



WORKFORCE TRANSPORTATION AT

HARBOR FREIGHT

Why I Ride, Drive, Partner: A Campaign Recap

PDRTA's campaign, featuring "Why I Ride," "Why I Drive," and "Why I Partner," highlights the essential role reliable transportation plays in the lives of community members and to partnering organizations.

"Why I Ride" allows passengers to share how PDRTA enhances their daily lives, showcasing the impact of dependable transportation on their ability to access work, grocery stores, and medical appointments. Meanwhile, "Why I Drive" provides insight into the experiences of PDRTA employees, emphasizing their motivations and the significance of their roles. Lastly, "Why I Partner" invites stakeholders, like Harbor Freight, to explain the value of collaboration with PDRTA in achieving shared goals for regional connectivity.

Workforce Transportation Insights from Harbor Freight

In a recent interview, Terence Anderson, Division Vice President at Harbor Freight's Dillon DC, spoke about the company's partnership with PDRTA, which has evolved over the past several years.

Anderson highlighted the importance of listening to their associates regarding their transportation challenges, particularly those living in households with limited vehicles. This feedback was instrumental in tailoring the partnership to meet the needs of employees, ultimately enhancing their ability to commute reliably and access essential services.

WHY I RIDE. WHY I DRIVE. WHY I PARTNER.



Harbor Freight Employee
Matt Patterson



PDRTA Bus Operator
Darlene Murphy



Harbor Freight Division VP
Terence Anderson

Overcoming Transportation Challenges: Matt Patterson's Journey

Matt Patterson has been a dedicated employee at Harbor Freight for 18 years, where he drives equipment and handles loading and unloading trucks. Throughout his career, Matt faced significant transportation challenges, often having to walk, bike, or rely on others for rides to work.

At one point, these issues nearly led to his termination due to the lack of a reliable commute. However, the support from PDRTA has transformed his experience, providing dependable transportation that has greatly improved his workday and overall job satisfaction. Matt strongly recommends PDRTA to others seeking reliable commuting options, emphasizing the positive impact it has had on his professional life.

A Day in the Life of Darlene Murphy

Darlene Murphy has been a valued employee at PDRTA for 13 years, currently serving as a driver for the Harbor Freight route. For Darlene, driving is about more than just getting passengers from point A to point B; it's about connecting with people and ensuring they arrive at work on time. She enjoys engaging in conversations with her passengers, learning about their lives, and understanding the challenges they face daily. Darlene takes pride in having helped to establish the Harbor Freight route.

Every day, Darlene's work begins at 3:30 AM, ensuring her bus is prepped and ready to depart by 4 AM. She starts her day taking night shift employees home, then picking up passengers who need to arrive at Harbor Freight by 6 AM. She believes it is important to be able to rely on transportation "because our area is so widespread that is impossible to walk to work so it is very important for these people to have this transportation option."

The Impact of Collaboration on Community

The partnership between Harbor Freight and PDRTA has yielded significant benefits, including increased employee retention and consistent ridership among associates. Anderson also shared a compelling story of an employee who, thanks to PDRTA, could avoid relying on a single family vehicle, thereby allowing their child to pursue higher education.

As PDRTA continues to adapt to the needs of its partners, the impact extends beyond individual convenience, contributing to overall community well-being. Anderson believes that as the partnership continues to grow, it will help alleviate financial pressures on employees and expand its reach into surrounding areas, reinforcing PDRTA's mission to serve the community effectively.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES



ROUTE 7 PDRTA

OPERATES: MONDAY-FRIDAY / AUGUST-MAY
SERVICE HOURS: 7:00AM-1:00PM; 2:00PM-6:00PM

Connects to Marion, SC on the first (7am) and last (6pm) run of the day.

Each time (:00) represents minutes after each service hour from 8am-12pm and 2pm-5pm.

BLUE is towards Florence Transit Center (inbound) and **GREEN** is towards Francis Marion (outbound).

FARE FREE with current FMU ID and veterans. Fare is \$1.50 OR \$4 for the Marion run. Half fare for 65+ and Medicare ID.

Francis Marion University
Forest Villa :23
The Grille :25
Founders Hall :26
FMU UC :28

FLORENCE DMV
By request only

FLORENCE AIRPORT
By request only

FRANCIS MARION PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
:41 / :03

MCLEOD HEALTH HOSPITAL
:36 / :05

DOWNTOWN FLORENCE TRANSIT CENTER
:00

SCAN HERE TO TRACK YOUR BUS

DOWNLOAD THE SPOT APP

QUESTIONS?
Call us at 843-665-2227 Ext. 2
or visit www.PDRTA.org

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY

Connecting Students and Community

During school semesters we welcome back our FMU/Route 7. This route provides a vital connection to Marion during the first and last runs of the day. Throughout the day, the route offers convenient stops around the FMU campus, including Housing at Forest Villa, The Grille, Founders Hall, and the Patriot Bookstore in the University Center (UC). Students can shuttle from these locations all the way to the FMU Performing Arts Center on one route.

Fare-Free Travel for Students and Faculty

Through this partnership, we offer fare-free rides for students and faculty with an FMU ID, making it easier for everyone to commute, save money, and gain equal access to education. We are grateful for our partnership with FMU, which emphasizes the importance of reliable transportation options for students.

Engaging with the FMU Community

On August 23, we participated in FMU's First Friday Festival, where we connected with students and raised awareness about our transportation routes. Attendees had the chance to enter a drawing for a new Roku TV.

Also at the event, we had the pleasure of interviewing FMU student Emily Hickson, who shared her positive experiences using our routes to navigate school, work, and shopping. Emily, a Mass Communication major, highlighted how the service made attending school easier for her and her family.



Emily Hickson, FMU Student / PDRTA Passenger

“When I started going to school, I started to take the bus a lot because I was staying with my Aunt who could not take me everywhere. Having public transportation is really beneficial to people that don’t have a vehicle or a license.”

We look forward to continuing to support students within our communities and watching the FMU Route 7 service flourish!





2ND ANNUAL SOUTH CAROLINA RURAL TRANSIT DAY

July 10th, 2024 | Upstate South Carolina

The 2nd Annual South Carolina Rural Transit Day was a successful event, bringing together community leaders, transit providers, and stakeholders to advocate for the vital role of transportation in rural areas. This year's event, hosted by the Up-

state Mobility Alliance, focused on building connections and addressing the unique transportation needs of rural communities.

Key Speakers and Panel Discussion

The morning session featured insightful presentations from key speakers, including opening remarks from Upstate Mobility Alliance Director, GP McLeer. Julio Hernandez of Clemson University followed, sharing his impactful story of how public transportation provided he and his family with reliable transportation when he was growing up.

Other speakers included Mayor Robert Halfacre of City of Clemson, Rep. Jerry Carter, SC House of Representatives, Mayor Terence Roberts, City of Anderson & ACATS Chair, Secretary Justin Powell, SC DOT and Deputy Director Nina Staggers, SC DEW. Each speaker echoed the importance of public transportation through the lens of their organizations.

Following the presentations, a panel discussion explored the future of rural transit in South Carolina. GP McLeer of Upstate Mobility Alliance acted as moderator and panelists included: Deputy Secretary Jennifer Necker: SC DOT, Deputy Director Nina Staggers: SC DEW, Mayor Nathan Senn: City of Laurens & President, Association of SC Mayors and Don Strickland: PDRTA & TASC.

Community Tours and Networking

After the panel discussions, the day moved into three community tours. These tours were tailored to specific interests of Education, Healthcare or Workforce. The education focused tour embarked to Clemson University. The workforce tour went to Tri County Technical College and Michelin tire manufacturing facility. The healthcare focused tour went to AnMed Health and Senior Solutions.

The tours provided firsthand insights into the transportation challenges and opportunities facing rural communities. The day concluded with a reception, offering attendees the chance to network with representatives from SC DOT, SC DEW, and other organizations involved in rural transit.

Looking Ahead

The 2nd Annual South Carolina Rural Transit Day was a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to advocate for rural communities. We are grateful for the strong support and participation from our partners and stakeholders. As we look ahead to year three, we remain committed to working together to ensure that rural South Carolina has access to the transportation services it needs to thrive.



OUR DRIVING FORCE



PDRTA TRANSIT AMBASSADOR OF 2024

Congratulations to Johnathan Bennett!

We are excited to celebrate our Bus Operator Johnathan Bennett for earning the Transit Ambassador Award! This prestigious recognition highlights his exceptional performance and unwavering dedication to delivering outstanding transit services.

Johnathan consistently goes above and beyond in his role, showcasing excellence in all aspects of his work. His strong focus on safety, customer service, and adherence to organizational policies exemplifies his commitment to our mission and values.

Johnathan's cooperative spirit and professionalism greatly enhances our driving force, making him a valued member of our team. This award is truly well-deserved and we anticipate seeing his continued growth and contributions to our team.

A Title of Distinction

Presented annually to only one Bus Operator, Johnathan will proudly hold the title of Transit Ambassador for the entire year. This award celebrates the ability to exceed expectations, maintain high-quality performance, and foster a positive team environment. Congratulations once again Johnathan!



Making a Difference for Our Drivers!

Delivering Chick-fil-A lunch to our hardworking bus drivers across 6 counties and 32 routes is no easy feat! A huge thank you to Azalee McPhail, who came up with the idea and took on the challenge! Her dedication to ensuring our team feels appreciated is truly commendable.

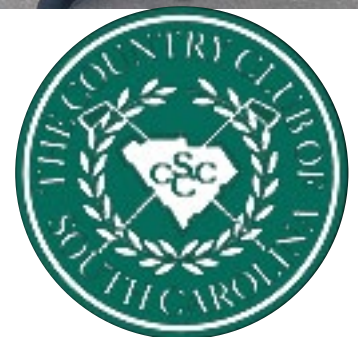
We were glad to help coordinate to treat our incredible drivers and brighten their day! We love to see this inspiring level of commitment to supporting our team and creating a sense of community!



Mark Your Calendars for the Annual End of Year PDRTA Party!

Saturday, December 7th we will hold our annual end of year employee party at the Country Club of South Carolina from 6 to 9 PM.

Come hungry and enjoy a delicious catered buffet. We'll also be giving out awards and exciting door prizes that you won't want to miss! We look forward to celebrating another fantastic year of teamwork and success together!



3525 McDonald Blvd
Florence, SC 29506

Ride A Mile: Initiative for Staff Engagement

Each member of our PDRTA team plays a significant role in our mission to *provide transportation with the highest degree of integrity, respectfulness, and efficiency across six counties in the Pee Dee.* To further grow and strengthen our team and organization, PDRTA developed an employee Ride A Mile program.

This initiative aims to help staff gain a better understanding of the unique challenges our drivers face every day while familiarizing them with routes and schedules. Additionally, it encourages staff to interact directly with passengers, allowing them to understand their experiences and gather insights to improve services.

Building Stronger Connections

To foster a more cohesive approach to our services, we're asking all administrative staff to dedicate four hours each month to ride along on a PDRTA route. These Ride A Mile experiences will provide valuable insights into our operations, helping us to enhance our services and better meet the needs of our passengers.

We encourage everyone to participate and engage in the Ride A Mile Program. Let's keep up the good work and Ride A Mile!



NEXT STOP?

Upcoming Dates and Events

- 10/11 - 630-9pm - PDRTA Boo Bus at Fright Fest
Downtown Florence
- 10/26 - Tentative Regional Bus Roadeo at Myrtle Beach
- 11/4 - 11/8 - PDRTA Passenger Appreciation Week
- 11/2 - SC Pecan & Music Festival
- 11/4 - 24/7 HF Workforce Demand Response Service
in Dillon County begins
- 11/5 - Election Day
- 11/11 - Veterans Day; holiday-off; running normal
service
- 11/28 - Thanksgiving Day; no services
- 11/29 - day after Thanksgiving Day; normal service
- 12/7 - 6-9pm - End of Year PDRTA Party
- 12/24 - Christmas Eve; holiday-off; normal service
- 12/25 - Christmas Day; holiday-off; no services
- 12/31 - NYE; normal service
- 1/1 - New Years Day; limited services - Workforce and
Beach Routes only



*For more updates
and information,
follow us on social,
view our website at
www.pdrta.org*



Share YOUR Story!

If you're interested in sharing your story as part of PDRTA's campaign "Why I Drive, Why I Ride, Why I Partner," please reach out to Lauren Leonard at lleonard@pdrta.org

ADVERTISE WITH US!

Our bus, your canvas!

Why Bus Wraps?

By choosing bus wraps, you're not just advertising; you're investing in local infrastructure, supporting public transportation and strengthening community ties. Support your local community and reach thousands with your ads daily!

If you would like more information on bus wrap or advertisements please reach out to us at info@pdrta.org

Feedback? We value your input!

Share your thoughts, suggest improvements.
Email info@pdrta.org or call 843.665.2227

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Email Lauren Leonard at lleonard@pdrta.org