



PHOTO BY ALISHA GOMEZ

CCTV observer Ramona Escareno often comes to the aid of passengers from her post at the ROC.

don't take more than a \$5 bill.

But after listening to their story and finding out that they were leaving Los Angeles in a couple of days, Escareno set out to return their money as soon as possible.

After taking the call, Escareno called GFI, whose technicians work on the TVMs, and was told that it is possible for a machine to take a large bill.

Escareno next called Beverly McWhorter, senior supervisor, Central Cash Counting in the Revenue Department. McWhorter authorized a roaming technician to inspect the vault at the 7th and Metro station.

### **\$100 was in the vault**

Once the Revenue Department had verified that a \$100 bill was inside the vault, Escareno asked if there was any way to return the money before the tourists went back to Poland.

"Normally, requests for refunds are routed to various departments, from the CCTV observers, Cash Counting and Accounting," says Revenue Collections Manager Marcelo Melicor. "A request for refunds can take five to 10 working days to process."

But, because this was a unique case, Melicor authorized the release and had Revenue Clerk Thomas Johnson deliver the money to the tourists' hotel the next day.

"The tourists were very appreciative of the extra efforts provided by MTA Staff and were very happy," says Melicor. "Ramona was very alert in getting all the vital information concerning the tourists and the ticket vending machine number."

### **It was teamwork**

But it was the teamwork that made it happen.

"We went out of our way in a group effort to get their money back, even though the machine should not have taken the \$100 bill from them," says

## **Recovering Tourists' Cash was an Exercise in Teamwork**

By ALISHA GOMEZ

(August 23, 2002) Ramona Escareno, a CCTV observer at the Rail Operations Center, gets very excited when she tells the story of how teamwork helped two tourists recover a \$100 bill they lost in a ticket vending machine.

"I was so happy," says Escareno. "I didn't want to them to go back home and have to wait for a refund."

And home was a very long way for two tourists from Poland. When she first received the call from them, she was surprised. The TVMs normally

ROC Central Control Facilities Manager Hector Guerrero.

Melicor gives credit to the great working relationship between the CCTV Observers and the Revenue Collections staff. "I am proud to manage a group of employees who not only perform their assigned tasks, but go out of their way to assist our customers."

For Escareno, the situation really hit home. "We've got this big flyer about team effort hanging in the building. And this is a perfect example of it."

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