

**MAKING CONNECTIONS, MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**Making  
Connections 2024**

• The National Transit Workforce Conference

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





# Successful Career Pathways in a Changing Industry

Foundational Skills for Transit Workers

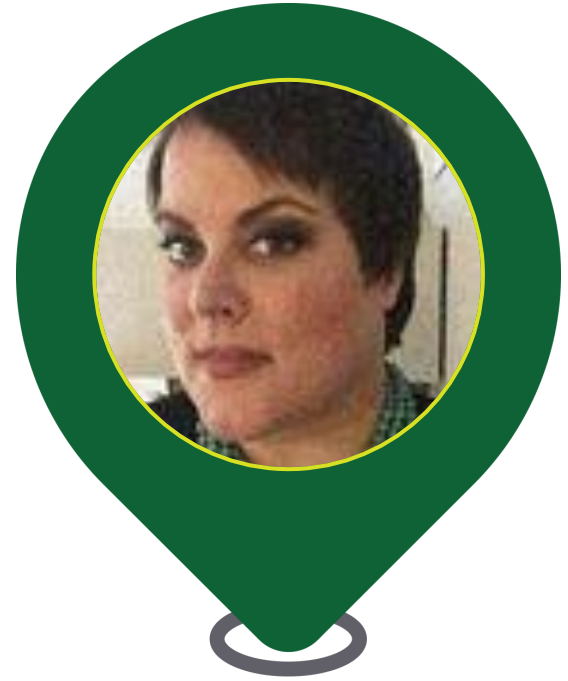
# Speakers Slide



**Kristen Ribaud**  
Senior Instructional Designer  
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*WMATA*



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# *Foundational Skills for Successful Career Pathways in a Changing Industry*

WMATA Technical Skills Program



# The Apprenticeship Model

## Recruitment

- The entry testing measures current skill level and potential to learn skills for the position.
- Uniquely designed interview questions enable the interviewer to gauge a candidate's critical thinking, commitment, safety and flexibility.
- Open ended questions also validate the truthfulness of candidate's resume.

## Related Learning (classroom)

- The sequential order of the related learning will use the Schedule of the Trade Process.
- Approximately 25% of the total training will be related to classroom / lab instruction.
- Courses will be easily identifiable using a numerical level designation, e.g. 100, 200, 300 level courses.

## On The Job Training (OJT)

- Maintenance Trainees will devote approximately 75% of their training to gaining field experience (OJT).
- A quantitative measuring system will measure an apprentice's performance over two years.
- The optimum mentee-mentor ratio is 1 to 1.
- Mentees can never work alone!

## Promotion

- Successful completion of all related instruction.
- Successful completion of the OJT Schedule for hours of training.
- Successfully passing the final written and practical exams.
- Bus Maintenance Trainees must possess an H Transit ASE to promote to C Mechanic.

# Overview of WMATA's approach to developing a Technical Skills Training Program



In 2018 – A similar workforce need was recognized for our Rail Car Maintenance Department. To fill a growing deficit in the workforce due to retirement – We used the framework from our Apprenticeship program to develop a 2-year Rail Car Maintenance Technical Skills Program.

# Rail Car Maintenance Program



The technical skills-based training program was developed to enhance career opportunity & develop individuals who possess basic maintenance related skills.



It helps train technicians that do not currently meet minimum educational or technical experience & associated requirements to qualify for entry-level positions (i.e., D-Level Helper Mechanics) in Bus & Rail Maintenance (Groups II, III & IV) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). *See Appendix E TSP Agreement, Agreement between Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, WMATA and Local Union 689.*

# Overview of WMATA's approach to developing an Apprenticeship



In early 2000, Metro established a multi-year in-house Apprenticeship Program to build their own internal team of journeyman that would maintain all of Metro's vertical transportation equipment.

The Apprenticeship Program is a joint agreement between Metro, Local 689 and District of Columbia Apprenticeship Council. This training and recruitment strategy has been very successful for Metro with the majority of the Elevator/Escalator journeyman positions being held by graduates from the program.



# Overview of WMATA's approach to developing an Apprenticeship



Applicants must meet one of the following minimum requirements for entry into the Apprenticeship Program:

- Enrollment and completion (or substantial completion) of a post-secondary technical training program appropriate for the elevator/escalator trade.
- Two years of high school vocational training appropriate for the elevator/ escalator trade.
- Employment history demonstrating prolonged interest and progression in a comparable classification.
- Any combination of employment history and/or training that demonstrates the individual's commitment/interest to progress in the trade.

# Elevator Escalator Apprenticeship



The normal length of time to complete ELES Apprenticeship program training is 208 weeks (4 years), off full-time enrollment. The program comprises 1544 hours of academic instruction and 6832 hours of ELES on-the-job training throughout ELES over 800 pieces of vertical equipment.



All courses are rated either 100 level courses - representing fundamental academic courses, 200 level courses – representing trade specific courses, and 300 level courses – representing advance training programs.

# Training Improvements and Key Lessons Learned

Presentation Title

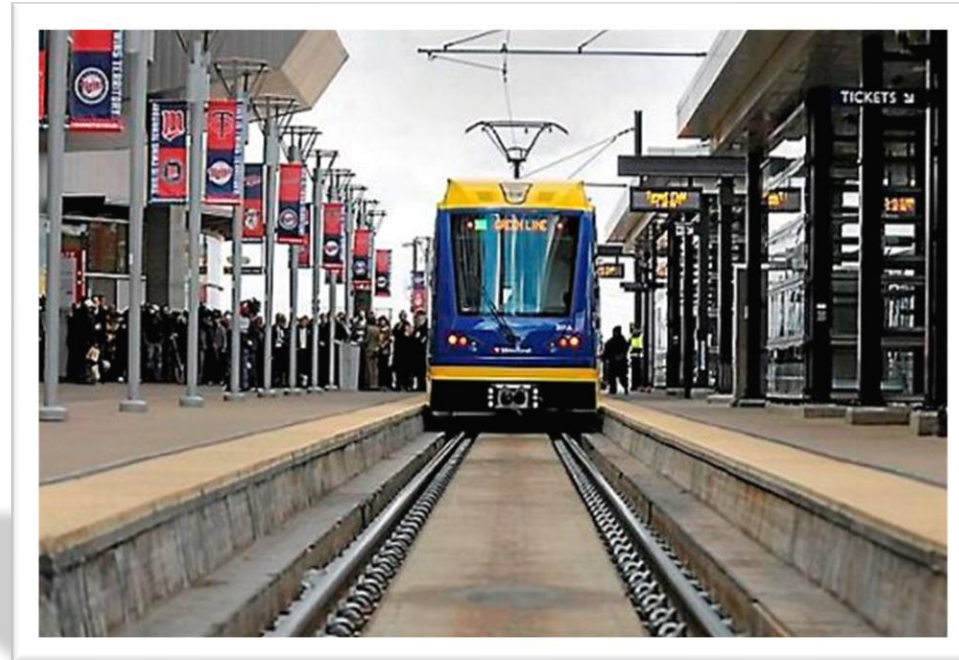


- Streamlined Wonderlic Math / Verbal entrance exam to the “WonScore” testing program.
- To aid in future planning, we conduct a large recruitment annually. This allows our team to replace graduating classes and always ensure a steady pipeline of trained Technicians.



## Light Rail Training: Foundational Skills and Professional Development

Ona Veda  
Manager – Rail Training and Development  
Metro Transit, Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN





# The Light Rail Training Crew



# Training Division Mission Statement and Staff

- To provide quality training to all divisions of Light Rail personnel, while creating and sustaining a learning culture, dedicated to safe outcomes, through engaged participation and vested curriculum.
- Rail Control Training Supervisors - 2
- Training Supervisor – Signals
- Training Supervisor – Track
- Training Supervisor – LRV Maintenance - 2
- 2 – Rail Instructor – Train Operator and Transportation Focus (Request one in 2024)
- Assistant Manager - 2024
- Currently there is no Training Supervisor assigned to Traction Power or COMM
- 6 Relief Instructors as of October 2024
  - Creating pool of 15 by 2026
- Organizational Chart

## Cross Training Completed

- All Training Supervisors and Instructors (RCC, LRV Maintenance and Systems, Transportation) are trained in LEARN Administration, to ensure accurate record keeping for their area of training and can assist each other with record course uploads, and record management
- All Training Supervisors are cross trained in Forklift Certification (Initial), All online training assignment and administration, CPR Administration, Contractor Safety Procedures, Articulate Development.
- All Staff completed Train the Trainer through the ITLC, 2023 and 2024



# General Communication and Training Project Requests

- All of Light Rail Managerial personnel are able to request training with a simple SharePoint form submittal.
- This ensures follow up, project updates, and finalization.
- The Training Department SharePoint site also shares training materials by department, handouts, LEARN Link as well as staff contact information, as well as the calendar for each department training.





## Standards of Training Development

- All training created to meet relevant **APTA Standards, OSHA, State Safety Oversight auditing, record retention policy (ECM collab)** and internal requirements based on Light Rail Standard Operating Procedures.
- **ADDIE Model**
- **Adult Learning Principles**
- **Creating a LEARNING CULTURE**



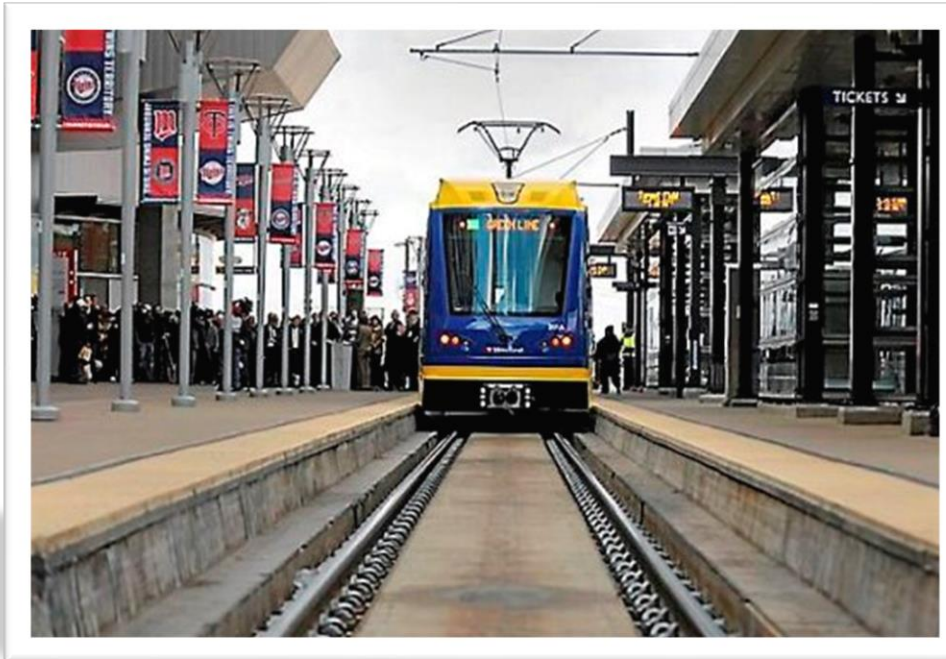
# Training Development

- **Staff:** Dedicated Training Supervisor and Rail Instructor
- **Training Creation Model:** ADDIE
- **Methodology:** Improved training program built through a combination of ILT Courses, Hands on and Kinesthetic Learning, with eLearning Courses and knowledge checks, resulting in better retention for adult learning, based on Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral types of learning. Learning style assessment given to all new hire students.



# New Employee Orientation

- Half Day Session
- HR Benefits Course
- “Welcome to Rail”
  - Showing integral interdependence of all areas of Light Rail



# Transportation

- Hiring from public pool
- Modified interview and hiring process
- Provided CDL and Fundamentals course
- Altered training program
- Relief Instructor Path





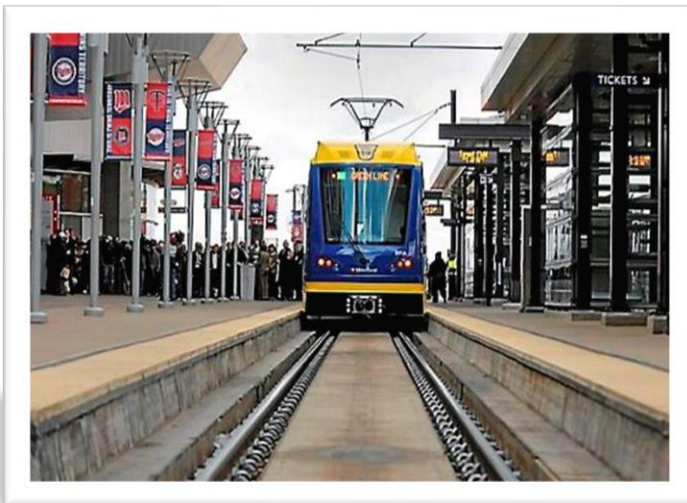
## Rail Control Center

- On the Job Training Program
  - 14 weeks
  - Standardized knowledge checks
  - Five tests
- RCC Mentor
- RCC Trainers



# Systems

- Track Laborer
  - Altered training program
  - Track Maintainer potential after two years
- Standardized On the Job Training program for Signals, COMM, Track and Traction Power
- Potential for Traction Power and Signals Apprenticeship Program



## LRV Maintenance

- Standardized On the Job Training Program
- Vendor Training
  - Welding
  - SIEMENS
- Apprenticeship Adoption Discussions
- MTTLRT



## Partnership with LOD

- On the Job Experience (OJE)
  - 6 month out of class experience
- Leadership Academy and Management Certificates
  - Offered every year



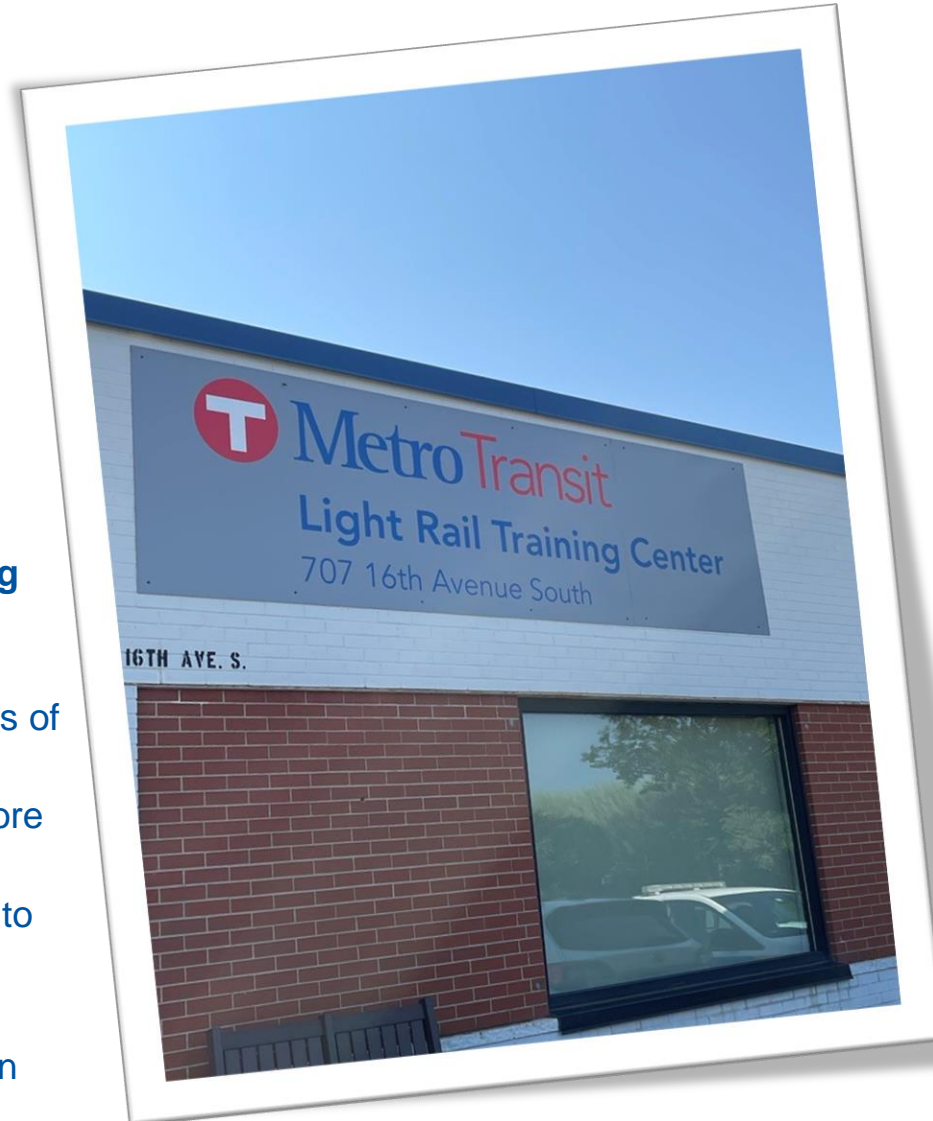


## Light Rail Training Center

- Phase 1 Construction Complete
- Opened in March of 2022
- Phase 2 Construction
  - Currently in Design Phase
  - Construction Complete in 2025

### Benefits to Light Rail Training Staff being centralized in one location:

- Improved communication between areas of training
- Cross Training completed faster and more efficiently
- Mentorship, training development done to increase quality of training
- Less down time
- Training mock-ups stored in one location



## On the Horizon – Aim High!

- **Light Rail Training Simulator**
  - Located at the LRTC
  - Reduce wear on LRV's
  - Reduce Training LRV's on Main Line
  - Prepare for SWLRT
  - Intended for all staff of Light Rail Staff to utilize



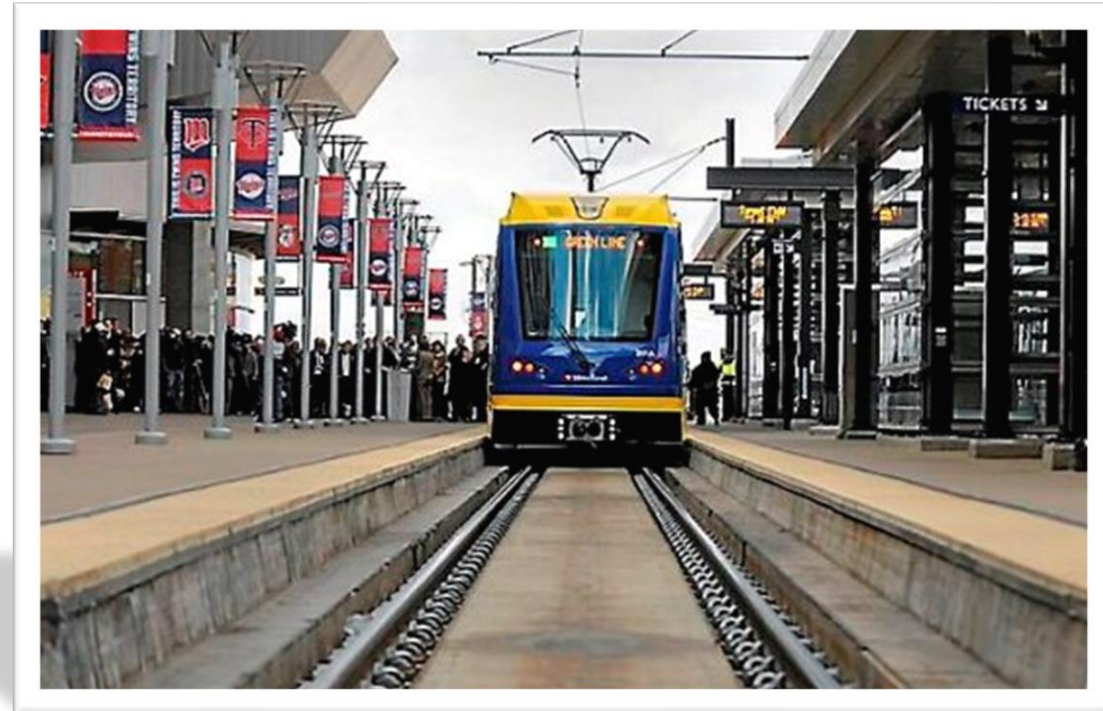
# Thank You!

**Metro Transit Light  
Rail –  
Training Department**

**MPLS / St. Paul**

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# TWC's Foundational Skills Program

Meet industry need and help to bridge the skills gaps agencies are seeing in core areas.

- Will be publicly available on TWC website
- Applicable for all occupations in transit
- Scalable depending on agency need

## **Courses to be included:**

1. Basic Mechanical Theories and Tools
2. Computer Basics
3. Electrical fundamentals
4. Shop Math





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