



Spring 2009

# Newsletter

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Dear Patrick,

On behalf of the Center for Transportation Excellence (CTE), it is my pleasure to present the first edition of the CTE Newsletter. Our goal for establishing this newsletter is to better inform you about our programs and upcoming initiatives, so that you will have a greater understanding of what is happening in Western New York to better coordinate community transportation.

Monthly features to come will include spotlights on CTE employees, advisory board member agencies and other community partners collaborating with CTE to improve transportation service and standards in our community. We will also strive to bring you news and best practices from other parts of the state and around the country.

Since our company's beginning in late 2005, CTE has met with numerous organizations and agencies. However, we fully recognize the need to continually reach out to new stakeholders in the community. We hope our quarterly newsletter will serve as one tool to help accomplish this task and welcome your input to enhance CTE programs and services in the future.

Sincerely,  
Kelly M. Dixon  
Director of Development & Community Outreach

## In this issue

### CTE Launches Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation Program

#### Mobility Management Takes Shape in Erie County

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County [read more...](#)

## Collaboration Corner

### CTE Partners with Erie County to increase mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities

In an effort to increase the transportation options for seniors and disabled individuals in Erie County, the Department of Senior Services as lead agency in partnership with Erie County Office of the Disabled, Rural Transit Service, Inc. and CTE applied for and was awarded a 2008 New Freedom Grant to offer curb-to-curb service. [read more...](#)

## CTE Awarded NYSERDA Grant

### NYSERDA Grant will implement GPS technology in provider network

CTE was recently awarded a \$250,000 grant from the New York State Energy Research Development Authority. This grant will allow for the implementation of mobile data terminals (MDTs) within CTE's transportation provider network. [read more...](#)

## Employee Spotlight

### Raymond Jones

Raymond has been with CTE for less than one year, however, he was recently promoted to Lead Call Agent after demonstrating all of the qualities of a great customer service representative and leader. [read more...](#)



## CTE Launches Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation Program

### Mobility Management Takes Shape in Erie County



On August 1, 2008, the Center for Transportation Excellence began managing Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) for Erie County Department of Social Services. Under the new program, all trip reservations are made through the CTE Call Center at 838-9000. CTE contracts with 11 transportation vendors in Western New York to carry taxi, wheelchair, and straight stretcher transport requests. During the first six months of operation, CTE has coordinated 179,839

trips for the program.

As with many new ventures, the first few weeks of program implementation presented us with a share of challenges. In response to the unprecedented call volumes, CTE tripled the number of telephone lines and doubled the number of call center staff dedicated to the NEMT program. CTE wishes to thank individual riders, agencies and providers for their patience during this time.

In September of 2008, CTE commissioned SigniCor to evaluate the first several months of the NEMT program operations. The Erie County Mobility Manger Services: Year End Report looked at the impacts and benefits this program had on NEMT in Erie County. The report demonstrates that CTE's Mobility Management Model has improved service and efficiencies for consumers and Erie County.

Some of the economic benefits include over 30 new jobs in an economically depressed area of Buffalo, with an estimated value of over \$1.8 million. CTE has also used its state-of-the-art mobility management software to incorporate new Medicaid regulations and begin tracking performance standards for the first time. If you are interested in a copy of the Year End Report, please contact Kelly Dixon at 898-7902 or via email at [kdixon@cteny.com](mailto:kdixon@cteny.com).

#### **NEMT Program FAQs**

1.) Who determines transportation eligibility for the program?

*Eligibility for NEMT is currently determined by the Erie County Department of Social Services and the Medicaid Utilization Review Office.*

2.) Is there a web portal available to make trip reservations online?

*Currently transportation must be scheduled by phone, but CTE intends to add an online reservation option soon.*

3.) How far in advance do I need to schedule a NEMT trip?

*With the exception of hospital discharges, NEMT trips must be scheduled with at least 48 hours notice.*

If you have additional questions on the NEMT program, please call 716-838-9000.

## **CUBRC & CTE Receive Transportation Grant**

**The John R. Oishei Foundation Grant will fund joint transportation planning and technology initiatives**

The John R. Oishei Foundation awarded a grant to [CUBRC](#) and CTE to research and create a plan to better integrate health and human services transportation with other key users of transportation in Erie County and work towards the development of a more comprehensive transportation system that serves a multitude of users. The grant also allows for the purchase of a driver training simulator for use by private and non-profit transporters and agencies, the development of a web portal which can be utilized by community organizations for coordination of route generation and service delivery, and the creation of a national best practice driver training curriculum.

As part of the coordinated health and human services transportation planning process, CTE held a United We Ride Community Transportation workshop. [United We Ride](#) is an initiative headed by the Federal Transit

Administration that assists communities in coordination efforts. Agencies in attendance included Buffalo Urban League, Erie County Division of Youth Services, City of Buffalo Department of Senior Services, Buffalo Place, Baker Victory Services, Jewish Family Service and others.

At the workshop, participants utilized United We Rides' assessment tool for communities to evaluate strengths and weaknesses related to coordinating transportation in Erie County. The top priority identified by the group was the need for an updated inventory of vehicles and services. It was felt that knowing where potential resource are will lay the ground work for further coordination in the future.

The Coordinated Transportation Plan was completed in February and presented to CTE's advisory board. The plan includes state case studies, best practices and economic benefits of transportation investments. Research indicated that WNY faces many of the same transportation issues affecting communities across the country. While the plan looks to other regions for best practices, many of the recommendations were derived from the community participation at the United We Ride Workshop and several focus groups with clients of CTE's advisory board members.

CTE would like to thank the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County for providing the meeting space to make this event possible, all the participants of this workshop and all the agencies that helped to arrange focus groups with their clients.

If you have questions about the grant or would like to receive a copy of the Coordinated Transportation Plan, please contact Carl Sadowski, CTE Research Coordinator by phone at 898-7904 or via email at [csadowski@cteny.com](mailto:csadowski@cteny.com).

## Collaboration Corner

**CTE Partners with Erie County to increase mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities**



In an effort to increase the transportation options for seniors and disabled individuals in Erie County, the Department of Senior Services as lead agency in partnership with Erie County Office of the Disabled, Rural Transit Service, Inc. and CTE applied for and was awarded a 2008 New Freedom Grant to offer curb-to-curb service.

The county recognized the unmet need for transportation services for the growing senior population and persons with disabilities. The grant will build off the successful pilot program between Senior Services and CTE that provides transportation services for the target populations. With an anticipated mid-2009 start date, CTE will provide mobility management services for this project, arranging transportation for approximately 500 individuals and over 1,800 trips over the year of this grant. Trips for medical care will take priority, but service will be available for trips to nutrition sites, personal business and social activities.

## CTE Awarded NYSERDA Grant

### **NYSERDA Grant will implement GPS technology in provider network**

CTE was recently awarded a \$250,000 grant from the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA). This grant will allow for the implementation of mobile data terminals (MDTs) within CTE's transportation provider network. These MDTs will use GPS to track vehicle location, speed and other vehicle conditions. A combination of handheld and fixed MTD units will be used in vehicles. Following an initial testing phase, the grant will allow installation of MDTs in 100 vehicles.

Through this grant, CTE hopes to reduce vehicle emissions and increase driver safety by identifying and addressing concerns such as excessive idling and speeding. In addition, this technology will help transportation providers to reduce fuel consumption and excessive vehicle wear-and-tear. The Buffalo Public Schools have already realized increased efficiencies since implementing GPS in their buses, and CTE hopes to achieve similar results.

### **Employee Spotlight**

#### **Raymond Jones**



Raymond Jones has been with CTE for less than one year; however, he was recently promoted to Lead Call Agent after demonstrating all of the qualities of a great customer service representative and leader.

Ray enjoys sports and spending time with his daughter. He has helped coach youth basketball with the Urban Christian Ministries for 10 years. In addition, he is hoping to start coaching with the Buffalo Ravens youth football program.

Ray is always looking to improve the quality of customer service. Ray focuses much of his efforts to ensure call center procedures run smoothly. Ray takes the time to better understand the reasoning behind the many regulations and requirements. Ray feels that callers are often concerned because they don't understand the trip scheduling process. By explaining how the process works, callers feel better and have greater appreciation for the call center staff. Ray also enjoys his job because each day is never the same, and he is always learning something new.