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Friends in deed: Operator William Bonney, center, now nearly fully recovered from a major attack he suffered on the job, reunites with co-workers who came to his rescue. Pictured, from left, Mechanic Vincent Tsao, Operator Diane Coleman, TOS Karmana Potts, Bonney, Operator Richard Cuevas and Operator Raul Arango. *Photos by Luis Inzunza.*

### • Rescue efforts by co-workers save Bus Operator's life

(May 12, 2010) A major heart attack at Division 1 April 22 felled an operator but set into motion a crack team of co-workers whose unerring skill and determination saved his life and paved the way for operator training in life-saving techniques at the division.

Just as Bus Operator William Bonney was about to start his shift on Line 745 on that fateful Thursday afternoon, he collapsed with a heart attack in the bus yard. Operator Raul Arango was in lane 90 – his bus in motion – when he was signaled by Operator Diane Coleman in lane 89 that Bonney had fallen to the pavement and appeared to be in trouble.

"I looked out the window. He was in convulsions, starting to get blue. That means no oxygen to the brain," said Arango.

Both Arango and TOS Karmana Potts rushed to the operator's aid. "I knew CPR so I began mouth-to-



Operator William Bonney, above with rescuers TOS Karmana Potts and, below, Raul Arango, shares his gratitude in a heartfelt message written on a special card he designed. Bonney drew the image on the cover.

mouth resuscitation and Karmana started the compressions."

"When you're waiting for the ambulance, it feels like it takes forever. I saw TOS (Potts) getting tired and that's when I signaled another operator, Richard Cuevas, to jump in and take over the compressions."

Both Arango and Cuevas were military trained in CPR. Arango is a U.S. Army veteran who served two tours in Iraq. Cuevas was in the Air Force. "In the military, we are trained over and over. It gets to you like second nature."

The co-workers continued CPR until the paramedics arrived at 3:23 p.m.

Bonney, who had no pulse when the paramedics arrived, was kept alive by co-workers applying life-saving CPR. The action earned the praise of the paramedics, who defibrillated Operator Bonney restoring a normal pulse, said Operations Instruction Supervisor Chris Doan. Doan had visited Bonney at USC Medical Center when he was still on life support.

At an awards ceremony held May 5 at the division, interim Director of Service Operations Sonja Owens, until just recently the longtime transportation manager at Division 1, presented the co-workers with engraved plaques signifying humanitarian honors.

The guest of honor on that day was Operator William Bonney, now nearly fully recovered.

"It was an emotional time," said Owens. "We were all out there, but it was these co-workers who saved his life."

As Bonney tearfully reunited with co-workers, Owens read a letter he prepared to express his heartfelt gratitude:

I am so deeply grateful to all. I pray everyone at Div. 1 be always surrounded by



Rescuers Arango, above, and Richard Cuevas, below, applied life-saving CPR to save Bonney's life. Longtime Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens presents Humanitarian Awards May 5.



Mechanic Vincent Tsao: "Happy to see you came back. Someday we will meet in the yard again."

God's love and protection. I don't understand it all, but I do understand on that day in my time of need. Some real, living angels stepped up and handed me my life back! God bless you! – William A. Bonney

The co-workers, now known as heroes at Division 1, are:

- Part-time Operator Diane Coleman. She made the operator comfortable and got help.
- Part-time Operator Raul Arango. He performed all rescue breathing until relieved by paramedics.
- TOS Karmana Potts. She performed chest compressions until relieved by Operator Cuevas.
- Operator Richard Cuevas. He performed chest compressions until relieved by paramedics.
- Mechanic Vincent Tsao. He kept time on ventilations-to-compressions ratio – important data needed by medical technicians.
- Equipment Records Specialist Lessie Candler. She dialed 911 and "held it all together."

Maintenance Manager John McBryan praised the teamwork and shared the lesson he had learned from the experience. "This is a good message that Mr. Bonney has given us: Start taking care of yourself."

Bonney is a part-time operator assigned to Division 1 who joined Metro in March 2009. The married father of one lives in East Los Angeles. He looks forward to returning to work upon his complete recovery.

--from Gayle Anderson



Operator Diane Coleman: She saw Operator Bonney collapsed and took action. A left, Operations Instruction Supervisor Chris Doan: "Thanks to his co-workers ,the Los Angeles City Paramedics, the County USC Medical Center's CICU, and all of our prayers, William Bonney has almost made a full recovery."



Message from Rail: A certificate of exemplary performance above and beyond for performing life-saving measures to save an operator's life.