

Rural Transportation: Setting the Context

Rural Transportation Roundtable
Charleston, West Virginia
January 27-28, 2009



Rural Transportation Roundtable: Purpose and Outcomes

- **Seven Rural Communities Initiative sites : Arkansas, Florida, Maine, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia.**
- **Over the next two days this Roundtable will provide you with the opportunity to:**
 - **Gather resources, tools and information from innovative rural transportation models that are serving TANF participants.**
 - **Hear from national agencies that are helping rural communities to design, implement, and fund rural transportation projects.**
 - **Conduct a site visit to Good News Mountaineer Garage and learn about the background, implementation history, and overall success of this program.**
 - **Create an action plan that synthesizes the lessons learned from the Roundtable and lays the groundwork for your work around rural transportation.**

Rural Transportation: Facts and Background Context

- More than 1.6 million rural households do not have cars (especially in South, Appalachia, Southwest, and Alaska)
- Rural areas with high carless rates are predominantly in high poverty areas and have high concentrations of African-American, Hispanic, and Native American residents
- Only 60 percent of rural areas have public transportation options. Sixty percent of rural providers are public agencies, 1/3 are nonprofit groups, and five percent are private companies/Tribal entities.
- As of 2000, 62 percent of rural public transportation users were female, 31 percent were elderly, and 23 percent were disabled

Rural Transportation: Challenges and Barriers

- **Lack of affordable cars and financing**
- **Costs of car repair and maintenance**
- **Access to public transportation options**
- **Funding challenges**
- **Gas prices**
- **Getting to jobs, education, training, child care, and access to healthcare**
- **Lack of drivers' licenses (never had one, revoked, suspended)**
- **Long commutes to jobs**
- **Insurance costs**



Rural Transportation: Nontraditional hour needs

- **Service is often limited or not available**
- **Many TANF participants and low-income rural residents rely on family and friends to meet their transportation needs**
- **Managing multiple stops to and from work activities (childcare, job, and education and training)**

Source: Friedman, Pamela. *Transportation Needs in Rural Communities*. Rural Assistance Center, March 2004.



Rural Communities Initiative: Highlighted Transportation Solutions and Programs

- **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)**
- **Wheels to Work**
- **Rural Transit Assistance Program**
- **United We Ride**
- **Community Transport Association of America**
- **Opportunity Cars, National Network**
- **Easter Seals Project Action**
- **Good News Mountaineer Garage, West Virginia**
- **Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement (SAFE), Alabama**
- **West CAP, Wisconsin**
- **Vehicles for Change, Virginia, Maryland, and D.C.**
- **Zee Inc Public Transportation Program, New Mexico**
- **Shore Transit, Maryland**
- **West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services**
- **Workforce Transportation and Referral Center/Transportation Institute Partnership, Virginia (upcoming Webinar)**
- **Community Resource Group, Arkansas (upcoming Webinar)**
- **JAUNT Program, Virginia (upcoming Webinar)**
- **Sweetwater Transit Authority, Wyoming (upcoming Webinar)**