



Rural Transportation Roundtable
Charleston, West Virginia
January 27 – 28, 2009
Summary Report



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Background

In recognition of the needs of rural communities and TANF agencies, the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is sponsoring the Rural Communities Initiative. The Rural Communities Initiative provides States, Tribes, and local TANF agencies in 16 nominated rural sites from across the United States the opportunity to share information and promising practices on critical rural issues and barriers to employment such as education, job skills, transportation, and child care. The Initiative is providing a variety of technical assistance to rural sites beginning with the Rural Communities Academy which occurred in Kansas City, Missouri on September 3rd through September 5th, 2008.

At the Rural Communities Academy, the challenge of providing reliable and cost effective transportation was identified by many site representatives as one of the most critical issues facing rural organizations serving TANF participants. As part of their technical assistance plans, sites expressed interest in learning more about additional programs in the field of rural transportation, resources on forming partnerships with local transportation stakeholders, and funding for these types of projects.

In response to this expressed need for specific rural transportation resources, the Rural Communities Initiative convened a **Rural Transportation Roundtable from January 27 – 28, 2009 in Charleston, West Virginia**. The event brought together content faculty with an in-depth knowledge on rural transportation programs and seven Rural Communities Initiative sites¹ (see **Appendix B** for a detailed list of participants) that identified transportation as one of their priorities in the technical assistance plan.

The goal of the Roundtable was to provide sites with tools, replicable program models, peer learning opportunities, and additional guidance on designing and funding rural transportation programs that will support TANF participants in becoming self-sufficient. The agenda was designed to allow content faculty to guide participating sites through the critical issues surrounding designing and funding rural transportation projects. Content faculty members were given time for presentations on lessons learned from current rural transportation models, both in the area of program start-up and management, as well as project funding.

Roundtable participants were given the opportunity to visit the Good News Mountaineer Garage, a model car ownership program, and see their service delivery model and meet with staff for a question and answer session. Equipped with this array of new information, and guided by content faculty and Rural Communities Initiative staff, sites developed action plans that captured the goals and next steps for meeting the programmatic and funding solutions to their rural transportation challenges.

The following sections provide a detailed account of each Roundtable session. For additional information see the Roundtable Agenda (**Appendix A**).

¹ The seven participating Rural Communities Initiative sites were Arkansas; Florida; Maine; Pennsylvania; South Carolina; Texas; and West Virginia.

Welcome and Opening Remarks, Participant and Faculty Introductions

On the morning of January 27, 2009, site representatives from the seven Rural Communities Initiative sites, content faculty, Rural Communities Initiative staff, and Federal staff met at the downtown office of *The Good News Mountaineer Garage* to convene the first day of the Roundtable. James Butler, OFA Federal Project Officer for the Rural Communities Initiative, welcomed all attendees and provided an overview of the Roundtable agenda. Eileen Friedman, TANF Program Manager from the Administration for Children and Families Regional 3 Office and Dan Hartwell, Program Manager of the West Virginia Division of Family Assistance then proceeded to welcome attendees and spoke about the critical role of transportation in the lives of rural TANF participants.

Following the welcome and opening remarks, site representatives, content faculty, and other attendees provided brief self-introductions. Each content faculty person provided a brief overview of their work, area of expertise, and topic for their Roundtable presentation. The following provides a brief overview of each of the content faculty members (see Appendix C for complete speaker biographies).

Barbara Bayes – Ms. Bayes is the Executive Director of The Good News Mountaineer Garage (GNMG). GNMG operates a state-wide car ownership program in West Virginia that has provided over 900 cars to TANF participants since 2001. GNMG also served as the host site for the Rural Transportation Roundtable.



Nichole Goldsmith and Rob Tassinari – Ms. Goldsmith is the Executive Director and Mr. Tassinari is the Senior Technical Manager of the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). RTAP is a Federal Transit Administration managed program that provides funds for training, technical assistance, and related support for transit systems in rural areas.

Carolyn Hayden – Ms. Hayden is the Executive Director of Opportunity Cars. Opportunity Cars is a national network of over 150 nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting car ownership for low wage working families as a strategy for improving employment and quality of life outcomes.

Peter Kilde – Mr. Kilde is the Executive Director of West Center Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Inc. (West CAP). West CAP's JumpStart program serves seven rural counties in Wisconsin, providing late model vehicles to TANF participants. The organization also connects participants to local credit unions that offer creative and low-interest vehicle financing packages.

Reginald Knowlton – Mr. Knowlton is the Coordination and United We Ride Ambassador for the Federal Transit Administration Region III through the National Resource Center of the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). CTAA provides human

service organizations, planners, funders, and individuals with expertise, training, and support in the field of transportation.

Marty Schwartz – Mr. Schwartz is the Executive Director of Vehicles for Change (VFC). VFC partners with social service and nonprofit agencies in Maryland and Virginia to identify TANF participants that meet certain employment and income requirements for car ownership. VFC sells vehicles at a minimal cost to qualified participants and provides car loans which help these TANF participants establish credit.

Setting the Context on Transportation Successes and Challenges for the Rural Initiative Sites

Rural Communities Initiative Project Manager Louisa Fuller opened this session with a brief overview on the purpose of the Roundtable, and a synopsis on the state of rural transportation in the United States. She drew attention to the severity of transportation challenges in rural areas by pointing out that only 60 percent of non-urban areas have public transit options and that more than 1.6 million rural households do not have vehicles. Ms. Fuller also reflected on some of the specific transportation challenges shared by many of the Rural Communities Initiative sites. Among these barriers include:

- A lack of affordable cars and financing;
- High costs of car repair, maintenance, insurance, and gas;
- Low access to public transportation options;
- Difficulty accessing jobs, education, training, child care, and health care facilities;
- Not owning a driver's license or having had it revoked;
- Long commutes to the workplace; and
- The necessity to manage multiple stops to and from work activities (childcare, job, and education/training).

Ms. Fuller also highlighted the resources and strategies that had previously been introduced to sites through the Initiative. She discussed programs like the Zee Inc. Public Transportation Program in New Mexico which is using Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to provide both a fixed route and demand response service that is allowing low-income residents in the Zuni Pueblo to access jobs and vocational rehabilitation supports. Ms. Fuller also stressed the importance of car ownership programs, saying that in addition to the innovative programs presenting at this Roundtable, the Rural Communities Initiative had held Webinars and convened a national Academy that highlighted other effective programs such as the Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement (SAFE) in Alabama. SAFE has developed a free van service, known as S.P.O.T. (Sylacauga's Public On-Time Transportation), that provides transportation for low-income individuals to the job site, child care, or nearly any activity that support employment preparation.

Following Ms. Fuller's presentation, the seven participating Rural Communities Initiative sites each provided an overview of the rural transportation successes and challenges in their area. These presentations provided their peer Rural Communities Initiative sites with updates, and lessons learned since the Rural Communities Initiative in September 2008. This session also

helped familiarize content faculty with the background and context of each of the participating rural communities.

Arkansas

The team from Arkansas identified lack of education and high unemployment as the primary barriers faced by their TANF and Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) participants. These challenges were compounded by the fact that potential employers (e.g. casinos and Wal-Mart) are often located long distances from participants and there is a lack of options in public transportation.

Arkansas currently operates a vehicle assistance program for TANF and TEA participants, although program specifics differ across the counties. In general, Arkansas TANF/TEA participants are given up to \$2,500 for a vehicle down payment and access to some type of van and/or vouchers for riding public transportation. With this amount of cash assistance, participants are usually only able to afford vehicles with high mileage or mechanical problems. The Arkansas team mentioned that these types of vehicles are often sold to TANF/TEA participants by less reputable car dealers, or these cars are continually circulated through the public assistance population.

South Carolina

The team from Hampton County reported that in March 2009, South Carolina will roll out a centralized statewide transportation program managed by the contractor LogistiCare. Until now, transportation assistance to TANF participants has usually been in the form of public transportation vouchers. The team also mentioned that within the state, a portion of the potential incoming federal stimulus money has been earmarked for transportation projects.

Maine

According to the site representative from Maine, a large percentage of their TANF population are located in extremely isolated parts of the state and often only have access to seasonal employment such as working in the Christmas wreath industry. Geographic seclusion and a pressing need to access job training opportunities have led Maine to identify transportation as one of the key challenges faced by their TANF participants. The state does currently have some transportation resources that are available to TANF participants. A branch of the Good Wheels Garage program, as well as Goodwill Industries are both in operation locally and are partnering with the state to assess transportation needs and provide access to vehicles to TANF participants.

Pennsylvania

Like many of the Rural Communities Initiative sites, Pennsylvania has a large number of TANF participants living in extremely rural sections of the state. These participants are usually in the low range income level, have vehicles without four-wheel drive, and are often without access to any type of public transportation. Only two of the state's rural counties provide bus and taxi services, and while there are transit program to take participants to other counties, this service operates on limited funding. TANF participants are able to access a maximum of \$2,150 for use in buying a vehicle. In addition to this assistance, participants are also provided with six months of car insurance and a maximum of \$400 that can be spent on car repairs. Pennsylvania is

currently looking at different ways to maximize state dollars and securing funding through local foundations.

Florida

Like Maine, the Gadsden County, Florida site also reported a high number of TANF participants whose employment options were limited to seasonal work. While the state has a transportation system, there are persistent challenges in transporting participants to and from employment and training opportunities. One of Gadsden County's largest employer, Quincy Farms, requires employees to have access to private transportation. Charity Cars, the largest car donation program in the state, was mentioned by other Roundtable participants as a resource the Gadsden County team should investigate.

Texas

Employment options for TANF participants in Fannin County work exclusively with companies offering non-traditional hours, such as Home Depot, Lowes, and Wal-Mart. Even with these business hiring TANF participants, the hours offered are usually less than full-time, and overall the county is experiencing high unemployment. There is no local county transportation system available to TANF participants, which in addition to constraining employment opportunities, also puts an additional burden on parents trying to secure child care. On average, the Texas site representative estimated, TANF participants travel between 35 and 40 minutes to their place of employment. Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) does operate in Fannin County, but is only available to senior citizens and those with medical care needs.

Content Faculty Presentation I: Highlighting Rural Transportation Programs

This session highlighted some of the tools, successes, and lessons learned from three car ownership programs who have implemented rural transportation programs that serve TANF participants.

The first speaker was Carolyn Hayden from Opportunity Cars. She explained that Opportunity Cars is a national network of 151 individual programs that directly deliver cars, make car loans, facilitate Individualized Development Accounts (IDAs) for vehicle purchases, and offer various other types of support that promote car ownership. Ms. Hayden's presentation explained some of the common demographics and program features within the Opportunity Cars network:

- TANF participants who are at 200% of the Federal poverty level and lack access to viable public transportation options;
- Programs that offer some type of financial literacy education component, a third of which offer assistance in acquiring a driver's license, and nearly 75 percent that actively connect participants to credit counseling, housing assistance, and job search or readiness services; and
- Thirty-eight percent of these programs also provide vehicles to participants at no cost, while 34 percent require a minimal fee.

Ms. Hayden informed the audience that an estimated 50,000 families have achieved car ownership through an Opportunity Cars program. She also mentioned that, due to the influence of the program's network, Congress is considering adding cars as an allowable use of IDAs

funded by the Assets for Independence program. Ms. Hayden suggested contacting Opportunity Cars as an initial step in starting a car ownership program as the network contains a number of different, successful models that may have potential for replication.

This session's next speaker was Marty Schwartz from Vehicles for Change (VFC). VFC operates a car donation program that serves low-income individuals in Maryland and Virginia. VFC is distinctive from many of the programs in the Opportunity Cars network in that TANF participants are required to pay \$650 for each car they are awarded. Mr. Schwartz stressed that this investment by participants helps establish a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility for the vehicle they receive. Participants have the option of having this fee covered by a VFC loan, which has the additional benefit of allowing them to establish credit. VFC partners with social service agencies to assist in identifying applicants who meet the employment and income requirements needed to participate in the VFC program. Like many of the other speakers, Mr. Schwartz emphasized marketing as a key component for increasing the volume of donated cars to his program.

The final speaker for this session was Peter Kilde from West CAP. Their "Jump Start" program buys late model, warranted vehicles that meet affordability, reliability, safety, and fuel efficiency standards. In addition to accepting only good, economical vehicles, Jump Start differs from other programs by having higher requirements for participant credit worthiness than other car donation programs. According to Mr. Kilde, while these requirements limit the pool of eligible participants, it also creates a more sustainable and successful program. By providing higher quality vehicles, ongoing training and mechanical support, and requiring some initial time and financial investments from participants, Jump Start feels their customers have a strong incentive to act as responsible car owners. Mr. Kilde reiterated on a number of occasions the strong tie he saw between reliable, economical cars and TANF participants becoming connected to additional assets. Among some of the policy goals West CAP is hoping to see achieved is the enactment of a provision in TANF legislation that includes a Low Income Car Ownership clause as a work support. Like the other two speakers at the Roundtable, West CAP is also a registered used car dealer. According to the Roundtable speakers, having this type of business license helps facilitate the transfer of used vehicles from sellers to TANF participants and helps reduce time and financial costs.

Content Faculty Presentation 2: A Look at Rural Transportation Programs and Funding/Leveraging Mechanisms

This section of the Roundtable focused on how rural transportation programs have secured or sought funding streams from Federal, state, local, and nonprofit sources. Speakers provided an overview of traditional and non-traditional funding available to sites and gave details on additional types of technical assistance available to support rural transportation projects.

Representing the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), Executive Director Nichole Goldsmith provided an overview of her organization, the types of technical assistance they provide, and an overview of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) 5311 grant program.

One aspect of RTAP's technical assistance package that sites found potentially very useful was their peer network. RTAP's Transportation Research Center contains a virtual community with

Webinars, resource guides, and online message boards for State managers, staff, committees, and the rural transportation community at large. After speaking on RTAP's capacities and available technical assistance, Ms. Goldsmith introduced sites to the 5311 Grant Program, FTA's funding source for rural transportation projects. While speaking on the 5311 Grant Program, Ms. Goldsmith talked sites through the program goals, eligibility requirements, potential uses, and options available to Tribes (5311(c) Tribal Transit Program). Ms. Goldsmith welcomed site representatives to contact their State RTAP Manager if they are considering applying for, or had questions regarding 5311 funds.

The second and final speaker for this session was Rex Knowlton, representing the United We Ride (UWR) Ambassador program. Mr. Knowlton began his presentation by breaking down possible sources of funding for transportation projects at the local (e.g. Chamber of Commerce), state (e.g. UWR Federal Partners), and Federal (e.g. Transit and HHS sources) levels. Concerning conventional Federal funding, Mr. Knowlton highlighted key components for each of the FTA's six transportation programs:

- Sec. 5309 (Capital – recipients must be public bodies);
- Sec. 5310 (Elderly and Disabled Capital – state administered funds for assistance with elderly persons and those with disabilities);
- Sec. 5311 (Rural Capital and Operating – available to communities with less than 50,000 residents);
- Sec. 5311(c) (Tribal Transit Planning, Capital, and Operating – similar to Sec. 5311 but solely for use with Tribal communities);
- Sec. 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute – for employment related services to TANF participants and other low-income individuals); and
- Sec. 5317 (New Freedom – for transit services beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Also a program that is enthusiastic about supporting pilots).

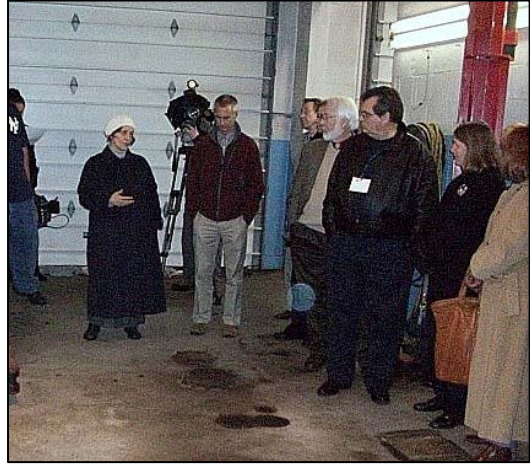
While Federal funding levels for transportation have increased, Mr. Knowlton also informed the Roundtable participants that communities often encounter difficulty securing a local match, which is required for all of FTA's grant programs. Faced with this challenge to match Federal funds, Mr. Knowlton suggested sites look for assistance at their state Department of Transportation, use contract revenue and in-kind donations as a match, or use this as an opportunity to coordinate services with other social service agencies. Mr. Knowlton stressed the importance of coordination, both as a source of revenue, and as a way to increase the effectiveness and reach of any transportation service. In closing his presentation, Mr. Knowlton encouraged sites to be knowledgeable about the type of funds that may be delivered through upcoming stimulus funding. He pointed at the proposed \$200 million in rural community facilities project and the \$4 billion for WIA related job training as two examples of possible stimulus funded projects.

Site Visit: Good News Mountaineer Garage

As the final activity for the first day of the Roundtable, site representatives participated in a site tour of the Good News Mountaineer Garage. Site representatives toured the facility, met with staff, and asked questions regarding daily operations, tips for accepting donated cars, and

marketing strategies. Sites expressed surprise at the fact that Good News Mountaineer Garage was relatively simple in design and function even though it was a nationally recognized car donation program.

After returning from the Good News Mountaineer Garage, the Executive Director, Barbara Bayes, provided site representatives with a presentation on the Garage's start-up and history; program model; past and current funders; and an overview of the transportation needs of rural West Virginia TANF participants. In her presentation, Ms. Bayes stated that Good News Mountaineer Garage averages around 180 vehicle donation per year, statewide. According to a customer follow-up survey, these donations appear to be having positive impacts on levels of self-sufficiency within WV's TANF caseload.



Of the TANF-WV Works participants who had received vehicles in 2003, 70 percent had exited public assistance, 82 percent were working, and 13 percent were in job training. Ms. Bayes laid out six components she believed critical to operating a successful vehicle donation program:

- **Marketing**: Initially extra revenue is needed to “brand” the name of your program. Continuing funds (10-25%) of the budget are needed to maintain a steady flow of vehicle donations;
- **Quality Assurance for Vehicle Reliability and Safety**: In order to keep TANF participants on the road in a donated vehicle, up front quality assurance, safety checks, and necessary repairs are critical;
- **Resale**: Vehicles not suitable for the donation program should be sold to maximize revenues and supplement the program's overall operational cost;
- **Customer Service**: As part of a program's outreach strategy, it is important to collect participant stories, conduct regular follow-up, and carefully guide new participants through the orientation process;
- **Administrative**: Ensuring a fiscally sustainable donation program requires fiscal accountability, strong program management, fundraising database maintenance, and regulatory compliance with the IRS, Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Department of Health and Human Resources; and
- **Governance**: Every donation program should have a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of a broad range of stakeholders. GNMG's Board is represented by social service agencies, religious organizations, car dealership owners, chamber of commerce staff, marketing firms, bankers/credit union officials, extension agency professionals, and program participants.

Round the Table: Peer-to-Peer Dialogue and Respondent Panel Feedback

During the opening session on the second day of the Roundtable, participants were tasked with reflecting on and discussing the ideas that had been presented during the Roundtable. In doing so, sites also discussed the ideas presented the day before that they intended to replicate in their

area. A respondent panel, composed of content faculty, listened to the plans presented by each site and offered feedback and suggestions on partnering, funding their plan, staffing, and additional advice on implementation. The following chart summarizes the goals and short-term implementation plans that emerged from this session for each participating state:

Rural Initiative State	Transportation Goal(s)	Strategies for Moving Forward
Arkansas	I. Implement <i>one TANF serving transportation model</i> , serving rural and urban areas, throughout the entire state.	I. Educate state staff on the resources provided by CTAA, RTAP, etc. II. Concentrate on Little Rock, Arkansas as the hub for any car donation program.
Florida	I. Become a part of their state's <i>coordinated human service transportation team</i> . II. Explore the feasibility of a <i>car ownership program</i> .	I. Outreach to key state and legislative stakeholders. II. Consult with RTAP for any technical assistance questions.
Maine	I. <i>Create a new model</i> that increases the effectiveness of the state's current car ownership program. II. <i>Submit a RFP</i> that captures the strategies and goals of the new transportation model. III. <i>Implement the new transportation model</i> in Washington County.	I. Distribute Rural Communities Initiative resources to all counties in the state. II. Conduct a site visit to Opportunity Cars. III. Consult with the RTAP for any technical assistance questions.
Pennsylvania	I. Implement a <i>pilot car ownership program</i> as a means for increasing work participation rates and supporting job retention among TANF participants.	I. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of implementing a new transportation program. II. Research current transportation programs to find potential models to replicate. III. Lead additional staff on a site visit to Vehicles for Change (Maryland) to increase buy-in. IV. Identify specific target audience for transportation project.
South Carolina	I. <i>Find funding resources</i> to supplement their State Transportation Initiative. II. <i>Retain state staff as active stakeholders</i> in any future transportation work. III. Explore the possibility of becoming a part of their state's <i>coordinated human service transportation team</i> .	I. Consult with RTAP for any technical assistance questions. II. Outreach to the state RTAP Ambassador.

Rural Initiative State	Transportation Goal(s)	Strategies for Moving Forward
Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Identify current <i>local transportation programs</i>. II. Build a <i>network of local partners</i> to support implementing a transportation program. III. <i>Secure additional funds</i> for use on transportation project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Establish partners with other workforce commission boards. II. Become a member of the local Mobility Management Board. III. Outreach to the state RTAP Ambassador. IV. Present a list of possible transportation models to senior staff at the Texas Workforce Commission.

Capturing the Learning and Wrap-Up

During the final session of the Roundtable, the seven sites worked in small teams through a facilitated session in order to reach a consensus on the challenges, opportunities, and resources that exist around the implementation of rural transportation projects in their local communities and states. Participants used an action plan to identify key stakeholders and establish concrete next steps for implementing their transportation project. The sites' action plans will also be shared with their Rural Communities Initiative technical assistance coordinators so as to assist with any future transportation project planning and/or implementation.

Following completion of the action plan session, James Butler closed the Roundtable by thanking participants, speakers, and Rural Communities Initiative staff. Mr. Butler wished everyone safe travels home and asked site representatives to complete the Roundtable evaluation.

In general, in their evaluation of the Roundtable, participants reported a high rate of satisfaction with the design and content of the Rural Transportation Roundtable. Participants particularly reported a very high degree of satisfaction with the content specialists and the visit to the Garage. Participants felt that the content specialists were knowledgeable in the field and had a deep understanding of the issues and challenges that are involved in serving rural communities' transportation needs. Based on the written comments, participants were satisfied with the content presented at the Roundtable and the ensuing discussions. Some participants expressed negative comments regarding Charleston's snowy conditions and the need to travel from the hotel to the Roundtable location. Overall, participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the Roundtable.

Appendix A: Roundtable Agenda

January 26, 2009

All Day Participants arrive at Hampton Inn from across the country

January 27, 2009

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Registration

8:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
James Butler, Federal Project Officer, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance
Eileen Friedman, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Region III
Dan Hartwell, West Virginia TANF Director

8:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Participant and Content Faculty Introductions

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Setting the Context on Rural Transportation Successes and Challenges for Rural Initiative Sites**
This session will allow each of the eight rural sites to provide a brief overview of the rural transportation successes and challenges in their area. This will provide their peer Rural Communities Initiative sites with updates, initiatives, and lessons learned since the Rural Communities Academy in September 2008. This session will provide the content faculty with the context of the rural communities they will be sharing in dialogue with during the next session.

Facilitators: James Butler, Federal Project Officer, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance
Louisa Fuller, ICF International

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Break

- 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.** **Highlighting Rural Transportation Programs**
This session will highlight some of the programs, tools, successes, and lessons learned from other rural communities who have implemented rural transportation programs for TANF participants in their communities and states. This session will allow participants to actively interact with the content faculty, and ask questions of the faculty, who have implemented innovative rural transportation programs in their areas.
- Carolyn Hayden from Opportunity Cars*
Marty Schwartz from Vehicles for Change
Peter Kilde from West CAP
Moderator: Alison Hathaway, ICF International
- 12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.** **Lunch (on your own)**
- 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.** **A Look at Rural Transportation Programs and Funding/Leveraging Mechanisms**
This session will highlight how rural transportation programs have secured or sought funding streams from Federal, state, local, or nonprofit sources. Participants will hear about how some rural communities have leveraged funding from various agencies to implement programs and create regional transportation solutions in rural communities.
- Reginald Knowlton, Coordination and United We Ride Ambassador for the Federal Transit Administration Region III*
Nichole Goldsmith, Executive Director, Rural Transit Assistance Program
Rob Tassinari, Senior Technical Manager, Rural Transit Assistance Program
Moderator: Patrick Heiman, ICF International
- 2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** **Site Visit: Good News Mountaineer Garage**
Participants will have the opportunity to participate in a site tour of the Good News Mountaineer Garage. Participants will be provided with an overview of the history, background, and implementation of the Garage.
- Barbara Bayes, Good News Mountaineer Garage*
- 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.** **Reception for all Participants**
Location: Good News Mountaineer Garage
- Hosted by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources*

January 28, 2009

8:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Round the Table: Peer-to-Peer Dialogue and Respondent Panel Feedback

This session will provide participants an opportunity to review the strategies, tools, resources, etc., discussed on Day One of the Roundtable with their fellow participants and Roundtable content faculty. Participants will discuss what ideas presented the day before could be successfully replicated in their area, and which strategies they felt may have challenges implementing in their communities. A respondent panel composed of content faculty will assist the sites to think through perceived challenges and add value to their ideas on project replication.

Moderators: Dr. Jeanette Hercik and Louisa Fuller, ICF International

9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Break

10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Capturing the Learning

Participants will work in small teams through a facilitated session in order to reach a consensus on the challenges, opportunities, and resources that exist around the implementation of rural transportation projects in their areas. Participants will use an Action Plan to identify key stakeholders and plan concrete next steps for implementing their transportation project.

11:45 a.m. – Noon

Wrap-Up and Evaluation

James Butler, Federal Project Officer, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

Appendix B: Participant List

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Appendix C: Content Specialist Biographies

Barbara Bayes has a MSW from the University of Texas at Austin with a primary concentration in nonprofit management. In May 2001, she became the first Executive Director of the newly created Good News Mountaineer Garage. Prior to this, she served as Executive Director of the West Virginia Advocates and the Legal Aid Society of Charleston.

Barbara is a 5-Year Cohort participant in the W.K. Kellogg's Rural People, Rural Policy Initiative and serves on the advisory committee on the newly formed Opportunity Car Initiative supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

James D. Butler is a Family Assistance Program Specialist in the Division of State & Territory TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance (OFA), Administration for Children and Families and possesses over 14 years work experience in the behavioral sciences on the State and local level as well as the federal level. He serves as the Project lead for the Rapid Response to Technical Assistance Contract, the Individualized Training and Technical Assistance for TANF program, and various other projects within the Technical Assistance Branch. He served as co-lead to the Achieving Common Goals II conference, "Addressing Substance Abuse & Mental Health Barriers to Employment through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in partnership with SAMHSA and OFA in 2007 and is the lead for the Rural Communities Initiatives Academy and Initiative.

Eileen Friedman is currently the Program Manager for TANF in the Administration for Children and Families in the Region III office in Philadelphia. Ms. Friedman has overall responsibility for TANF in the states in Region III which include the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Delaware. Before that, she was the Program Manager of the AFDC Program in the Regional Office. She began her career as a caseworker for the Susquehanna County Board of Assistance in Pennsylvania and then as a Casework Supervisor. She came to the Federal Government as a Program Specialist in the Work Incentive Program.

She has a Bachelors degree from Marywood College and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the Pennsylvania State University. She received her certification in Conflict Resolution from the Bryn Mawr School of Social Work.

Nichole Goldsmith is the Executive Director of the National RTAP. National RTAP is the national arm of the 50 state RTAP program. Ms. Goldsmith's responsibilities as Executive Director include coordinating interactions between the Federal Transit Administration, RTAP State Managers, national and state partners. Her role also includes forwarding the initiatives of the National RTAP Review Board. Ms. Goldsmith has extensive national association experience specifically in program management, consortium building, and rural transportation programs, policies, and regulations. Over the years Ms. Goldsmith has designed and implemented successful programs and has an impressive track record of assessments, federal program management, and national technical assistance. Ms. Goldsmith has fostered alliances with organizations, agencies, states, and communities, and has used those relationships to orchestrate national, state, and local initiatives. Ms. Goldsmith holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Kent State University.

Carolyn Hayden is the Director of Opportunity Cars, a national network of over 150 nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting car ownership for low wage working families as a strategy for improving employment and quality of life outcomes. Opportunity Cars works with car programs, advocates, researchers, and other critical stakeholders to strengthen practice and promote policies to further car purchase and financing options. In addition to her 18 years in the nonprofit sector in senior leadership positions, Carolyn is a graduate of the Ford Motor Company Minority Dealer Development Program and previous owner of a Ford Lincoln Mercury automobile franchise. Carolyn is an Annie E. Casey Foundation Children and Family Fellow and an author and contributor to numerous publications and articles.

Peter Kilde has been executive director of West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Inc. (West CAP), since 1995. West CAP operates numerous anti-poverty programs in a seven county service area, including a large low-income weatherization program: the nationally recognized JumpStart facilitated car purchase program with its companion Ideal Auto nonprofit used car dealership. Mr Kilde currently represents the upper Midwest on the national Community Action Partnership Board of Directors and serves on his regional Workforce Development Board.

Reginald Knowlton currently serves as Coordination and United We Ride Ambassador for Federal Transit Administration Region 3 (Mid Atlantic) through the National Resource Center of the Community Transportation Association of America. Mr. Knowlton additionally serves as CFO for Knowlton Aviation, LLC and Knowlton Investments, LLC as well as Treasurer for RevolutionCare and Exec Jet USA. Mr. Knowlton is the Principle of Knowlton Advisors, LLC.

Mr. Knowlton served as Executive Director of Wheels of Wellness in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from 1989 through 2006 and had been affiliated with the company since 1979 starting as Fiscal Project Manager through 1985 and Assistant Executive Director from 1985 to 1989. Reporting to WHEELS' Board of Directors, Mr. Knowlton held responsibility for management, operation, development, and fund-raising for all of WHEELS' programs. In this capacity Mr. Knowlton was responsible for upwards of 2.5 million passenger trips per year including a fleet of over 250 volunteer, owned, and contracted paratransit vehicles.

Martin Schwartz started Vehicles for Change (VFC) in April 1999 with a \$30,000 grant from Precision CertiPro Warehouse, an auto parts distributor. The program awarded its first car in Carroll County, Maryland awarding five cars per month. Martin has directed an expansion that included Baltimore City and 12 other Maryland counties, most of Virginia, and Washington, DC. VFC has changed the lives of more than 9,000 individuals through the awarding of more than 2,900 cars. Today 40 to 60 cars are awarded monthly. VFC was selected as a "best practice" organization in a national study completed by the National Economic Development and Law Center. Martin serves as a program planner for the annual Low Income Car Ownership Practice and Policy Convening. He also serves on a national committee created to broaden the opportunity of car ownership programs for worthy families.

In 2005, Martin started Freedom Wheels, a retail used car business. A program of VFC, Freedom Wheels netted \$250,000 in 2006 and 2007 had gross sales of \$1M and provided a net income of \$314,000 for VFC. Marty was selected as the University of Baltimore 2007 Social Entrepreneur of the Year and serves on the Advisory Board for the University of Baltimore Social Entrepreneurship program.

Robert Tassinari is a Senior Technical Manager at National RTAP. His primary function is financial administration and all technical aspects of the National RTAP. This includes data collection, tracking and outcome measurements, and management of RTAP Resource Center staff. Mr. Tassinari is also the Program Manager of the Massachusetts Statewide Access to Jobs Initiative under contract with the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). The Access to Jobs Initiative is the State of Massachusetts' transportation piece of Welfare reform. Mr. Tassinari's duties include: oversight of the day-to-day activities of the program which include the provision of transportation services to DTA clients participating in pre- and post-employment activities. In 1998, at the beginning of the program, Mr. Tassinari managed a program consisting of managing 14 Transportation Coordinators (TC) who provided transportation services to DTA recipients in 13 Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and MBTA regions; training of the TCs; fiscal oversight and reporting; marketing and outreach; and, coordination with other Welfare to Work efforts in the State. Since 2001, the program has been consolidated to a staff of three FTEs providing the same level of service throughout the State. Mr. Tassinari has also served as the Director of the Logan Airport Transportation Management Association where he was responsible for the human, fiscal, and other resources in the implementation and operation of this private nonprofit 501(c)(4) corporation. Mr. Tassinari has many years of experience in management of private shuttle bus services and implementation of transportation system management programs as well. Mr. Tassinari holds an Associate's Degree in Civil Engineering, a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Design, and a Masters Degree in Community Planning.

Lisa Washington-Thomas is Branch Chief of the Division of Self-Sufficiency in the Office of Family Administration, Administration for Children and Families (ACF). She possesses a breadth of experience in a wide array of social services programs, such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills, and Emergency Assistance Group, the Rapid Response to Technical Assistance Contract, the Healthy Marriage Resource Center, and the Community Planning Grants. Ms. Washington-Thomas earned a B.A. from Georgetown University.