



# NEWS

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## **METRO BLUE LINE...A SUCCESS TRAIN FOR MINORITY STUDENTS ATTENDING L.A. TRADE TECH**

The road to success for students of Los Angeles Trade Technical College is paved with a lot of hard work and determination. And for a growing number of them the road also is etched by the train tracks of the 22-mile-long Metro Blue Line.

The 71-year old community college moved to its current location at Grand Avenue and Washington Boulevard in 1952 and, since the Blue Line's inauguration in July of 1990, the Grand Avenue station has been the light rail line's most popular destination.

Make no mistake, L.A. Trade Tech, which sits just yards from the station, is a big reason for that distinction.

Mary De Leon of Lynwood will graduate from L.A. Trade Tech this fall after completing studies in secretarial and office administration. She's been a regular rider on the Blue Line since July of 1992. "When I used to ride the bus it took an hour and fifteen minutes to make the trip to school," says De Leon. "The Blue Line has cut my travel time to only thirty minutes."

De Leon says besides the easy commute she feels particularly safe on the Blue Line. She says Transit Police get to know many of the regular riders and she too has struck up a few friendships.

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"The Blue Line is saving me money and I don't have to deal with any traffic. Even if I owned a car, I wouldn't drive to school. The Blue Line is the only way to go!" adds De Leon.

"We consider the Blue Line to be one of our school's greatest assets," says Betty Hartwig, Interim President of L.A. Trade Tech. "It's clear that a growing number of our students believe the Metro Rail system is very convenient, and we're pleased to be on track."

The Blue Line also counts among its fans a large number of recent L.A. Trade Tech graduates including Jose Gomez and Maria Hernandez. Gomez, a Bellflower resident who graduated last year with a degree in Fashion Design, initially rode the Blue Line from the Artesia Station.

When the Green Line went into service in May of 1995, Gomez found it even more convenient to board at the Green Line's Lakewood Station and then transfer to the Blue Line at the Imperial/Wilmington Station.

"The two lines were comfortable, on-time and convenient," says Gomez. "I had put off going to L.A. Trade Tech until I found out the Blue Line had a station so close to the school. Taking the train allowed me to put my commute time to good use...doing my homework!"

In May, former L.A. Trade Tech student Maria Hernandez earned her degree in Fashion Design and Merchandising. Hernandez, who lives in Cerritos, says she began taking the Blue Line "out of necessity" but soon was delighted to find it was the cheapest and easiest way to get to L.A. Trade Tech on time.

"I think the Blue Line is great," says Hernandez. "It's one of the best things that could have happened to me while attending school."

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"These are the kinds of real life stories that demonstrate the value of the Metro Rail system," said Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO. "Coupled with the Red Line and the Green Line, the Blue Line continues to link thousands of people with their jobs, shopping areas, and other important destinations such as L.A. Trade Tech. Mary De Leon, Jose Gomez and Maria Hernandez are among the many people enjoying the benefits of our growing transportation network."

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