

Something

AWESOME

is happening!



**EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 8
SEPTEMBER 2019**



HELLO

fall

PSTA's GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We operate with honest and transparent **communication**.

We invite robust debate and **listen** to each other's ideas.

We take personal responsibility to design **customer-focused** solutions and own the results.

We **innovate** and drive **reliability, quality, and efficiency**.

We actively engage in **professional development** and take initiative.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



WE ARE PROUD OF YOU, **JEFF UNDERHILL**,
THE STATE OF FLORIDA'S BUS TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR!!!

- Thanks for your commitment to excellence, positive attitude, and strong leadership qualities!
- ASE Certified Master Transit Bus Technician
- Recent graduate of highly selective FDOT and CUTR's Certified Transit Technician Program
- Graduated with the highest grade point average – WOW!

Congratulations!

HELP PSTA FIND OUR NEXT FLEET TECHNICIAN!



**Earn a \$500 bonus when your referral is hired as
a Fleet Technician and completes probation**

Candidates must have:

HS Diploma or GED and
Minimum 1 year related experience or auto/diesel
tech vocational school

FL Driver's License and ability to obtain a CDL

**Apply at www.psta.net/careers
Tell your friend to list you as a reference!**

Program details available at HR

Do you know your numbers?



Grand Opening of PSTA's Stand Alone

BLOOD PRESSURE MACHINE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH

at 11AM – 1PM

Healthy Snacks Available, information on how to use the new machine and general information on Blood Pressure and why it's so important to KNOW YOUR NUMBERS.



YOU ARE AWESOME

CUSTOMER COMMENDATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

BUS OPERATORS

STEPHEN CREWS

JAMES DAVIS

LAKETA DAWSON

MICHAEL DESSINGUE

WILLMIN HOLMES

EDSON MELVILLE

DONALD NORTHUP

ARRON PLUMB

IRA ROBERTS

MARIE SAYCE

DONALD SCOTT

ERIC TAYLOR

THOMAS WALDO

JAMES WHITMAN

JUSTIN WILLIAMS



GREYHOUND OPERATIONS AND ITS SERVICE AT PSTA'S PINELLAS PARK

Submitted by James Bradford, Chief Operating Officer

PSTA entered discussions with the Greyhound bus company last November about the possibility of creating a shared customer service center at PSTA's Pinellas Park terminal. Greyhound's purpose for this endeavor was to seek a safe and convenient customer service location for boarding and alighting its customers and sheltering its employees within Pinellas County.

Pinellas Park's customer service center was chosen to best suit Greyhound's need due to its proximity to interstate 275, its available customer amenities, and its convenient and safe location. This area also attracted Greyhound because it was nearby to shopping, dining and entertainment with a bustling public transportation hub connected to the plaza as provided by PSTA's multiple local connecting bus routes and direct connect service.

Greyhound serves nearly sixty (60) cities and towns in Florida including notable areas like Daytona Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Key West, Miami, Naples, Orlando, Panama City, Pensacola, Sarasota, St. Augustine, St. Petersburg, Tallahassee, Tampa and West Palm Beach. Greyhound makes connections through its service to every state in the U.S. with exceptions to Hawaii and Alaska.

Greyhound will operate seven (7) days a week from PSTA's Shoppes at Park Place terminal departing at 8:20am & 4:40am headed directly to Sarasota and, 3:15pm & 6:30pm headed directly to Tampa.

Route	Direction	Arrival to Pinellas Park	FROM	Departure from Pinellas Park	TO
3749	SB	8:10am	Tampa	8:20am	Sarasota
3752	NB	3:05pm	Sarasota	3:15pm	Tampa
3755	SB	4:30pm	Tampa	4:40pm	Sarasota
1008	NB	6:20pm	Sarasota	6:30pm	Tampa



PLEASE JOIN US

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony
in celebration of our new
partnership with Greyhound

September 23
10 a.m.

Pinellas Park Transit Center

3801 70th Ave. N.
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
(on the south side of the
Shoppes at Park Place mall)





Thank you to the PSTA Benefits Team & Cigna for offering employees FREE flu shots!



Photo Credits: Nicole Dufva



Submitted by James Bradford, Chief Operating Officer

PSTA joins Atlanta's MARTA agency and Tampa's HART agency in rolling out the **Ride with Respect** campaign in efforts to raise awareness, promote harmony, and create a more comfortable shared-space aboard our vehicles for our operators and transit customers alike.

Ride with Respect calls on everyone **to be kind** and **to be courteous to one another**. The campaign challenges people to each do their parts in contributing to a worry-free trip that feels respectful, peaceful, and help ensures that everyone just enjoys the ride. Our desired outcome is to create a wonderful experience for our riders, operators, and come across that way to those looking in.

Both PSTA and HART desire that the **Ride with Respect** campaign will be the initiative to launch a safer, kinder, friendlier and more joyous shared-ride experience on all our vehicles. We will look to capitalize on the launch of this campaign with additional synergizing initiatives to keep the movement going.



Pictured: Tab Ward,
Driver of the Year!



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEYS

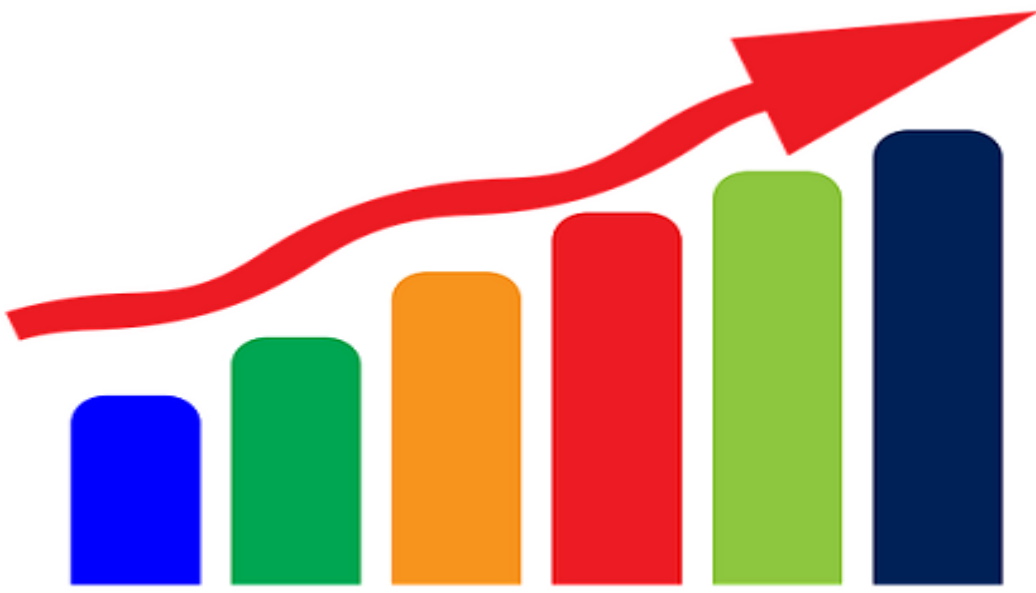
THANK YOU for participating in the recent PSTA Employee Engagement Survey! Your feedback will help us to continue to DRIVE CHANGE in the organization.

If you have yet to receive your \$5 Walmart gift card, please come to HR to sign for it and pick it up.

If you work a shift where you are unable to make it to the HR window during business hours (8 am to 4:30 pm), please contact Tamika White (twhite@psta.net, 727-540-1850) to make other arrangements.

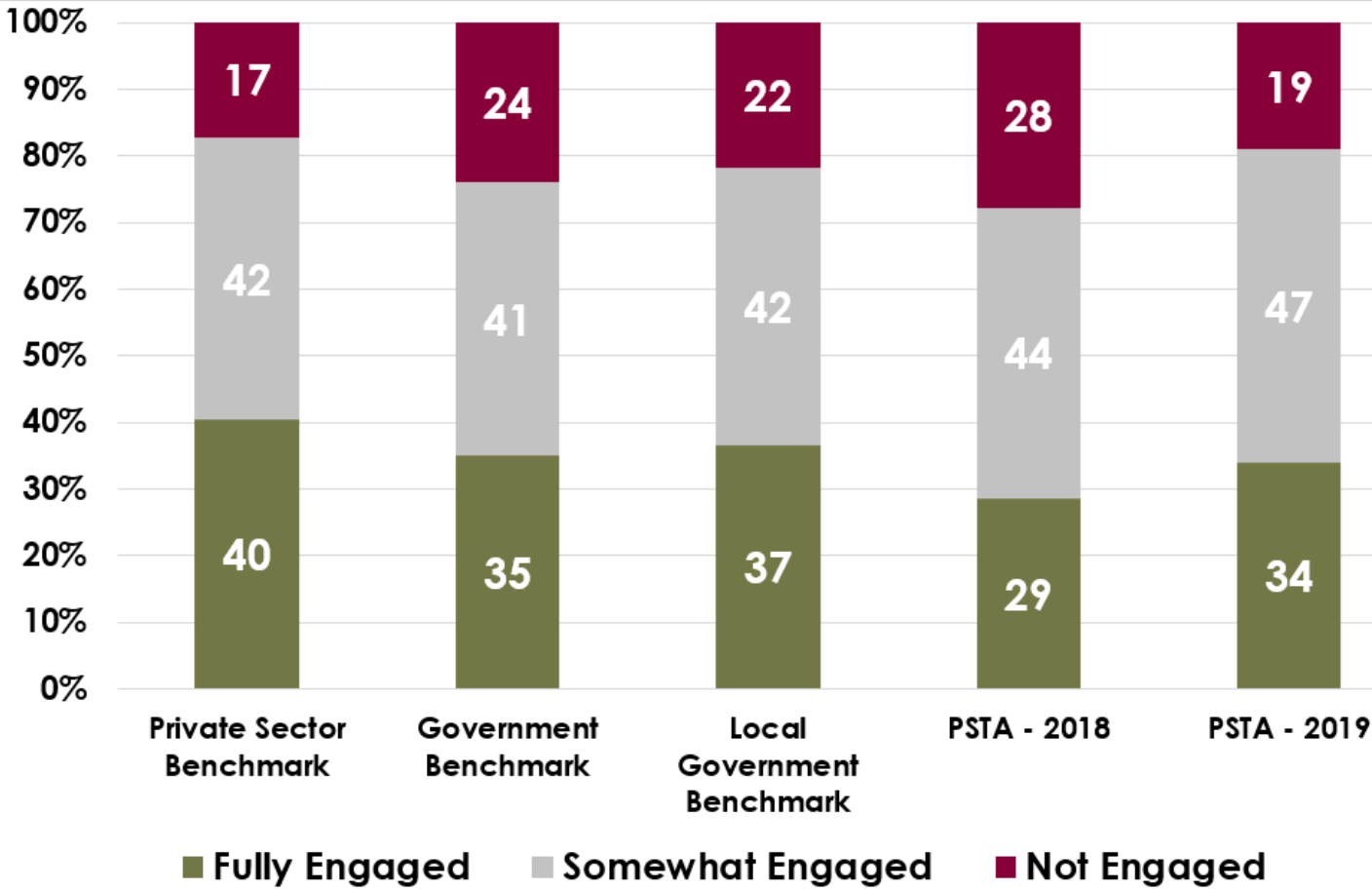
**WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING
PSTA THE BEST PLACE TO WORK!**





OUR SCORE WENT UP!

Overall Engagement Levels



- The 2019 fully engaged score for PSTA employees (34%), increased by 5 points from 2018.
- PSTA's somewhat- engaged score (47%) is above all benchmarks, and the not-engaged score (19%) is below the government benchmarks.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF!

Submitted by Trish Collins, Director of HR

Please help me welcome **Tamra Lozanovski** as our new HR Manager! Tamra comes to us with a human resources background in consulting, the public sector, and manufacturing environments, with a Bachelor's Degree from Thomas More College in Kentucky. In her new role, she'll manage the day-to-day operations of the HR department and be a resource to support employees and managers with many HR services.

Tamra grew up in Valparaiso, Indiana and has lived in Florida since 2014. She likes to garden, cook, swim, read, and spend time at the beach.

Please stop by to meet Tamra and welcome her to the team!



WHY EVERYONE IS TALKING ABOUT PSTA'S BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Submitted by Michael Hetrick, Project Coordinator, PMO

It has been an exciting few months as final design of PSTA's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project advances. The project team has recently achieved several important milestones beginning with the Federal Transit Administration Risk Assessment Workshop conducted at PSTA on July 24th and 25th. The FTA and the Project Management Oversight Consultant (PMOC), CH2M Jacobs, were both in attendance. The purpose of the risk workshop was to review the proposed design and discuss known and unknown vulnerabilities identified by the project and how PSTA plans to minimize those risks. FTA and PMOC staff then call on their extensive knowledge and experience with other transit projects to determine if there are additional risks that should be identified. We are anticipating receipt of the PMOC's report in September 2019.



At the beginning of August, the BRT reached its 60% design milestone. Through extensive coordination and communication with project stakeholders like FDOT, the City of St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Forward Pinellas, and the community at large, the station locations have been confirmed and the architecture of the station platforms and amenities have been further refined. As part of each design milestone (30%, 60%, 90% design), PSTA engages the community in conversations about the project by way of open house events. Members of the community are encouraged to attend open houses to express their excitement, or their concerns, for the project. At the 60% design milestone, an open house was held on September 11, 2019 at the South Pasadena City Hall. Several PSTA and design team staff were present to answer questions and provide detailed information about the project. A second open house is scheduled for September 25th in the PSTA Admin Lobby from 5:00 – 6:00 PM. If you have questions about the project, or just want to learn more about the BRT, please plan to attend. Additionally, the project team is coordinating with the Transportation department to set up open house Q&A sessions in the driver's lounge in November of this year. Keep a look out for flyers advertising this event!





Last but certainly not least, the project team is happy to announce that a purchase order was issued to Gillig on September 11th for the purchase of nine 40' Low Floor BRT Hybrid buses. The BRT buses will have a look of their own both on the inside and the outside. The buses will be wrapped with unique branding specific to the BRT to identify this fleet as a premium service. Missing from the front of the bus will be bike racks that will be moved *inside* the bus! Customers will board the bus with their bikes and secure them to racks inside. This will speed the boarding and alighting process and improve transit times. Also missing from the BRT buses will be the fare box. There will not be cash transactions on the BRT service. All fare payments will occur off the bus allowing passengers to board and validate their fare at any door. There will be other exciting features included on the BRT fleet as well. **Come to any of the open houses to learn more!**



CAREER Pathways

»» EXCITE. EXPLORE. ENGAGE.

Submitted by Trevor Endreson, Mobility Associate



My name is **Trevor Endreson!** I've been in public transit for about 15 years and I have an AA in Computer Information Systems. After moving to Florida, I joined PSTA as a Bus Operator.

I noticed early on that promotion within the organization is encouraged and supported. Seeing opportunities in the future I wanted to pursue, I moved into the CSR department and then joined the DART department's MOD team, where I'm able to apply my skills more broadly.

One tip I can offer to coworkers looking to move up is to do your work with integrity and pay attention to detail. People will notice and doors will open to you!

OCTOBER 2019 SERVICE CHANGES

EFFECTIVE 10/20/2019

Minor schedule changes will be made on Routes 9, 14, 20, 52/52LX, 62, and 300X.

Route	Route/Service Change
18	Bus Stop Optimization, Largo Mall routing change, no longer serve Heritage Loop (Scheduled times adjusted)
CAT	Bus Stop Optimization, no longer serves Pass-A-Grille (Scheduled times adjusted)
59	Largo Mall routing changed
73	Bus stop optimization (Scheduled times adjusted)
812	Change from flex route to fixed route, add bus stops
813	Change from flex route to fixed route, add bus stops
814	Change from flex route to fixed route, add bus stops

Heritage Loop: As of October 20, 2019, Route 18 will no longer service Heritage Loop. Effective October 20, 2019. Riders will be able to access Route 18 by using the new Direct Connect location.

Other transportation options are Mobility on Demand and DART.

Pass-A-Grille: As of October 20, 2019, Central Avenue Trolley (CAT) will no longer serve Pass-A-Grille. The CAT last stop will be at the Don Cesar.

Riders that would like to travel to Pass-A-Grille will need to transfer to the new St Pete Beach transportation service. The decision to change the service was made by the City of St Pete Beach.

Largo Mall: As of October 20, 2019, Route 18 and 59 will only stop at #3651 that is currently located next to Five Below.

Connectors: As of October 20, 2019, the North County Connectors will no longer flex or deviate. Stops are being added to the routes. Riders can only be picked up at these designated stops.

Bus Stop Optimization: Routes 18, 73, and CAT

What is Bus Stop Optimization? The addition, improvement, and/or reduction of bus stops to help decrease travel time, keep the buses on schedule, and improve the rider experience.

What does this mean? Buses will stop less, which helps get you to your destinations faster. It also helps buses stay on schedule. Less idle time will reduce noise, pollution and fuel use.

How are changes determined? The following are some of the qualities used to determine if a stop was removed or kept:

- Proximity – spacing between stops
- Ridership – total riders getting on and off buses at each stop
- Transfer Points – stops that allow for route transfers
- Point of Interest – stops that are near parks, shopping, apartments, future development, etc.



Join us for . . .

The Great American Teach-In

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13th!

Members of the community are invited into Pinellas County schools for an hour, a few class periods or an entire school day to share information with students about their career or hobby, to organize an activity, to read a story or to teach a class.

Teach-In participants will be able to see Pinellas County public schools and interact with students firsthand. For alumni of Pinellas County Schools, the annual event is an excellent opportunity to return to old classrooms in elementary, middle or high schools, and visit favorite teachers or staff members.

In addition to elementary, middle and high schools, there also are dropout-prevention programs, exceptional education schools, and alternative schools that are seeking speakers.

If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Nicole Dufva, Public Engagement Planner, at 540-1804 or ndufva@psta.net



SEPTEMBER IS

Healthy Aging

MONTH

*Submitted by Liz O'Hara,
Benefits Manager*

10

HEALTHY BRAIN AGING TIPS

1

KEEP YOUR BRAIN INSULIN SENSITIVE

Insulin resistance can cause type 2 diabetes along with dementia and Alzheimer's Disease. Avoid eating saturated fat with simple sugar.

2

INCREASE BDNF

BDNF increases neurogenesis and improves cognition. Aerobic and strength training increase BDNF. The greater the intensity, the higher the boost in BDNF.

3

MANAGE STRESS

Chronic stress decreases neuronal plasticity. Exercise, positive coping, optimism, and resilience can all improve stress response.

4

EXERCISE

Three 45 minute exercise sessions per week is enough to increase brain volume, boosting memory performance.

5

USE YOUR BRAIN

Reading, discussion groups, board games, solving puzzles, playing a musical instrument, and learning a second language increase cognitive reserves, protecting against age related cognitive decline.

6

MEDITATION

Meditation can cause positive structural changes in the brain, increase neuroplasticity, and improve the stress response.

7

POLYPHENOLS

People who ate polyphenol rich foods had better cognitive ability and lower risk of cognitive decline.

8

CURCUMIN

Curcumin fights inflammation and oxidative damage while preventing amyloid-beta plaque build-up. 400mg curcumin daily can improve attention and working memory along with improving mood.

9

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Found in fatty fish, omega-3 support mitochondria function, promote healthy brain glucose utilization, and reduces oxidative stress.

10

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Intermittent fasting has neuroprotective effects along with increasing BDNF and reducing inflammation.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Submitted by Kerry Dudley, Accountant

Almond Joy Fat Bomb

- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 3 TBS coconut milk – full fat
- 2 TBS + 2 tsp coconut oil (melted)
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 4 oz sugar free chocolate chips
- 1 pinch of salt
- ¼ cup of Stevia
- 12 Almonds



Add shredded coconut, coconut milk, coconut oil, vanilla, salt and Stevia together in a bowl. Mix well with a spoon or fork. Fill 12 mini cupcake paper cups with mixture and put in freezer for 30 minutes. Microwave or melt chocolate chips and stir until smooth. Take the coconut cups from freezer after 30 minutes and add one almond to each cup. Drizzle chocolate over the top of each coconut cup and refrigerate or freeze until set.

Serving 1 candy
Carbs 3g

Calories 96
Fiber 1g

Fat 9g
Protein 2g

(keto, paleo, low carb)

Happy September Birthdays



FUN FACTS

- The zodiac signs for September are Virgo (August 23 – September 22) and Libra (September 23 – October 22).
- Famous people born in September include Adam Sandler, Adam West, Agatha Christie, Alexis Bledel, Amy Winehouse, Andrea Bocelli, Beyonce Knowles, Bill Murray, Brigitte Bardot, Bruce Springsteen, Carl Zeiss, Colin Firth, Confucius, Daniel Defoe, Freddie Mercury, Greta Garbo, Ivan Pavlov, Karl Lagerfeld, Lance Armstrong, Leonard Cohen, Michael Faraday, Monica Bellucci, Queen Elizabeth I, Richard I, Sophia Loren, Stephen King, T. S. Eliot, Truman Capote, Upton Sinclair.
- The birthstone for September is the sapphire. The sapphire, present in almost every color (rich blue, pink, yellow, green etc.), symbolizes intuition, clarity of thought, peacefulness, as well as loyalty and trust.
- There are three traditional flowers of the month of September: the aster, symbolizing love; the forget-me-not, representing memories and love; and the morning glory, symbolizing unrequited love.
- Special holidays in September include Labor Day (the first Monday in September), the September equinox (September 22nd), National Grandparents' Day (celebrated in the U.S. on the first Sunday after the first Monday of September).

Call for Newsletter Submissions...



Please send us your stories!!!

- Cool ideas for the newsletter? Please contact Tamika White, 540-1850 or twhite@psta.net.
- Newsletter Committee members include: Juan Luvian, Nicole Dufva, and Shelbie Harris.

