

Meeting of Feb. 22, 2021

February Employees of the Month Recognized

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors recognized three employees of the month for February.

The honors went to:

- Andrew Degorostiza, a coach operator working out of the Garden Grove base. Andrew has been driving for OCTA since February 2002 and achieved 18 years of safe driving in February.
- Ricky Losee, facilities maintenance technician out of the Santa Ana base. Ricky joined OCTA in February 2019 and is a skilled member of the team. He responds to calls and handles high priority repairs out of all five bases.
- Megan Abba, communications specialist in OCTA's Public Information Office. Megan joined OCTA as an intern in 2015 and has played a key role in ensuring that the agency provides accurate information to the public, media and employees.

Board Receives Update on 91 Express Lanes

The OCTA board received an update on the 91 Express Lanes, showing the impacts that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had on travel.

OCTA has owned and operated the 91 Express Lanes since 2003. The 10-mile toll facility stretches between SR-55 in Anaheim and the border with Riverside County.

In April, following a statewide stay-at-home order, traffic volumes on the Express Lanes dropped 80 percent compared to average levels reached in 2019. In the following months, traffic volumes grew steadily and peaked in October.

As a result of additional stay-at-home orders in December, traffic volumes and toll revenues declined again, but only to a 25 percent decrease from the previous year. Overall, traffic volumes in 2020 totaled 13 million, a 27 percent decrease over 2019.

Despite the many challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 91 Express Lanes continues to provide a reliable and convenient option to speed up travel times for drivers traveling through the 91 corridor. As a result of its history of conservative financial investments, the 91 Express Lanes continues to be in a strong financial position and continues to advance transportation improvements for everyone who uses the 91 corridor – whether or not they choose to use the Express Lanes.

OCTA Requests Feedback from the Public on Bus Service Changes

OCTA continues to adjust OC Bus service during the COVID-19 pandemic and wants to hear from riders and members of the public to help keep Orange County moving safely.

Since March 2020, when the initial stay-at-home order was issued by the state, OCTA reduced bus service in light of the reduced ridership and for employee safety, but continued providing vital public transit for those who need it to reach essential jobs and medical appointments.

Since then, bus service has been gradually increased to accommodate increased ridership and to ensure social distancing. Currently, service is running approximately 70 percent of what it was prior to the pandemic.

Moving forward, OCTA is seeking public input, in multiple languages, to help decide what changes to make to bus service in June and beyond.

Members of the public are encouraged to share their opinions on all of the changes to date by filling out an online questionnaire – available through March 26, online at ocbus.com/2021feedback.

In addition, several public meetings via Zoom are planned to provide information and gather feedback. Meetings are planned in English on Tuesday, March 9, and in Vietnamese and Spanish on Wednesday, March 10. Comments can also be submitted at any time by Friday, March 26, by phone.

A public hearing on the June service change will also be held during the OCTA board meeting at 9 a.m. on Monday, April 26. Public comments can be submitted by email by 5 p.m. April 25.

For more details on how to join the public meetings or submit comments, visit OCBus.com/2021BusChange.