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Flanked by instructors, the Metro Rail Train Operators Class of Nov. 07 graduates with full honors in a ceremony held in the windsor room of Metro Headquarters on Wednesday.



Front row, from left, Monique Barrett, RTOS Rachel Barlow, RTOS Lisa Chew, Karen Butler, Rosa Nunez, Egriselda Molina, RTOS Jennelle Price, Willard Johnson (Instructor). back row, from left, Arnold Johnson (Instructor), Gerald Harper (Instructor), Frank Hooks (Instructor), Jose Arias, Ralph Newman, Roland Burts, Paulo Prado, Oscar Portillo, Hugo Repreza, RTOS Abraham Miranda, Hector Gutierrez (Instructor), Metro Rail GM Mike Cannell, Rail Instruction Manager Linda Leone, Ricardo Perez (Instructor). Photo: Gayle Anderson.

Graduating Class of Train Operators Adds 14 to Metro Rail Ranks

By GAYLE ANDERSON

The November graduating class of Metro Rail train operators added four Rail Transit Operations Supervisors (RTOS) and ten train operators to the ranks of some 200 rail operators who pilot the Metro Rail system through a countywide maze of tracks and tunnels to transport a steadily growing ridership.

"The expertise acquired and achieved by operators means the quality of service will continue," Rail General Manager Mike Cannell told the graduates.

One by one, Cannell presented each graduate with a framed official certificate and a distinctive new Metro Rail employee badge.

Rail Division Transportation Managers Bruce Shelburne and Davide Puglisi welcomed the graduates to the ranks, noting the expertise gained in the seven-week intensive training course is already evident.

Comparing the achievement to "passing the bar exam," UTU Local 1565 Chairman Tim Del Cambre praised the graduates' teamwork and dedication to a professional goal.

Training consists of an overview of the rail system and concentrated instruction on rules and procedures followed by hands-on yard operation, mainline operation and procedures specific to operation of each Rail Line, said Linda Leone, Rail Instruction Manager.

Directed by Leone, the class was conducted by rail training instructors Arnold Johnson, Willard Johnson, Gerald Harper, Frank Hooks, Hector Gutierrez and Ricardo Perez. After observing an in-service trip and completing individual evaluations, instructors officially certified the graduates on Nov. 2 and Nov. 5.

The graduating class of 2007 includes four new supervisors: Rachel Barlow, Lisa Chew, Abraham Miranda, and Jennelle Price. The new operators are Monique Barrett, Karen Butler, Rosa Nunez, Egriselda Molina, Jose Arias, Ralph Newman, Roland Burts, Paulo Prado, Oscar Portillo, and Hugo Repreza.

Three graduates take up posts on the Metro Gold Line; three more landed at the Metro Blue Line and one has joined the Metro Green Line. Three graduates transferring from Bus Operations return to their divisions and will rotate into Rail Operations when positions become available.