



May 7, 2004

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Mechanics and Metro Bus Operators and Motherhood; Celebrating Dedicated Mothers This Mother's Day

After a day's work of fixing an engine or driving a Metro bus on a crowded freeway, MTA mothers come home to their children with the caring touch of a mother's hand. Not too many mothers can say that they do this, but the moms at MTA who work as mechanics and bus operators have what it takes to succeed in these jobs while living as full time mothers.

Paula Osife, bus operator and single mother who works in the Metro Gateway Cities Service Sector out of Metro's Gateway Division in Los Angeles, has seven children. Her children Frank, 23; April, 21; Angel, 19; Jackie, 16; Jonathan, 14; Caleb, 8; and Sarah, 6 are proud of the fact that she works as a Metro bus operator.

"When I first started the job, Jonathan, my son, helped me learn my bus line, and he was so excited about it," Osife said. "When I dropped off things to him at school in my uniform, he would tell his friends, 'Hey that's my mom; she's a Metro bus driver,' and you could see in his expression that he was proud."

As a Metro bus operator, Osife learns a lot about motherhood while she is on the job. The different cultures and people that she encounters everyday reinforces the importance of understanding diversity.

"I talk to my children about different cultures, the people that I meet on the bus, and the diversity of the city that I experience while I am driving the bus," Osife said. "I teach them to treat people the way that they want to be treated and to be considerate of the people that they meet."

Osife also considers Metro's Gateway Cities Division 1 an extension of her family. "The drivers here all watch out for my son," she said. "The other operators all help me with advice and encouragement."

Being a bus operator also helps Osife's children with school. As family members of an employee, her children can ride the bus for free. "My kids love the bus, and my thirteen year old takes the bus to the library all the time," Osife said. "He calls his bus pass his freedom card."

Eva Torres, a Metro mechanic at the Gateway Cities Division 1, is a mother of two who also feels that her motherhood has been positively influenced by her position at MTA.

"I want my kids to stay honest and be able to keep a steady job," Torres says. "Throughout my years here at MTA I've been able to keep those values up and I instill the same values in my children."

"There are a lot of challenges that I face at work and overcoming them has strengthened me. Having overcome work challenges, I have become better equipped for challenges at home," said Torres.

Her children are very supportive of their mother working as a Metro mechanic. When they come to see her at work, they are proud that she has advanced in positions and that she also has the opportunity to continue to advance in position and pay.

"My kids are very proud, they like that I'm a mechanic," Torres said. "There are not too many women out there that are mechanics, driving tow trucks, and doing what we do."

All in all, Osife and Torres would agree with Kimberly Smith, a Metro service attendant and mother of four, who said, "Overall my job has made me a stronger mother and increased my faith in God. My kids know how thankful I am for my job and my family."

