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## Rail Safety Tour Leaders Receive Many Thanks from Students

- ‘You guys are the best,’ one child writes.

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 26, 2007) Every month the thank-you cards come in – some in crayon, some scrawled in pencil, some embellished with drawings – all thanking the “superheroes” of the Community Relations Department's Transit Education Programs.

About 50 cards a month come to administrative interns Ashley Molina, Jackie Martinez and other team members who guide an average of 200 elementary school pupils and their chaperones on weekly rail tours as part of the Metro's Rail Safety Orientation Program.

The children learn that the train is nothing to be afraid of as long as they observe safety rules, and that it can take them to fun places.

Elementary school kids are the majority of the safety tour participants, however, anyone five and over is welcomed. Each tour group is given the opportunity to ride Metro Red, Gold, and Blue lines.

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I really liked the Gold Line. It was like a rollercoaster to me.  
*Faith Evans, Normandie Christian School*

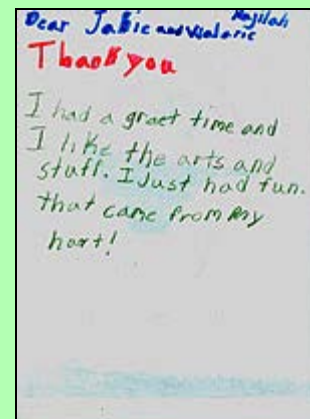
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“Are we really underground?” ask some students on a recent tour as the subway train pulls out of Union Station. During a stop at Civic Center station, they say “‘Let’s go again! Nothing happened to us,’” says Martinez.

Martinez leads the kids up the stairs to the surface of the station to show the children where they are. They say, “Wow, this is cool. Let’s go back on the train again.”

At the end of the tour, the students ask Martinez, “Do you get to ride on the train all

Metro's Community Relations Department receives a hefty packet of thank you cards from elementary students about once a month for leading them on the Rail Safety Orientation Tour. The tour teaches students that they can go to fun places so long as they follow rail safety rules.



day? That's awesome!"

I forgot to tell you that I thought Union Station was so beautiful I said "Wow!" when I saw it. I was so happy that I would like to go back and visit. Maybe even live there one day. I wish I would be an MTA worker when I grow up so I could see Union Station everyday. I like the rides!

Thank you for a wonderful experience.  
Sincerely, *Sheeny Ng*, Brightwood School

Once the students test out the trains and learn the safety rules from their tour leaders, they receive a day pass to ride wherever they want for lunch. A few of the popular places are Chinatown and Olvera Street.

"Having little kids tell you 'We want to be like you when we grow up,'" says Martinez, "that's the cutest thing ever."

Some students and teachers who take the tour have never even ridden the train before. For many classes, the safety tour is the "trip of the year," says Martinez.

Thank you for everything because without you guys I could have die already because I could have not followed the rules. And your rules could have helped me. You guys are the best. Your rules helped everyone. Your job is great. Because you help people. You could be a superhero.  
*Angela Chen*, Brightwood School

