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Class of 2008 - Mechanic "C" Graduates are, front row from left, Walter Snipes, Monica Carney, Linda Jackson, Kimberly Smith and Normandy Villacorta. Back row, from left, Pedro Estrada, Steve Barber, Jose Gallardo, James Robinson, Oscar Ramirez and Juan Hernandez. Joining them in the winner's circle are Operations Training Director Doug Middleton, at far left, Equipment Maintenance Instructor Brian Markey, back row center, and Sr. Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly, at far right. Not pictured: Graduates Daniel Perez and Guillermo Perez. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Former Service Attendants Join the Ranks of Metro Bus Mechanics

- Tough 18-month course combined classroom, on-the-job training

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(June 26, 2008) Clutching shiny new torque wrenches – a symbol of their trade – 13 newly certified Metro bus mechanics joined the noble ranks of a new profession, June 25, during graduation ceremonies at the Metro Support Services Center.

The graduates had survived an intense 18-month course that combined technical classroom instruction with on-the-job training in operating division maintenance shops.

All 13 of the new mechanics started their Metro careers as service attendants. They were selected by union seniority from some 90 service attendants who had applied for the mechanics training class, said Master of Ceremonies Steve Mullaly, Sr. Equipment Maintenance Instructor who directed the program.



Walter Snipes takes on 'run and repair' at MSSC. The 68-year-old mechanic joined Metro in September 2000 as a service attendant.

Claiming to be the oldest graduate in the 33-year history of the Mechanic "C" training course, 68-year-old Walter Snipes said his new profession was a "second career" choice. The former service attendant, who joined Metro in September 2000, will work in "run and repair" installing new engines in

revitalized buses.

Mechanics training classes are convened under an agreement negotiated between Metro and the ATU, which represents maintenance employees.

'You can take it with you'

"This is a trade no one can take away from you, but you can take it with you," ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver told the graduates.



ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver, at left, told the graduates they had learned a valuable trade and skills that will last them a lifetime. Instructor Brian Markey concurs.

The graduates and their new assignments are Steve Barber at Division 3, Monica Carney at Division 1, Jose Gallardo at Division 10, Pedro Estrada at Division 10, Juan Hernandez at MSSC, Linda Jackson at Division 1, Daniel Perez at MSSC, Guillermo Perez at Division 15, Oscar Ramirez at MSSC, James Robinson at Division 2, Kimberly Smith at Division 1, Walter Snipes at MSSC and Normandy Villacorta at Division 15.

Among those attending the graduation ceremony were sector general managers Mark Maloney and Alex Clifford; MSSC Operations DEO John Roberts; ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver; division managers Frank Lonyai, Salvadore Llamas, and Clifford Thorne; MSSC managers Mike Singer, Carey Stevens and Amy Hughes; MSSC Operations Training Director Doug Middleton; Sr. Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly, and Equipment Maintenance Instructor Brian Markey.