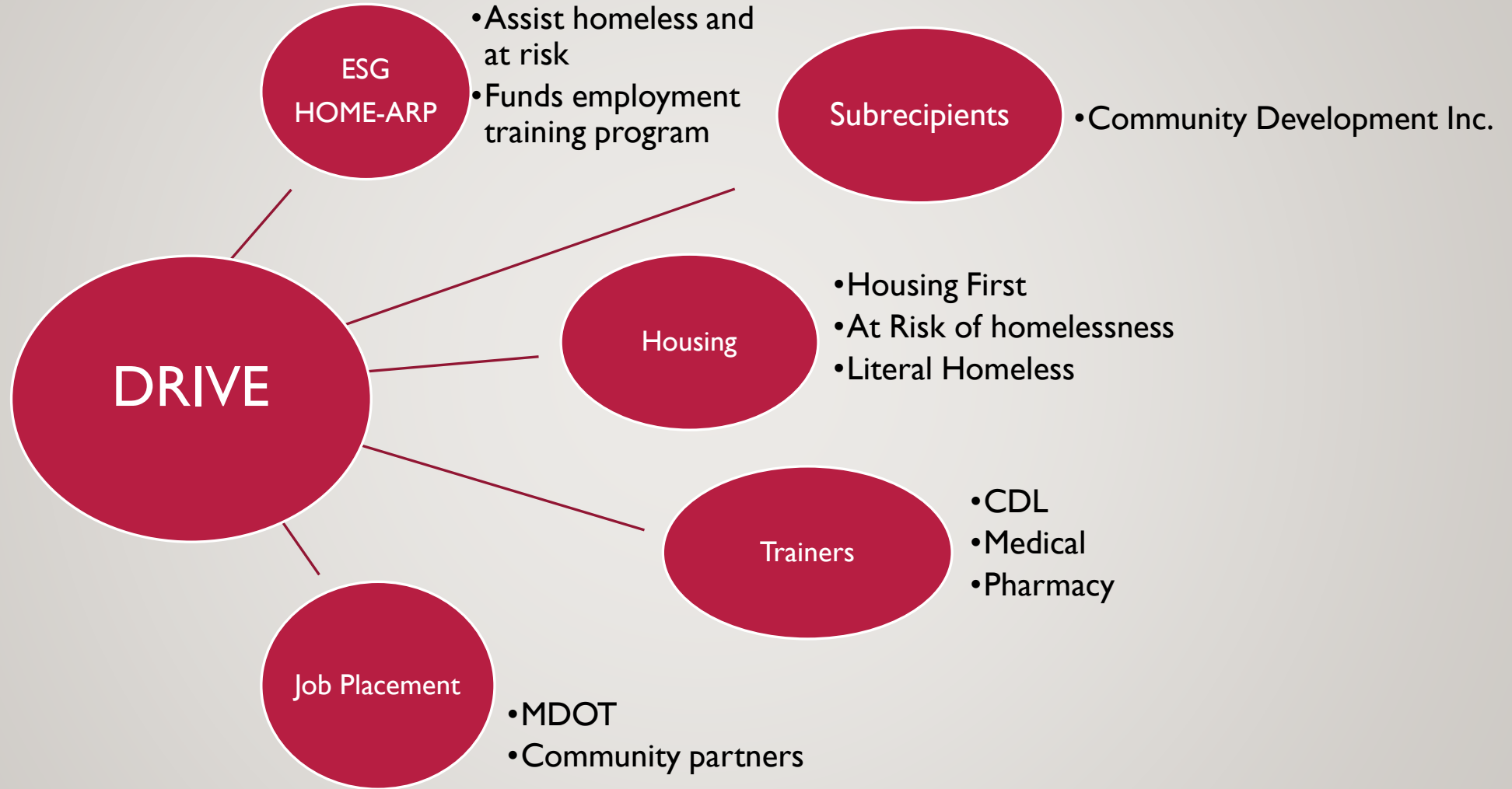
Transit drivers are the backbone of the transit industry, without them there are no services to the community. In recent years, transit agencies nationwide have been faced with a critical driver shortage. Some of the contributing factors are:

- COVID-19
- Competitive Wages
- Lack of CDL certification,
- Unable to pass background checks and drug and alcohol test.

DRIVE TEAM

- **Mississippi Home Corporation (MHC): Mississippi**
- **Department of Transportation**
- **Central Mississippi Continuum of Care (CoC)**
- **Community Development, Inc. (CDI):**
- **DEIA, Supportive Services**

DRIVE COMPONENTS



OUR STORY VIDEO

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/ZGETOQ
ZQSSS](https://youtu.be/zgetoqzqsss)



The DRIVE Program

2024



Oma Hibbler-CEO
Community Development Inc.
10/29/2024

PARTNERSHIP

- Community Development Inc. partnered with **the Mississippi Department of Transportation-Dr. Charles Husband and The Mississippi Home Corporation; Mrs. Tamara Stewart**, to implement the Drive Program for individuals and families who are Homeless identified within four qualify definitions.
- Other community partners are to-wit: Medical, and Health Care Professionals, Counselors, Social Workers, Landlords, Transportation Providers, Physical Therapy, Budgeting and Life Skill Professional, and Legal Services, City and County Officials etc.



IMPLEMENTING THE DRIVE PROGRAM FOR HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT



Community Development Inc. (CDI) Strategic Plan

OVERVIEW OF CDI'S STRATEGIC APPROACH

Implementing a strategic plan for a homelessness program like 'Drive' involves a multi-phase approach, focusing on community partnerships, housing support, resources for individuals experiencing homelessness, and a pathway to sustainable living. Here is an outline of key steps Community Development Inc. has taken.

1. Initial Assessment and Research

- Data Collection: Analyze data on local homelessness rates and primary needs.
- Stakeholder Mapping: Identify government agencies, nonprofits, shelters, and other community organizations.
- Benchmarking: Study successful programs in other regions to gather best practices.



2. Establish Partnerships and Funding

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborate with local businesses and service providers.
- **Funding Sources:** Seek federal/state grants, foundations, and corporate sponsorships.
- **Government Involvement:** Engage local government for zoning, subsidies, and resources.



3. Program Design and Implementation

- **Housing First Approach:** Stable housing as the foundation, with shelter and permanent options.
- **Health and Wellness Services:** Partner with healthcare for medical and mental health support.
- **Workforce Development:** Provide job training tailored to the needs of the homeless population.
- **Case Management:** Individualized support for connecting participants with essential services.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment

- • Metrics of Success: Track key performance indicators (e.g., housing rates, job placements).
- • Continuous Improvement: Regularly assess and adjust the program as needed.
- • Long-Term Sustainability: Plan for financial and operational longevity.



History of Community Development Inc.

- Community Development Inc. (CDI) is a non-profit organization with over 30 years of experience in providing programs and services across Perry County. As one of the largest employers in Perry County, CDI has a team of 213 employees and offers a variety of job opportunities to support sustainable living.



Training Programs and Certifications

- CDI, certified by the FTA, provides training for CDL Class B with passenger endorsement. Programs cover:
 - Basic and Advanced Operations
 - Passenger Safety
 - ADA Compliance
 - Emergency Procedures
 - Safety and Compliance Standards



LESSONS LEARNED IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT.

CHALLENGES

- Employment first
 - Homeless, housed, at risk
- Stipends without requirement
- Limited program choices
- Only day classes
- No programs that allow felons
- Picture ID - can be a barrier

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Housing first
- Transportation to classes
- Case management follow-up
 - Trainers and clients
- Pre-background screening
- Pairing other homeless programs
- Partnering with more agencies
- Hiring an Employment Specialist
- Praise!!!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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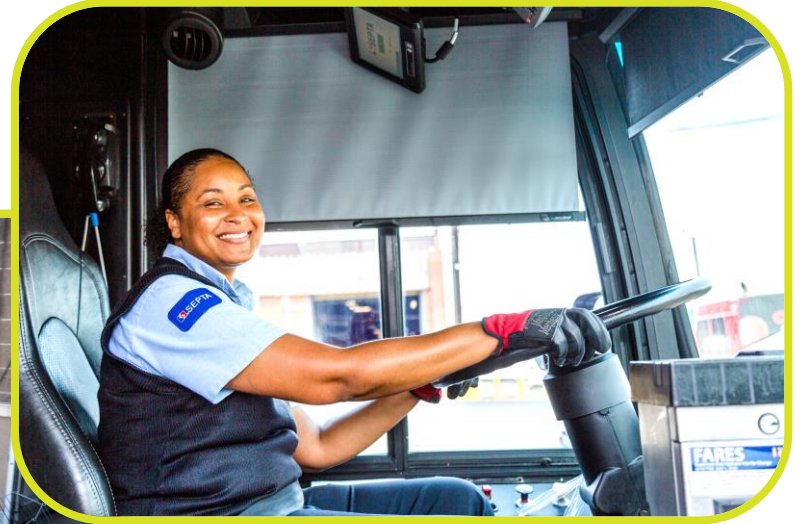
Dominique Bolton

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Other Populations to Consider

- Parents of young children
- Women
- Older adults
- Younger adults
- English language learners
- Who else have we missed?





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