

Behind the Scenes



Executive Director's Report

While Hurricane Hilary had Access on high alert, the resulting tropical storm didn't have a big impact on service.

The Access Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was staffed with a duty officer who monitored weather reports, traffic updates, and kept track of the voluntary evacuation of Catalina Island in case Access was called on to assist. As the storm approached, staff made efforts to inform riders of the coming weather, and possible service delays, through Where's My Ride app alerts, an Everbridge mass notification message, an email blast, and a temporary website banner.

On Sunday, August 20th, trip volume decreased by 58% compared to the previous Sunday. And on Monday, August 21st, trip volume decreased by 41% compared to the previous Monday. And while many fewer rides occurred during the storm, our contractors were ready to handle the challenge posed by the several inches of rain that fell in Los Angeles.

A big thanks to Chief Operations Officer Mike Greenwood and his team, particularly Emergency Management Coordinator Alex Chrisman, who staffed the EOC during the storm. While no one expected a hurricane in Southern California, the Access EOC was prepared.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Access attends Rancho Event Honoring Carlos Benavides

Access staff recently attended an event where Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn renamed the Rancho Los Amigos Amphitheater in honor of Carlos Benavides, Access' 2022 Spirit of Accessibility Award recipient. Supervisor Hahn recognized Carlos' tireless efforts advocating for disability rights and promoting inclusivity in various aspects of Los Angeles County.

It has been a privilege working with Carlos on a number of Access issues. I jokingly tell him that he is the "James Brown of his field" because, to me, he is the "Hardest Working Man in Advocacy." He has invested countless hours volunteering for organizations that support disabled individuals, advocating for accessible infrastructure, and engaging in public speaking engagements to educate others about disabilities. His passion and unwavering commitment to this cause have earned him the respect and admiration of many, including myself.



Carlos is an accomplished musician, artist, advocate, and, most importantly, a friend to many. It is important to highlight the accomplishments of individuals like Carlos, as he serves as a role model for everyone. It is truly heartening to see his efforts being acknowledged, and I am confident that he will continue to make a positive impact in many people's lives. Congratulations, Carlos, on this well-deserved recognition!

Rogelio Gomez
Manager of Operations

Access conducts Business Development Training for small and diverse businesses

Access Services recently joined forces with GCAP Services, Inc. (GCAP) to conduct a workshop to provide small and diverse businesses with effective business development strategies to increase their success within the market.

GCAP is a DBE, Hispanic-owned, small business providing professional consulting services that recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary. GCAP supports the public sector, including highway, transit, and energy projects by delivering practical, sustainable solutions for business challenges. GCAP offers a range of services including, but not limited to, diverse business programs, contract and labor compliance, process improvement, disparity studies, and diversity, equity, and inclusion consulting.



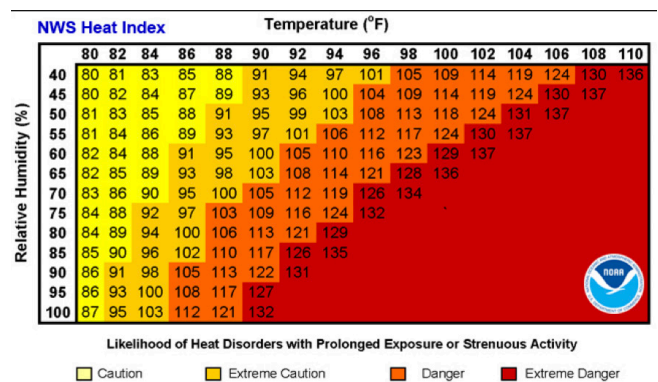
Ed Salcedo, President of GCAP, conducted the training session to provide insights on business development strategies, such as marketing and networking, for small business owners looking to expand their marketplace knowledge. Susan Mathews, Director of Compliance and Paula Hernandez, Compliance Analyst with GCAP, also supported the event and were critical parts of the workshop.

We found this training essential to assist small businesses with gaining knowledge on how to not only become successful in the marketplace, but how to maintain their success as well. GCAP reached out to certified disadvantaged business enterprises using the California Unified Certification Program Certification Portal and invited the business owners to participate in the training session. During the training, Mr. Salcedo provided attendees with the opportunity to hear the opinions from several prime contractors on what it takes to be a successful business collaborator when working with them and other contractors. The training session successfully provided the attendees with the information needed to continue their success in the marketplace and we received great feedback from attendees.

Onnika Payne
Transportation Planner

Access staff attends Heat Illness Prevention Training

Skyrocketing temperatures this summer put more than 90 million people under heat alerts. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, extreme summer heat is associated with increases in heat related illnesses, including cardiovascular and respiratory complications. Heat illness is a serious medical condition that results when the body is unable to cool itself. It can result in heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat stroke, which can be deadly. Everyone is susceptible to heat illness, however, through education and awareness, it can be prevented.



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To prepare for anticipated heat events in Los Angeles, Access Services facilitated Heat Illness Prevention Program Training (HIPP) for staff. The purpose of the Access HIPP is to prevent heat related illness from occurring through education and proper work practices. It teaches individuals how to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat illness and how to respond should one occur. Staff learned about variables that affect body temperature and how to provide first aid to people experiencing heat-related illnesses. In the event of an emergency, this information could help save a life.

The best way to prevent heat illnesses is to stay cool, stay hydrated and stay informed. The CDC provides guidance for protecting against heat illnesses, more details and resources can be found [here](#).

Melissa Lucero
HR Assistant/Specialist

Commendations

"I am filing a Smile for my driver. His car was so clean it looked like a brand-new car. I appreciate his cleanliness."

Adrineh Grigorian
Rider since May 2018

"I would like to commend my driver for her professionalism. I was so embarrassed that I accidentally stepped into some dog feces before the driver arrived. She made me feel comfortable and helped me remain calm. She even made it a point to walk me to the door to ensure I didn't step in anything else."

Nicole Matheny
Rider since April 1995