



Graduates of MTA's 23rd Mechanic "C" training class are: (seated) Eva Torres and Glenn Buakong; (standing, left) Clyde Brawley, Tam Quach, Terry Owens, Eugene Wilder and Charlton Plunkett; (rear) Darryl Cheaves and David Uribe, and, far right, Instructor Gene Amaya. Not shown: Graduates Patricia Thomas and Leonard Skinner.

38 Hard Weeks of Training Pays Off for MTA's 11 Newest Mechanics

(April 4) After 38 long, hard weeks of instruction, testing and on-the-job training, 11 employees enrolled in the MTA's rigorous Mechanic "C" training program received graduation certificates during ceremonies, Monday, at the Regional Rebuild Center.

It was the 23rd class to complete a program that began in 1976 and one that represents a career change for the graduates, Tony Chavira, division maintenance superintendent, said during opening remarks.

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Mechanics David Uribe, above left, and Terry Owens, below, received a certificate from Saul Reece and Charles McMillan, right, of the Office of Central Instruction.

Classes on their own time

The new mechanics, who attended 22 weeks of four-hour, twice-weekly classes on their own time, have only begun to learn their new trade, Chavira said. "When you get out to your divisions, you're going to learn every day – it doesn't end."

Classes included safety procedures, shop math, laws and regulations, bus systems operation and basic electrical. Students were tested weekly and were required to maintain at least a 70 percent average.

During the OJT phase of training, students learned about brakes, air conditioning, wheelchair lift operation



and how to make running repairs. This was followed by two weeks of motor vehicle laws and regulations and driving skills with buses and tow trucks.

Among most important employees

"The mechanics, service attendants and bus and rail operators are among the most important employees in the MTA," said Transit Operations Chief Tom Conner, whose father was a mechanic, "because they provide service directly to our customers."



Neil Silver, president, Local 1277, ATU, congratulated the class.

Neil Silver, president, Local 1277, Amalgamated Transit Union, which represents the MTA's maintenance employees, described the mechanics training as "an excellent program we're all proud of."

"It's your opportunity to get in the door -- to pick up a trade," he told the graduates. "A trade is something that can't be taken away from you. You have a great profession and a great future ahead of you."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)