



NEWS

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MTA SPONSORS RAIL SAFETY AWARENESS DAY FOR L.A. MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The creative energies of 400 7th and 8th grade students will be showcased in Union Station's Main Concourse Room on Thursday, May 19 at 10 a.m. as poems and essays are read, posters displayed and even rap songs performed, all in support of rail safety. The students, from 22 Los Angeles County middle schools, are winners of a contest sponsored by the MTA and Los Angeles Clippers in conjunction with National Transportation Safety Week.

"The MTA and its predecessors have been conducting rail safety presentations in schools since 1987," said MTA Chairman and Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Alatorre. "We've reached over one million students in our continuing public education effort. The enthusiasm these kids showed in their contest entries tells me our message is getting through," he added.

Winning entries were chosen in four categories – poetry, essay, poster, and rap. Representatives from the MTA, Clippers, and program emcee, KTTV Channel 11 anchor John Beard will award trophies to each winning classroom.

Following the performances and awards presentation, the students will tour Union Station and its various modes of rail transportation: Amtrak, Metrolink and Metro Red Line. Throughout the tour, rail safety lessons will be emphasized. The day's activities will conclude with a ride on the Red Line.

"Teaching rail safety to our school children has been a great investment in our future," said MTA CEO Frank White. "They learn how to be safe around trains, how to safely use rail transportation, and they pass on this knowledge to their parents and friends," he reported.

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MTA's rail safety programs feature the mascot Travis the Owl, created in 1987 as an educational outreach to address construction and operational safety issues along the Metro Blue Line. That initial effort evolved into the Travis the Owl School Safety Program, which targets students in public, private and parochial schools from grades K-8 along all Metro Rail and Metrolink routes.

MTA officials also provide rail safety presentations to high school students, teachers and parents. The ongoing program, active in 19 L.A. County school districts and 21 school districts in adjacent counties, is designed to make people aware of new rail projects, caution residents about the risk of accidents if they get too close to construction areas, and emphasize safety and common sense regarding rail operations.

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