

A top-down photograph of five hands of different skin tones pointing their index fingers towards the center of the frame, forming a circle. The hands are positioned at approximately the 10, 2, 4, 6, and 8 o'clock positions. The background is a plain, light gray surface. The text 'the 2016 ALL-STARS of commute programs' is printed in white, sans-serif font across the center of the hands.

the 2016 ALL-STARS  
of commute programs

## Awards are given in the following categories:

### MARKETING

Actively promoting and championing alternative commuting options resulting in less drive alone commuting to your workplace.

### INCENTIVES

Providing commuter benefits or incentives that encourage employees to telework, bicycle, walk, car/vanpool, or take public transportation to your workplace.

### TELEWORK

Providing part- or full-time teleworking opportunities to a significant number of employees.

Has your organization made a difference in any of the following areas? If so, apply now.



### TELEWORKING

Providing management support, training, and technology to enable employees to work from home or a remote office either on a part-time, full-time or occasional basis.

### TRANSIT AND VANPOOLS

Offering monthly transit and vanpool pre-tax or direct benefits, through SmartBenefits®. Providing shuttle services to and from the workplace and transit stations.

### BICYCLING AND WALKING

Providing bike racks, lockers and/or shower facilities for bicyclists and walkers. Offering a direct monthly bicycle benefit for purchases, improvement, repair, or storage.

### RIDESHARING

Promoting Commuter Connections' free Ridematching services for carpools and vanpools, or providing your own on-site employee ridematching service.

### PARKING STRATEGIES

Offering reduced parking fees and/or preferred parking spaces for carpools and vanpools.

### DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIPS

Offering discount memberships to nearby gyms, Bikesharing and/or car sharing services.

### WORK SCHEDULE ALTERNATIVES

Offering flexible or staggered start and end times, or compressed work week schedules such as 4 days/40 hours, or 9 days/80 hours.

### AIR ALERTS

Receiving free e-mail Alerts from Clean Air Partners about forecasted unhealthy Code Orange/Red days to encourage employees to improve air quality by teleworking, bicycling, ridesharing or taking transit.

### GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

Promoting and/or supplementing Commuter Connections' free emergency ride home program for employees during unexpected personal or family emergencies/illnesses, or unscheduled overtime.

### CLEAN ENERGY VEHICLES

Providing electric car charging stations or a company fleet of clean energy vehicles or hybrids.





## A bit about last year's 2015 winners:

### MARKETING

#### WeddingWire, Chevy Chase, MD

WeddingWire is the nation's largest online marketplace serving the wedding, corporate and social events industry. Of its 340 employees, approximately 228 (67%) participate in alternative forms of commuting.

To promote alternative commuting options, the company maintains an intranet page where transit maps and schedules are posted, as well as company incentives and benefits given for using alternative transportation. An internal Facebook page engages employees to comment about commute related topics, and an internal newsletter provides information on commuting options and promotes contests such as "The Biggest Loser," to motivate walking to and from work.

In large part due to its marketing efforts, WeddingWire employees reduce 1,858,200 vehicle miles traveled per year, and save 93,848 gallons of gasoline annually.



### INCENTIVES

#### OPower Inc., Arlington, VA

Founded in 2007, Opower Inc. is the global leader in cloud-based software for the utility industry. Of its 560 employees in four countries, 325 work at its Arlington headquarters, and two-thirds of those (66%) have found environmentally-friendly solutions for their commutes.

Opower offers employees a \$100 / month transportation subsidy, regardless of commute preference. This subsidy offsets travel costs ranging from transit fare to walking shoes and bicycle maintenance. In addition, employees may contribute up to \$130 / month on a pre-tax basis towards mass transit. Opower also provides on-site bicycle storage, and shower facilities. The office also hosts discounted bike tuning and repair events.

The success of Opower's commuter benefits program has equated to a reduction of 1,640,000 vehicle miles traveled per year, and a savings of 82,000 gallons of fuel annually.



### TELEWORK

#### Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Hughesville, MD

Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) is located in Charles County and was founded in 1937. SMECO is a customer-owned electric cooperative employing 534, providing electricity to more than 160,000 customers in southern Maryland counties.

Contact Center employees work shifts around-the-clock, interfacing with the public on service issues. Previously, when storms caused a high volume of power outages, all personnel were needed at the office. During those situations it was necessary for employees to share desks. Workstation shortages during high-stress times created conflict and low morale. As a remedy, in 2006 the telework program was launched for employees with a history of dependability and professionalism. Teleworkers are supplied with all needed technology to perform their jobs from home, including the installation of a dedicated data line.

As a result of its telework program, SMECO has shown a reduction of 12,280 vehicle miles traveled per year and saves nearly 620 gallons of gasoline annually.



## What is the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments?

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an association of 22 local governments in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. COG's National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board is a forum for addressing transportation challenges that go beyond jurisdictional boundaries.

Please visit [mwcog.org](http://mwcog.org) for more info.

## Where Commuter Connections comes in the picture

Commuter Connections is a regionwide transportation information, outreach, and service network dedicated to easing the workday commute and reducing the number of single occupant vehicles. Free information and assistance on services including ridesharing, public transit, teleworking, bicycling, park & ride lots, HOV lanes, and Guaranteed Ride Home is available for both employers and commuters.

Commuter Connections is supported by the District, Maryland, Virginia, and U.S. Departments of Transportation, with state and federal transportation funds. Please visit [commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org) or call 800.745.RIDE for more info.



## Easing the way for what's to follow

Ridesharing, commuting by public transportation, bicycling, walking, or teleworking contribute to less traveled roads. That means smoother, easier, and faster commutes and a reduction in harmful vehicle emissions.

## Opening new doors... and getting in

Commuter Connections encourages area businesses and commuters to discover innovative ways to reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles on the road.

The Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards acknowledge employers who initiate or improve programs encouraging commuting alternatives. Companies who implement these programs and services make a difference to their organization, employees, and the community at large.



**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**  
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

About the organizations





### Eligibility

Employers in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia that have initiated, enhanced or expanded an employee alternative commute or telework program may apply for these awards. To be eligible, programs must have been initiated or improved **before** January 1, 2015.

### Deadline

The application deadline is February 3, 2016.  
Completed applications should be sent to:

**Commuter Connections**  
Douglas Franklin  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002-4290  
Tel: 202.962.3792 Fax: 202.962.3202  
Email: [dfranklin@mwco.org](mailto:dfranklin@mwco.org)  
[commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org)

### Instructions

Nominations should include all information requested in items 1-5, using this form (or the requested information clearly marked on a separate sheet) and an attached program summary narrative as described in question #6. Supplemental materials may be submitted in addition to, but not in place of the nomination form questions and program summary narrative.

### 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Contact (Mr./Ms.) \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Submitting Nomination Form (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Program Began (must have been initiated or improved before January 1, 2015) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Program (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. AWARD CATEGORY

Which Award Category below best describes the focus of your program? (See brochure or website for description of categories.)

- Marketing       Incentives       Telework

Is there a secondary category you would like to apply for? (Note: You can only win in one category.)

- Marketing       Incentives       Telework

### 3. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Please mark one of the choices below that best describes your organization.

- Private sector       Local, State or Federal government  
 Non-profit organization       Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Please specify

### 4. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

How many people do you employ in the Washington metropolitan area? \_\_\_\_\_  
At how many work sites? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the total number of program participants in the Washington metropolitan area? \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I am authorized to submit this nomination form on behalf of my organization and that if selected as a winner, my organization will participate in the awards presentation and video, and that Commuter Connections will promote my organization's initiatives online and in print.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. PROGRAM SUMMARY NARRATIVE

Please attach a 1-3 page written summary about your program, answering and elaborating on as many questions below that apply. Address each part (A, B, C, D) in a separate paragraph and provide measurable results of the program, wherever possible.

Provide a clear, concise description of your program's activities. If a previous Commuter Connections' award winner, please make clear what new initiatives have taken place and/or what has been done differently to encourage substantial increases in employee participation since last winning.

Questions and points to address in narrative if applicable:

### **A. Description of Program**

- What was the situation or condition that led to the creation of your program?
- What were the program's goals and how has it been successful in meeting its goals?
- What have the results been compared to previous years?
- What type of commuter benefits, services, information, or amenities are offered to employees and how many take advantage of each?
- How are the various programs promoted within your worksite?
- If parking is provided are carpools given discounts or preferential parking spaces?
- If transit fare is provided to employees, is it subsidized as an out-of-pocket expense by your organization or paid by employees on a pre-tax basis?  
If subsidized, then what is the maximum dollar amount provided?
- Do you provide shuttle services between your worksite and nearby transit centers?
- Do you have bike racks, lockers and/or shower facilities?
- Are flextime or compressed work weeks offered?
- What type of training and/or amenities are offered to management and to employees who telework?
- Is your telework program informal or do you have a formal telework policy?

### **B. Employer and Employee Benefits**

Describe how the program has:

- Improved employee morale, productivity, absenteeism.
- Increased your organization's ability to attract and retain qualified employees.
- Helped reduce employee commuting times and stress.
- Contributed to better employee work-life demands/balance.

### **C. Economic and Financial Benefits**

Describe how the program has:

- Helped reduce employee commuting expenses.
- Reduced your organization's costs associated with providing commuter parking and/or office space.
- Provided other dividends for your organization or employees.

### **D. Environmental Impacts**

Describe and quantify the benefits to the community. Describe how the program has:

- Reduced traffic congestion. How many vehicles have been taken off the roads? How many annual vehicle miles have been reduced? To calculate vehicle miles reduced, please visit [commuterconnections.org/commuting-resources/vmt-calculator](http://commuterconnections.org/commuting-resources/vmt-calculator).
- Reduced gasoline consumption and emissions. What is the number of estimated gallons of gas saved annually?
- Affected your awareness or support of air quality. Does your organization provide air quality alerts to employees and allow teleworking on such days?