

Metro Bus Operator Flags Down Cops Who Arrest 3 in Robbery of Patron

(Nov. 9) Loc Tran of Los Angeles was waiting for a bus on Broadway late Monday night when two men grabbed him from behind, pulled his hood over his eyes and demanded money. They allegedly snatched his wallet and ran off.

Tran recovered his wits and chased the pair, but they rounded a corner, headed east and disappeared in an alley near 4th and Spring streets.

Just as the incident occurred, Metro Bus Operator Jose Hill-Soto, a nine-year veteran assigned to Division 7, was driving his Line 2 route northbound on Broadway.

"I saw a man being attacked by two others," said Hill-Soto, who once worked in private security. "I also saw a police car behind me, so I stopped my bus and flagged them down."

Found van parked in alley

Alerted by Hill-Soto, LAPD officers James Ferrell and Enrique Ceja spotted two men running up Broadway with a third man in hot pursuit. They lost sight of the two, but within moments found a maroon van parked in an alley. Three men were inside.

A search of the vehicle turned up Tran's wallet.

The Transit Bus Patrol officers arrested Michael Alonso and Fabian Fernandez, both 19, and Angel F. Martinez, 18, all of Los Angeles, and charged them with robbery. Alonso was held on \$50,000 bail, while Fernandez and Martinez were held on \$35,000 bail each.

"People are being victimized," said Hill-Soto, who helped identify two of the suspects. "I'd want someone to help me if the shoe were on the other foot."

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