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Central City Division 1 Metro Bus Operator
Derald Andrews

Derald Andrews Commended for Helping a Co-Worker in Distress

By KIM SIM

(March 24, 2004) Metro Bus Operator Derald Andrews' calm and collected response to a fellow bus operator's breathing difficulties earned him an employee's commendation.

Andrews came to the assistance of another bus operator, Feb. 23, after being alerted to the situation by a waiting passenger. In an Employee's Commendation Memorandum, Transit Operations Supervisor Adrienne Gipson wrote that Andrews "went beyond the call of duty."

A bus operator for Central City Division 1, Andrews was working Line 18 when he stopped at the layover zone on Vermont Avenue and Sixth Street.

What happened next was that "a passenger waiting for the 201 line approached my bus and told me that the operator of the 201 bus couldn't breathe," Andrews said.

He used his own cell phone to call 911 and then placed a priority call to Bus Operations Control for help.

'Checked her pulse'

"The first thing I did was to turn her coach on to get some air," he said. "I proceeded to get her arms up, check her pulse. She was breathing."

He fashioned a cold compress for the bus operator using water and paper towels.

"My reaction was, I was going to help, see what I could do, for another co-worker," Andrews said. "(The Fire Department) told me I did a good job."

It wasn't easy getting in to assist the bus operator in the first place. Because the door was closed, Andrews had to run around to the side to open the driver's window.

Life-saving skills

This isn't the first time the 20-year veteran of MTA has had to put his life-saving skills to the test.

Andrews, who learned CPR while serving in the military in the late 1970s, once had to assist a passenger who said he couldn't breathe.

"It's part of the job," Andrews said of being prepared to deal with emergencies. "I would do it again."

As is customary with all commendation recipients, Andrews will be recognized at the division's next staff meeting.

The purpose of such recognition is to "just let the employees know what happened," Transportation Manager Sonja Owens said. "Let them know what he did."

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