

The Resource

Published by The Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program

**2009 HELPING HAND MINI GRANTS
AVAILABLE THROUGH MARCH 15, 2009 FOR
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

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The Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program (MARTap), on behalf of the Executive Office of Transportation, announced the "Helping Hand Mini Grants" Program of up to \$750 for equipment or projects designed to update and enhance transit services in rural and small urban services.

The grant is designed to improve delivery of transportation services for Massachusetts regional transit authorities, non-profit transportation providers and councils on aging. Priority will be given to transportation providers that serve rural areas of the Commonwealth.

Computer hardware and software, both new and upgrades; fax machines, driver recruitment campaigns and marketing and promoting materials including internet web design and set up are just some of the eligible uses. Other eligible uses include:

- Travel training for customers
- Community surveys on transportation needs
- Tools that enhance passenger security
- Accessory equipment for vehicles
- GPS

For items (such as computers, office equipment, tools and accessory equipment), MARTap encourages you to visit www.comm-pass.com. If you need help on this website, please contact MARTap. Visit www.martap.org for complete information or contact Carol Tally at 877-627-8271.

Important Dates to Remember:

- Application period February 1, 2009 – March 15, 2009
- April decision by Advisory Committee
- Expenditure deadline July 28, 2009
- Reimbursement request deadline August 28, 2009
- No late reimbursement requests will be honored

MARTAP ADVISORY COMMITTEE '09

Paula George – Committee Chair
Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority

Francis Gay
Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority

Judy O'Connor
*Millbury Council on Aging
Director of the Friends of the Millbury Seniors*

Joanne Champa
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Community Transit Services, Inc.

Paul Talbot
Cape Ann Transportation Authority

Angela Grant
Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority



Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities Wins National Marketing and Communications Award

Agency awarded first place in the American Public Transportation Association's AdWheel Awards

The Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities (MARTA) received first place honors in the 29th Annual American Public Transportation Association (APTA) AdWheel Awards for the Senior Transportation marketing campaign. The awards, which recognize excellence in public transportation marketing and communications, were presented at a ceremony on October 6, in San Diego during the APTA 2008 Annual Meeting and International EXPO. Nearly 750 entries were submitted in this year's competition.

"APTA is pleased to honor the winning entries of the 2008 AdWheel Awards; this competition showcases the best of the best in public transportation marketing and communications," stated William W. Millar, APTA President. "These individuals and organizations have done an outstanding job in helping to further promote our industry."

In the fall of 2007 MARTA formed a committee to develop a brochure focusing on senior transportation. Committee members included Kurt Dossin, RouteMatch Software Regional Sales Director; Judy O'Connor, Director of the Millbury Council on Aging; Jeannette Orsino, MARTA Executive Director and Paula Leary, NRTA Administrator and Executive Vice President of MARTA. The intent of the brochure is to provide information to various agencies (i.e.: RMV's, Council on Aging, State Police, Medical Facilities), seniors and their families about public transportation when they can't or no longer want to drive. "MARTA wanted to provide information about public transit services that would make it easy for people to find out what transportation services are available to them in their region" said Paula Leary, Executive Vice President of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities. "This brochure is to assist in the transition from driving to using public transportation, making it easy and take away any concerns seniors may have in being able to continue with their everyday transportation needs, such as errands and medical appointments" stated Leary. The brochure contains a map of the Commonwealth with the RTA's service areas and a listing of contact phone numbers to which they should call to find out specific information on the transportation services available to them in their own community.

The Registry of Motor Vehicles partnered with MARTA for the development and dissemination of this brochure. The brochure was widely distributed throughout the Commonwealth to RMV's, doctor and medical offices, Council on Agings, and is available on the RTA's websites. For a complete list of all 2008 AdWheel Award winners visit www.apta.com.

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APTA is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 member organizations including public transportation systems; planning, design, construction and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; and state associations and departments of transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical public transportation services and products. APTA members serve more than 90 percent of persons using public transportation in the United States and Canada.



NorthEast
Passenger
Transportation
Association

NEPTA

2009 NORTHEAST PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE AND EXPO

U.S Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration, Region 1 and the NorthEast Passenger Transportation Association (NEPTA) bring their regional conference and Transportation EXPO to Hartford, Connecticut on March 18 & 19, 2009. For complete information, visit www.nepta.org or call 800-NEPTA01 (637-8201). There is still time to register!

MARTAP TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS

MArtap scholarships are still available as of October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009. The funding for this fiscal year is \$11,000.

Through the scholarship program, MArtap will continue to offer scholarships for tuition and expense for individuals to attend training courses or workshops. Through this aid, transportation providers in Massachusetts are able to attend valuable training opportunities, including community-based continuing education programs, which otherwise may be prohibitively costly.

In addition, transportation providers are able to attend national or regional transit conferences and thereby further develop professional networks on a state, regional and national basis and facilitate networking informational exchanges within Massachusetts. This program is geared to benefit all transit providers throughout the Commonwealth.

Two scholarships per fiscal year are available for eligible agencies, with a maximum of \$750 per scholarship. Most MArtap scholarships provide 90 percent of the cost of tuition and expenses for conference/training, but may cover the full cost. Those eligible for scholarships include recipients of federal transit assistance under Section 5311, including RTAs and their op-

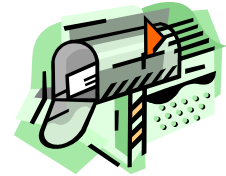
erating contractors, Section 5310 and/or the state's Mobility Assistance Program (MAP) recipients. Scholarships are available to organizations operating in rural and small urban regions, and in urban areas. Private non-profits and human service agencies, along with private bus operators in non-urbanized areas are also eligible for the scholarships.

Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on available funds. Funding for the Fiscal Year 2009 scholarship program is \$11,000. Training must be transportation related and result in the improvement of your transportation services.

The scholarship program is administered by MARTA and the MArtap Advisory Committee. All requests must be submitted to MArtap 30 days prior to the event. For complete information and guidelines, visit www.martap.org and visit MArtap Scholarship link.

Questions on any MArtap program? Contact Carol Tally, Program Manager, at 877-MArtap (627-8271).

MArtap
PO Box 155
Foxboro, MA 02035
info@martap.org



If your contact information changes, please let us know.

Email:
Carol Tally at
info@martap.org

Be sure to include your agency/organization name.

2009 Northeast
Passenger
Transportation
Conference and EXPO in
sponsorship with the
FTA.
For complete
information, visit [www.
nepta.org](http://www.nepta.org) or call 800-
NEPTA01 (637-8201)

COMMUNITY UPDATES

The Resource is printed throughout the year by the Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program (MArtap) with funds provided to The Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities (MARTA) by The Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration.

This publication is a wonderful place to share your news. If you have a story about your agency and/or the people around you, please direct all editorial and advertising questions to: Carol Tally, MArtap, PO Box 155, Foxboro, MA 02035 (p) 877-MArtap1 (627-8271), (f) 508-698-2002, email: info@martap.org.

Help MArtap keep you informed...

The Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program (MArtap), on behalf of the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), would like to keep you updated on all of the programs MArtap has to offer. To better serve you, be sure to keep us posted on any contact changes. *Be sure to reference your agency when emailing us any information changes. Thank you.*

PO. Box 155
Foxboro, MA 02035

Phone: 877-MARtap1 (627-8271)

Fax: 508-698-2002

Email: info@martap.org

www.martap.org

www.martap.org

WEBSITE FEATURES:
DRIVER TRAINING SCHEDULE
SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES
AND MORE

PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL TRANSIT INSTITUTE AWARDS MARY SPARDA WITH "TRAINING PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR" AWARD

Denver, CO - The National Transit Institute (NTI) presented its 2008 Training Professional of the Year Award to **Mary Sparda**, Safety & Training Manager at Professional Transit Management (PTM) of Cape Cod, Managing Company for Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA).

Sparda was awarded with this honor during the Transit Training Awards ceremony, as part of the NTI Transit Trainers' Workshop held in Denver, October 19-22, 2008. Also honored at the event were Linda Watson of the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX), and Ed Wisniewski, Scott Clark, and Arthur Jacobs of the Sunshine Line of Hillsborough County Health and Social Services.

Sparda was honored with this award for her extensive contributions to the training initiatives at CCRTA, where her high-energy and innovative classes fill quickly to capacity. After 26 years of experience as a driver, supervisor, and manager in both truck and bus operations, Sparda joined PTM of Cape Cod in 2006 and took on responsibility for all new driver recruitment and training, as well as implementation and compliance with all environmental, health, and safety policies. Sparda is largely regarded as a "walking reference library" by colleagues and staff members who rely on her expertise with regard to health, safety, and environmental issues.

Upon her arrival, Sparda enhanced and refreshed the training program at CCRTA for approximately 140 drivers, ensuring that all operators received the required training, while also providing new, innovative and interactive training programs, such as "Getting an 'A' in Customer Service." Her leadership efforts facilitated the kick off of Flex Bus service, the Lower Cape's full-service fixed route/flex system. In just a short time, Ms. Sparda was able to fully staff the system with trained, qualified drivers.

"This has been a huge honor for both me and my company," said Sparda, who went on to describe what makes her training program so successful. "The programs I offer are proactive and not reactive," she said. "By offering courses in a variety of formats and fostering a team atmosphere during training, students are engaged, encouraged to interact, and are offered a firm foundation for success."

Sparda's dedication and commitment to safety and training is evident in the time she devotes to training staff in outside agencies. In addition to all CCRTA operators, Sparda has trained drivers and safety personnel at many subcontractors' agencies including the Human Service Transportation Providers, individual towns' Councils on Aging, Mass Health, DMR/DayHab, and Early Intervention Program (EIP).

"Mary's impact on the organization can hardly be quantified," said Lisa Maragnano, General Manager, PTM of Cape Cod, "her duties form the core of all that we do."

The Training Professional of the Year award recognizes the exceptional contribution and sustained impact of a transit training professional on his or her organization and the industry as a whole. The Training Professional of the Year is chosen based on an applicant's innovation, impact, professional development, and a number of reference letters.

The National Transit Institute was created by Congress and receives funding from the Federal Transit Administration to develop, promote, and deliver training and education programs for the public transit industry. NTI's mission is to provide training and educational resources in support of public transportation and quality of life in the United States.