

Dana Coffey Targets Teamwork as Theme for Sector Management

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(May 16, 2002) In recent years, Dana Coffey has become a football fan. Not for the thrills of the bone-crunching action, but for the precise timing of the teamwork.

"I became interested in football," says the newly named service sector general manager, "after listening to a coach talk to his players talk about teambuilding and how they had to work together. Each player had a specific role, but unless each executed his responsibility, the team couldn't win the game."



Dana Coffey

Teamwork is one of the primary themes Coffey, a 26-year MTA veteran, plans to emphasize as general manager. Focusing on customer service and safety and increasing employee productivity, while constantly improving service quality and increasing ridership, are her goals.

Although her sector assignment hasn't yet been announced, Coffey looks forward to the change and plans to set a positive agenda. Working with employees, she plans to present creative ideas to enhance her assigned sector's image.

To promote and sustain development of teamwork among sector employees, Coffey sees her role as providing positive leadership and support. She intends to be constantly visible and accessible to sector employees and the general public.

'Best of the best'

"We want to help our employees achieve the highest levels of performance by assisting them in obtaining the information and resources they need," she says. "Plain and simple – nothing short of the best of the best."

In return, she hopes employees will "give me an opportunity to continue to lead them toward the goal of making their sector successful and highly competitive." Achieving that goal will be demanding and will mean that each team member must shoulder more responsibility and be more accountable.

"We have a job to do and each of us has a specific role, whether it be as a bus operator, mechanic, service attendant or office staff," she says. "But, our number one product is service and our practice is safety. Those two things have always been consistent and they will remain consistent."

Coffey began her career in 1976 as an SCRTD bus operator at Arthur Winston Division 5. Over the years, she has worked at all 11 bus operating divisions.

She was promoted to division dispatcher in 1978 and then to transit operations supervisor and instructor, serving in that capacity until 1993. That year, she was named an assistant division transportation manager at Venice Division 6 and later transferred to Division 5 as a deputy service operations manager.

Promoted to division manager

In 1995, Coffey worked for six months as deputy service operations

manager in maintenance at Division 5, then was promoted to division transportation manager in the hope that she could correct long-standing problems there.

As manager, Coffey initiated a new management program that led to a series of changes that improved both service and working conditions. In April 2001, she was transferred to South Bay Division 18 where she was serving when she was named sector general manager.

In these positions, Coffey managed 500 to 600 operations employees, was in charge of bus fleets of 180 to 280 coaches and as many as 28 bus lines. She also was responsible for on-time pullouts, in-service schedule adherence and the overall operation of division transportation activities.

A graduate of the Anderson School of Management's Transportation Leadership and Management Program, Coffey currently is enrolled in an accelerated management program. She also has participated in many leadership and management development programs.

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