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On TAP: from left, Metro Commuter Services Director David Sutton, Transportation Planning Manager Diana Estrada, LACC mascot Cubby, Deputy Executive Officer, UFS, Jane Matsumoto, CEO Roger Snoble and Real Property Management and Development Chief Roger Moliere.

Metro, L.A. Community College District Partner to Offer One of the Country's Largest Student Transit Pass Programs

By Laura Kloth
myMetro.net

(Jan. 21, 2009) Los Angeles City College students cheered Friday after learning they will be paying only \$15 to ride Metro through June.

Student representatives Rose Bustos of East Los Angeles and Renell Ross of Pomona were among those who spoke and thanked Metro and Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) officials for creating Metro's Institution Pass program, which is expected to save them an average of \$200 this semester.

The program, announced at a news conference on the campus of Los Angeles City College, allows students to purchase Metro's TAP card for \$15 if they are enrolled in a minimum of 12 units.

Metro partnered with LACCD to create the program that helps pay for passes for nine colleges and is expected to benefit some 30,000 students.

CEO Roger Snoble told students to take full advantage of the program as he encouraged them to remain Metro users even after they graduate.

"You are the future so when you go to school, study hard, get good



Student representative Rose Bustos of East Los Angeles City College said that the new program would not only save money, but help students with the constant struggle to find parking. Below, LACC students flash new iTAP cards with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.



grades and realize the importance of public transportation, don't forget that," said Snoble.

"The temptation is to go out and buy a car right away. Well, you don't necessarily have to buy a car or two cars or three cars. You can get around this city, this region very easy on Metro," Snoble said.

Los Angeles Mayor Anthony Villaraigosa said the program couldn't have come at a better time.

"That's Top Ramen for two months. That's books and backpacks for the

semester and that's water and power for the year," the mayor said.

He said the program is a promise he made months ago to several students who confronted him one day demanding that proposed transportation rate hikes be denied.

Ross, president of the Black Student Union, said he spends two hours commuting on bus and rail to school from Pomona, and the program will save him \$96 a month for his bus commute alone.

"It helps me out economically and also helps the environment because it encourages people to use public transportation, which means a decrease in greenhouse gasses," he said.

Bustos said students have been asking for help for a long time and that the new program would not only save them money, but help them with the constant struggle to find parking. She also applauded the idea that the LACCD is committed to helping the environment by promoting public transportation.