



# NEWS

Nov. 20, 1996

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## **BUS BOOT CAMP**

Training for MTA bus operators is not all that different from boot camp. The sessions are tough. The day starts at 6:30 a.m., and arriving late can be grounds for immediate dismissal. Recruits have to undergo three weeks of intensive classroom work, plus four weeks of on-the-job training before they ever officially get behind the wheel. They learn some defensive driving tactics on the dry Los Angeles River bed. They get a dose of sensitivity training, sitting in a wheelchair, waiting for others to help them board a bus. They act out real life dramas to learn how to respond to threatening situations that might develop on the bus. Oh yes, and there is a 180 question written exam and a driver's test.

## **MINORITY STUDENTS RIDE METRO BLUE LINE TO SUCCESS**

Grand Avenue Station is the most popular destination on the Metro Blue Line. The station is just yards away from Los Angeles Technical College, a 71 year old community college that has helped generations of South Central and East Los Angeles residents graduate to prosperous careers. Many of the students struggle financially to put themselves through school. The Metro Blue Line has made it just a little easier. Says Mary De Leon, a recent graduate from Lynwood, "Even if I owned a car, I wouldn't drive to school."

## **MTA PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS OFFER HELP DOOR TO DOOR**

MTA's public affairs officers are out there, with the public, on a day to day basis. Their job is to meet the store keepers and the residents who reside near subway construction sites, to hear their complaints, and try to anticipate their problems. They work on ways to eliminate excess noise, or dust, or set up new signs and traffic patterns so customers will not get lost. They go door to door, listening. Sometimes it's a 24-hour job. Michael Turner covers the Hollywood/Vine and Hollywood/Western stations of the Metro Red Line, as well as the Hollywood tunnels. "Everyone has my pager," Turner says. He gets calls every day, sometimes every night.

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