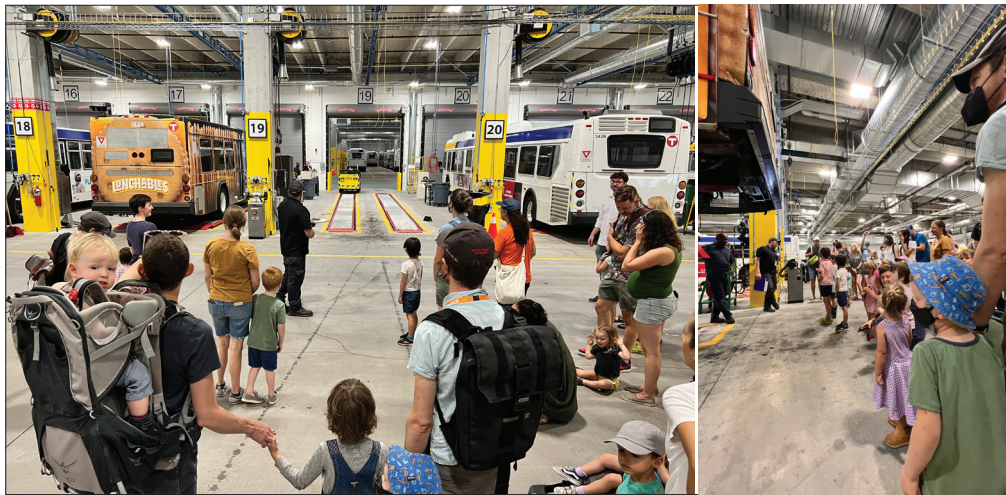


INSIGHTS

Metro Transit's weekly employee newsletter

June 30, 2023



Recently, parents and their toddlers visited the North Loop Garage as part of a group called "Bus Camp." This group meets regularly to ride on Metro Transit buses to destinations across the metro area together. Group member and principal data scientist for Metro Transit, **Joey Reid**, suggested they travel on transit to the North Loop Garage to see and learn more about where buses come from and how they're maintained. Thank you to Instructor **Michael Wright** and Service Garage Supervisor **William Fetterly** for providing the tour.

Al Daley retires with 32 years of service

When he was 18 years old, **Al Daley** didn't want to leave Jamaica and join his mother in Minnesota. "I was sure my mom made a mistake – I was going to leave Minnesota as soon as I could," Daley said. "Thank god that didn't happen."

After arriving he enrolled in college, but soon found out that it wasn't a good fit for him. So, he entered the job market and eventually became an IT field technician. However, this job was shorter lived than he'd hoped – 3 years after starting, the now young father was laid off.

"I was looking for anything that got a paycheck coming in," Daley said. "I drove taxi, school buses, sold cars, whatever it took."

That's when a friend suggested he apply to be a bus operator at Metro Transit. "I thought it was going to be a stop along the way. I hoped to return to IT," he said. "That didn't happen, and I wouldn't change a thing."

He credits the people and the pay for keeping him here all these years. The interactions with customers onboard reminded him that his role was important, especially on cold winter days.

"They appreciate and need you," Daley said. "They're good people just trying to get from Point A to Point B."

In retirement, he plans to spend more time with his son and his grandchildren, and when he can, return to Jamaica during the winter.



Spending time together builds strength, optimism

From Interim General Manager
Lesley Kandaras

Over the last week or so, I've had several opportunities to connect with staff and customers. This included:



- Visiting several light rail stations during our first-ever Great Day in Transit, a coordinated effort to get more staff out on the system;
- Observing two nights of exemplary late-night service at U.S. Bank Stadium;
- Visiting Ruter Garage for the final day of the Bus Rodeo,
- Marching alongside staff in last Sunday's Pride March, and;
- Listening to staff experiences and ideas during Coffee with Cops at South Garage.

Across all these experiences, I saw how much our employees care for each other, our customers, our community, and our mission.

Thank you to everyone who helped make each of these events a success. The enthusiasm that came through was truly uplifting!

That enthusiasm wasn't contained to our organization, either. Many riders and partners have recognized and applauded our recent efforts. (In fact, we heard literal applause Saturday night after the Taylor Swift concert as trains pulled into U.S. Bank Stadium Station).

And we have numerous opportunities to build on this momentum.

Upcoming large events like the Taste of Minnesota and the Minnesota State Fair offer more opportunities to continue connecting our riders to where they want to go and to introduce or re-introduce ourselves to people who've never used transit or haven't ridden in a while.

Last week's Great Day in Transit was such a success, we will do it again on Wednesday, July 19. More information on how to sign up is coming soon.

continued on next page

And activities organized through the Great Workplace Project, Coffee with Cops, and the Transit Kids' Day Advancing Women in Transit is hosting on August 12 give us chances to grow closer as an organization.

Beyond these events, continued outreach related to the Code of Conduct, transitway planning and construction, and operator hiring are bringing us closer to our riders and communities.

Starting the week of July 10, we will be visiting bus garages and support facilities to share information and answer employees' questions about the direction Metro Transit is heading. Below is more information on sessions scheduled thus far. We will be adding more dates and locations in the coming weeks.

Thank you to everyone who is filling our collective calendar.

The time we spend together with our riders and our community is so important as we strive to grow ridership and improve the customer experience, retain and attract workers, deepen our commitment to transit equity, and advance the vision set in our Strategic Plan.

So please, get involved and take advantage of these opportunities to create and build stronger connections inside and outside our organization.

As we've seen this last week, we can accomplish a lot when we come together – and we can have a lot of fun doing it.

Upcoming Employee Town Halls

Monday, July 10 from 2:00–3:00 p.m. at Heywood Garage

Thursday, July 13 from 2:00–3:00 p.m. at South Garage

Monday, July 31 from 8:00–9:00 a.m. at Nicollet Garage

Monday, July 31 from 2:00–3:00 p.m. at East Metro Garage

Federal Transit Administration grant to fund vehicles, equipment, and training

Metro Transit recently received a \$17 million FTA grant that will help purchase 12 40-foot electric buses and chargers for the North Loop Garage. The grant will also allow us to expand an apprentice program for technicians who will help maintain these vehicles.

“The technology behind zero-emission vehicles is rapidly improving with the promise of public benefits like cleaner air and lower greenhouse gas emissions,” Metropolitan Council Chair

CUSTOMERS TELL US HOW WE'RE DOING

People like her help keep communities safe!

South Garage Operator, **Carol Ratliff** recently received a commendation for her customer service.

I want to give this driver a big complement for being conscientious and thoughtful. She responded quickly, professionally, and firmly to a disorderly rider. I am extremely impressed by the driver's graceful handling of a tough situation and how she kept the bus a respectful place. People like her help keep communities safe!

-Pearl H

Charlie Zelle said. “That’s why this investment is critical to continuing Metro Transit’s industry-leading work to transition our fleet. Receiving this funding is a testament to our federal, state, and local partners who support the goal of a zero-emission fleet – and a cleaner more sustainable future.”

Learn more about our Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan at metrotransit.org/electric-buses.

2023 Roadeo winners

The results are in for Metro Transit’s annual safety and skills competition, the Metro Transit Bus Roadeo. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to everyone who competed this year!

1st Place: **Jean O’Neill**
2nd Place: **Kenneth Schmoll**
3rd Place: **Jonathan Dumenya**
Rookie of the Year: **Samson Desu**

Garage Champions

Heywood: **Jean O’Neill**
East Metro: **Kenneth Schmoll**
Nicollet: **Patrick Schulte**
South: **Floyd Seres**
North Loop: **Bradley Schnieder**

Briefly: This week’s news and notes

Due July 1: Employee Forum trainings for bus operators: All bus operators are required to complete three online trainings on racial equity by Saturday, July 1. For training details and links to the modules, visit the training landing page at metcouncil.mn/EFmodules.

4th of July service reminders: Metropolitan Council offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 in honor of Independence Day. Transit service will operate on a holiday schedule. For more information on holiday schedules, speak to your manager or visit metrotransit.org/holiday-fares.

Attend the next Coffee with Cops: Grab a coffee with MTPD officers Wednesday, July 5 at either Central or Nicollet light rail stations from 7:30–9:30 a.m. Join police for conversations on staffing, safety and security, and more. Email **Carol LaFleur** at carol.lafleur@transitpd.org for [more information](#).



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