



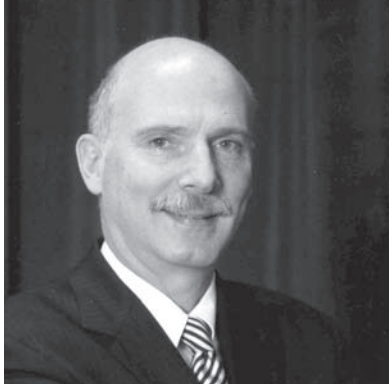
ITEM #5

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- WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

20 EMPLOYER
15 RECOGNITION
AWARDS

JUNE 30, 2015



Phil Mendelson
Chair, Transportation Planning Board
District of Columbia Council Chairman

The National Capital Region is a vibrant place to live, work and visit. As a destination for homes, jobs and tourism, its appeal and continual growth presents both challenges and opportunities for our transportation system and infrastructure.

As we strive to keep pace with the region's progress, changing the public's daily commute behavior remains a key ingredient. By encouraging shared rides, use of transit, bicycling, walking and teleworking, we can work toward realizing our regional goals.

The business community plays an integral role in helping to shape commuting behaviors of their employees. Many employers offer transit subsidies or pre-tax transit benefits. Others encourage use of flexible work schedules and teleworking, or reward ridesharing by providing preferred and/or free parking to carpools and vanpools. Some also offer shower and locker amenities for bicyclists and walkers. Commuter Connections and its jurisdictional partners work with employers to provide the needed support that helps foster these activities.

The employers we are honoring have implemented innovative and successful commuter benefit programs. We hope that through their example, other employers will embrace these practices, creating more workplaces where increased commuter benefits yield motivated, productive and less-stressed employees.

On behalf of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, I congratulate the winners of the 2015 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards and thank them for their continued commitment to reducing traffic congestion and improving the air we breathe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Mendelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

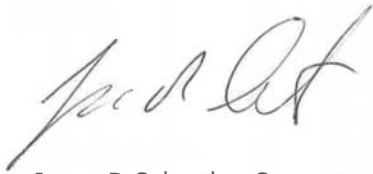
Phil Mendelson, Transportation Planning Board Chair

This year marks the eighteenth annual Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards ceremony. A select group of employers are being honored for their exemplary commuter programs that help reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in the Washington metropolitan region.

Employers that support daily commuting transportation alternatives such as ridesharing, bicycling, public transit and teleworking help create a better quality of life for their employees. The Commuter Connections Employer Services program is a comprehensive regional network dedicated to assisting employers set up and expand commuter benefit initiatives. These types of programs help employers attract and retain a quality workforce, improve their bottom line and help with Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification credits.

Please join me in congratulating the recipients of the 2015 Employer Recognition Awards who have dedicated resources to meet the commuting challenges of their employees. They are outstanding examples to other organizations within the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Sebastian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

James R. Sebastian, Commuter Connections Chair
District Department of Transportation



James R. Sebastian
Subcommittee Chair, Commuter Connections
District Department of Transportation

The 2015 Employer Recognition Awards

The Commuter Connections Annual Employer Recognition Awards Program acknowledges employers who have initiated programs that facilitate the use of alternative commuting methods such as transit, teleworking, carpooling/vanpooling and bicycling. These methods help to mitigate traffic congestion and provide for cleaner air through reduced auto emissions.

Eligible employer programs include those that marketed alternative commuting options, initiated a successful telework program, or provided incentives that make using alternative transportation modes easier and more attractive than driving alone. Applicants are evaluated by a Selection Committee and winners are chosen for their ability to offer measurable commuter benefits that reduce automobile fuel consumption and emissions, through fewer vehicle trips, and miles traveled. In addition, winners are selected for their policies that have improved the lives of their employees and the region.

Incentives

Commuter incentives reward and encourage employees for taking alternative means of commuting. They also help to attract and retain employees. Incentives and commuter benefits can come in many forms such as transit and vanpool subsidies, pre-tax transit and vanpool benefits and preferred or discounted parking for carpools and vanpools. Other incentives might include offering flex-time schedules or the provision of facilities and equipment such as showers and lockers for those who bike or walk to work, on-site amenities, free shuttle service or laptops for teleworkers.

Marketing

Promoting the merits of ridesharing, transit and teleworking within a company is an essential part of a successful commuter program. Companies who educate and advocate about alternative commuting options enjoy higher employee participation rates. With knowledge of the available choices, employees are empowered to make well-informed decisions about better and smarter ways to get to work. They arrive less stressed and more able to start their productive day. Marketing of commuter information and available benefits clearly serves as an influential aspect behind helping to change commuter drive-alone patterns.

Teleworking

Teleworking at home, or at a local telework or co-working center, allows employees to dramatically reduce or completely eliminate the time and money spent commuting to-and-from work, one or more days per week. For employers, savings may come in the form of reduced overhead such as office space costs and parking. In addition, teleworking provides for lower absenteeism, higher productivity and helps businesses attract and retain qualified employees.



Incentives Award

Opower Inc.
Arlington, VA



Founded in 2007, Opower Inc. is the global leader in cloud-based software for the utility industry. Opower combines data and behavioral science to help utilities around the world reduce energy consumption and improve relationships with their customers. This helps consumers lower energy use and costs, which significantly reduces carbon emissions.

Beginning in 2012, Opower began offering employees a wide range of green transportation incentives to support the company's core mission. Of its 560 employees in four countries, 325 work at the Arlington headquarters, and two-thirds of those (66%) have found environmentally-friendly solutions for their commute.

Opower is conveniently located two blocks from the Courthouse Metro station and offers all employees a \$100 per month transportation subsidy, regardless of commute preference. This subsidy is used to offset travel costs ranging from transit fare to walking shoes and bicycle maintenance. In addition, the company partnered with WageWorks, allowing employees to contribute up to \$130 per month on a pre-tax basis towards mass transit. The monthly transit subsidy is loaded directly onto employee SmarTrip® cards.

To accommodate the needs of those who bike, walk or run to work, Opower provides on-site bicycle storage, shower facilities and towel service. The office also hosts discounted bike tuning and repair events. Additionally, Opower provides healthy snacks and smoothies to cyclists at the Arlington Bike to Work Day event.

Opower employees are supplied with laptop computers and remote company-server access, allowing them to telework on a sporadic basis to balance work/life needs. The majority of staff capitalizes on the company's flex-time benefit throughout the year, based on personal and project schedules.

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.



WeddingWire is the nation's largest online marketplace serving the wedding, corporate and social events industry. Launched in 2007, WeddingWire connects engaged couples and party planners with merchants such as venues, photographers, caterers and entertainers.

Of its 340 employees in Chevy Chase, Maryland, approximately 228 (67%) participate in alternative forms of commuting. In 2013, the company moved from Bethesda to Chevy Chase, to offices directly above the Friendship Heights Metrorail station. Employees who ride transit are given a monthly pre-tax benefit up to \$130 per month, plus a \$50 subsidy to help with commuting costs.

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 was also created which engages employees to comment about preferable commuting methods through survey links. The social media also informs employees by posting commute related topics such as travel alerts, transit delays, and links to web sites such as Commuter Connections, Metro, and Capital Bikeshare.

The company offers a Treat Yo'self benefit, where \$250 is made available to all employees to use for health-related activities such as gym equipment, walking shoes, and bike equipment. In addition, WeddingWire produces an internal newsletter that provides information on various commuting options and promotes contests related to commuting. One such contest is "The Biggest Loser" competition which motivates employees to walk as a healthy means of commuting and traveling. Sixty-eight employees participated and winners received gym memberships and equipment.

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.





Marketing Award
WeddingWire
Chevy Chase, MD



Telework Award
Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
Hughesville, MD



Founded in 1937, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) is headquartered in Charles County. SMECO is a customer-owned electric cooperative employing 534, providing electricity to more than 160,000 customers in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, and in southern Prince George's county.

SMECO's 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, the Emergency Response Plan required all hands on deck at the office at the same time. During those situations it was necessary for SMECO's Contact Center employees to share desks. The workstation shortages during high-stress times created conflict and low morale among the staff. As a remedy, in 2006 the telework program was launched, offering a work-from-home option for employees with a history of dependability, independence and a high level of professional knowledge.

Participating Contact Center employees are supplied with all necessary equipment to successfully perform their jobs from home, including laptops, headsets and software. SMECO covers the complete cost of the installation of a dedicated data line, and half the monthly internet or cable costs. IT support is available for home setup of equipment and when technical issues arise. Telework is promoted by the Contact Center's management and the potential opportunity to telework is discussed as part of the interview process.

With the intention of promoting a flexible environment for its employees, improving productivity, and supporting work/life balance, in 2013 a flexible workplace program was implemented. This program allows 87 employees to create a work schedule that flows best with lifestyles and needs. Employees can work 40 hours in four ten-hour days, with the fifth day off; or work 80 hours in nine days, with the tenth day off. Employees may also adjust start and end times, provided that core hours are worked.

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.

The Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award is given to the Commuter Connections Employer Services sales team that has most successfully met its goal of partnering with employers to develop and expand commute benefit offerings. There are a total of 10 Employer Services sales teams with 32 full time equivalent representatives in the Washington metropolitan region who cultivate and support employer based transportation programs.

The Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Commuter Connections program is pleased to honor the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) with the Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award. goDCgo is DDOT's sustainable transportation program which includes professional employer sales and outreach services. During the past year with one full time sales representative, over 1,800 contacts were made with employers within the District, and 23 meetings were held. As a result, DDOT's Employer Services Program has added 24 new clients of various levels and expanded their total list of high-impact employer commute clients to 87. goDCgo staff attended more than 90 employer transportation fairs and commuter events last year, as well as conducted transit benefits seminars and workshops. Selection of the 2015 Sales Team Achievement award recipient was based on information provided by the Employer Services sales teams as part of their required monthly reports to COG/TPB, and through on-going database verifications.



Employer Services
Sales Team Achievement Award
**District Department
of Transportation**



SmartBenefits
PLUS 50
INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Transit Benefits
FOR EMPLOYEES



A Fairfax County, Va., publication

Employer Services
Organization Achievement Award
Fairfax County Department of Transportation

The SmartBenefits® “Plus50” program was primarily designed to encourage companies to implement SmartBenefits® programs and motivate commuters to use the new Metro Silver Line and Fairfax Connector bus service. Employees of participating companies are provided with a \$50 incentive to stimulate trial use of transit service with the objective of converting these commuters into regular users of transit service.

The “Plus50” program sends each participating employee a pre-loaded SmarTrip® card via their employer, which is available for use as soon as it’s received. After employees have enjoyed their free commute using the “Plus50” incentive, they are encouraged to enroll full-time into the monthly SmartBenefits® commuter program.

To become eligible, employees must be new to transit, not have a SmarTrip® card, and not currently receiving commuter benefits. For employers, the program is simple; there are no contracts required, no cost for trial participation. Companies apply by contacting the SmartBenefits® account team.

Implementing a monthly SmartBenefits® program will provide advantages in tax savings for employers and for participating employees.

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation has held numerous SmartBenefits® employer seminars and briefings and has secured 14 companies in the “Plus50” program. As a result of these efforts, more than 500 employees commuting within Fairfax County have signed up to participate in the “Plus50” program.

Honorable Mention

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following nominees with honorable mention:

Abt Associates - Bethesda, MD
Boeing Company - Arlington, VA
Calvert Investments - Bethesda, MD
Honest Tea - Bethesda, MD
MITRE Corporation - McLean, VA
National Cancer Institute - Rockville, MD
Toole Design Group - Silver Spring, MD
United Therapeutics Corporation - Silver Spring, MD

2015 Awards Selection Committee

Hon. Timothy Lovain*, City of Alexandria Council Member
Buddy Alves, Maryland Transit Administration
Jack Carlile, U.S. Food & Drug Administration
Tracy Fuhr, vRide
Hillary Poole, City of Alexandria
Cheryl Williams, U.S. General Services Administration

* Committee Chair

About the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, and plays an important role as the regional forum for transportation planning. The TPB prepares plans and programs that the federal government must approve in order for federal-aid transportation funds to flow to the Washington region.

Members of the TPB include representatives of local governments; state transportation agencies; the Maryland and Virginia General Assemblies; the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; and non-voting members from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and federal agencies.

About Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a network of Washington metropolitan commuter transportation organizations and is a program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Commuter Connections provides ridematching services, promotes transit, bicycling to work, telework and other alternatives to drive alone commuting, and offers the 'Pool Rewards and free Guaranteed Ride Home programs. Commuter Connections is funded by the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and U.S. Departments of Transportation.

For more information about services and assistance available through Commuter Connections, call 800.745.RIDE (7433), (TDD) 202.962.3213 or visit commuterconnections.org.

How to Get Involved

Does your company offer, promote or support any of the following: transit benefits, ridesharing, telework, or bicycling? If so, apply for the 2016 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards. Visit us at www.commuterconnections.org for more information.

Special Thanks

Commuter Connections Subcommittee 2015 Employer Recognition Awards Workgroup

Shawntea Smith, Prince George's County Dept. of Public Works and Transportation

Meredyth Jensen, goDCgo | Capital Bikeshare | DC Circulator

Katy Nicholson, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission

The 2015 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards selection process was moderated and tabulated by Arch Street Communications.

About the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Founded in 1957, The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 22 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

Policies are set through the COG Board of Directors, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board and the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee. These three boards are responsible for a broad range of issues under the COG umbrella. Supporting committees help shape programs through the dedicated work of a wide array of public servants, from police chiefs to social workers.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
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800.745.RIDE
commuterconnections.org



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