

MTA Bus and Rail Operators, Top Mechanics to be honored for Excellent Work Performance



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- **The MTA will recognize the efforts of 67 of its top Transit Operations division employees at an awards banquet on Saturday. Thirteen receive "Extra Mile" awards for acts of courage, selflessness and extraordinary service.**

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Jan. 23, 2001) The top one percent of MTA's 6,500-strong Transit Operations force will be honored as the "Best of the Best – MTA's Brightest Stars" at a banquet, Saturday, co-sponsored by Transit Operations, Risk Management and the Office of System Safety and Security.

Among the presenters will be MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe.

"Best of the Best" awards, presented for the third year in row, will be given to 41 Metro Bus operators, two Metro Rail Green Line train operators, and nine top mechanics. The 52 honorees compiled exemplary safety and attendance records and provided excellent customer service possible over a five-year span beginning in 1996.

"Our operators and mechanics are this region's unsung heroes. Through a maze of traffic, tough streets that get even more dangerous in the rain, whatever conditions present themselves all hours of the day and night, they get our passengers to their destination safely. And these individuals deliver that service without an accident or a single complaint from the public we serve," said Board Chairman Fasana. "On behalf of the Board of Directors, I commend each of these outstanding employees for an extraordinary achievement of integrity, courage and dedication to public service."

The 41 bus and 2 rail operators who will

Going the 'Extra Mile'

Thirteen Transit Operations employees will receive "Extra Mile" awards for their acts of courage, selflessness and extraordinary service. They are Division 5 supervisors Laureen Lemon and Michael Walton, Division 7 supervisor Alice Gates, Metro Bus operators Mimi Pereira, Louvenia Harris, and Dhamika Kahanda, Division 9 supervisor Clyde Berry, Bus Operations Control analyst Monique Ramos, BOC supervisor Steve Rank, mechanic Francisco Guzman and Bus Roadeo champion Mark Holland and the Southern California Regional Bus Roadeo winning maintenance team from Division 10, David Klinkenborg, Alan Wong and Doug Creveling.

Among those who received the 'Extra Mile' award, Operator Mimi Pereira was commended by the Burbank Chamber of Commerce for outstanding service to the community involving disabled passengers.

The Chamber recognized Pereira, of Sunland Division 15, by presenting a surprise award to her at a bus stop in downtown Burbank last November. Pereira, who joined the MTA in 1984, was honored for assisting a developmentally disabled passenger on two separate occasions.

Also honored are pedal-to-the-medal winners and champions of the Southern California Regional Bus Roadeo. Alan Wong, Doug Creveling and David Klinkenborg, the team of mechanics from Metro Division 10, were crowned the Roadeo's Champion Maintenance Team during regional competition Sept. 8 in Hemet, Calif.

Another Bus Roadeo champion, Division 9's top gun operator Mark Holland, will also take home the "Extra Mile" award. While competing for honors at the APTA

receive the award were selected from among 4,464 MTA operators. There are 1,944 mechanics.

Thirteen of the bus operators earned the "Best of the Best" distinction for the third year; and 20 topped the charts for the second year in a row. It also is the second appearance at the awards banquet for five of the nine mechanics.

International Bus Rodeo, Sept. 29, in Philadelphia, Holland drove to third place in a demanding contest that pitted him against 71 of North America's top professional bus operators. It was the highest placement, yet, for any MTA bus operator competing in the annual international competition.

"The awards are evidence that the MTA is on its way to becoming a world-class transportation agency," said Deputy CEO John Catoe. "And we will get there by being committed to excellence and providing good service just like the 'Best of the Best' we honor here."

To qualify as "Best of the Best," operators must have recorded no customer complaints, no lost-time injuries, no traffic accidents and no long-term leaves for the past five years. Mechanics must have had perfect attendance, no lost-time injuries and no disciplinary actions for the past five years.

Each honoree will receive a commemorative plaque. Newcomers will receive either an operator jacket or a bomber jacket with "Best of the Best" logo. Those who will receive the honor for a second year will receive a gold Seiko railroad-approved watch engraved with the program logo. Third-time honorees, who have already earned their jacket and watch, take home an AmEx certificate worth \$250.



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