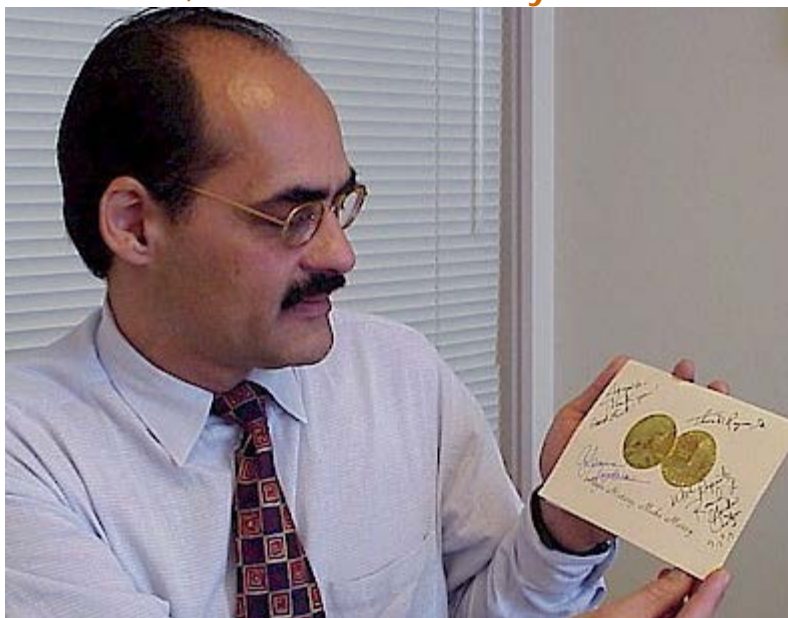


## MTA Revenue Director Diaz Helps Strike New U.S. \$1 Coin in Ceremony at Mint



Revenue Director Agapito Diaz with his invitation to attend a ceremony at the U.S. Mint introducing the new U.S. dollar coin.

(November 22) The U.S. Mint will introduce a gold-colored \$1 coin into general circulation next March. One of those chosen to "strike" the first of the new coins in a ceremony at the Philadelphia mint, Nov. 18, was the MTA's director of Revenue, Agapito Diaz.



Diaz's invitation includes signatures of Glenna Goodacre, whose likeness of Sacagawea is on one side of the new coin, and Tom Rogers, whose sculpture of an eagle is on the reverse.

Diaz, who serves as vice-

chairman of APTA's fare collection committee, has worked with the Mint and the U.S. Treasury Department on the design of the new coin and also on the designs for the new \$5 and \$10 bills, expected to be issued in late 2000.

The production of the dollar coin was marked by an elaborate ceremony attended by U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow and Philip N. Diehl, director of the Mint. Withrow introduced the new coin, whose obverse side features a likeness of Sacagawea, the 15-year-old Shoshone interpreter who, with her husband and child, accompanied the Lewis and Clark expedition in the early 1800s.

When his turn came during the event, Diaz pressed a button on a stamping machine to strike a new coin. Using tweezers, a technician handed it to him so he would be the first to touch it. After a quick

photo, the coin was placed in an envelope. It will be sent to Diaz in January, when the coins become legal tender.

As a result of input from the transit industry and others, the new \$1 coin will be accepted by coin-operated machines in use today. The coins, which contain no gold, are made from an alloy of manganese, brass and copper and have an electronic signature that will be recognized by MTA fareboxes and ticket vending machines.

"We had budgeted hundreds of thousands of dollars to retrofit MTA equipment to accept the new dollar coin," says Diaz. "Now, that's an investment we don't have to make."

To ensure the success of the coin, the Mint will launch a \$40 million advertising program that will include a promotion involving 10 million boxes of Cheerios. A Sacagawea coin will be placed in every 2,000th box and a certificate for 100 of the coins will be placed in every 4,400th box.

Mint officials estimate that demand for Sacagawea coins will total \$100 million in the first year. The Mint produced \$847.5 million Susan B. Anthony dollars in 1979 and 1980, when production was halted, but the coin was not well received by the public.

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