

Opening remarks

Carolyn Jeskey, Director of Community Engagement, Community Transportation Assn. of America

Good morning and welcome to what will become more than 150 of us in this room these next two days. I'm Carolyn Jeskey, Director of Community Engagement for the Community Transportation Association of America. And this 2014 Mobility Management conference is our partnership's third conference in as many as four years. Not too shabby. We are a field. And we have a past, and we have a solid foundation. There are more than 350 of us calling ourselves mobility managers, mobility coordinators, mobility specialists, mobility navigators and there are more and more of us who don't wear the title of mobility manager and we have the skill of mobility management —putting the customer first, forging all sorts of partnerships and seeing that no solution is the wrong solution if it gets the job done for our customers. So we are quite a field. And part of our past, too . . . since 1998, we have written in legislation mobility management and the function of a mobility manager. We've had more than ten years of funding supporting mobility management. And it's not just job access versus community New Freedom. It is Federal Transit Administration funding and of course we know our partners have funding at the state and local levels. We also have the V.A., the Dept. of Veterans Affairs that has mobility management job descriptions, positions; they have been training probably more than a hundred now as well.

That's a really strong foundation. And so what we have is a lot of knowledge and a lot of experience together. And in our present we are showing ourselves to be change makers, leaders, facilitators, conveners, and innovators. And over the next two days we'll get to hear from each other innovators in and of ourselves but innovators that are going to be on our agenda these next two days. We have Ron Hughes from California Vanpool Authority who many moons ago saw that farm workers needed additional safe and reliable transportation and adapted a vanpool model to farm workers and he took it a step further and said there are low wage communities that can't get students, students who can't even sign up because they can't get to community colleges and he adapted the model to for community college students. Van pooling for community college students.

We have Norah Cashin from Dane County Human Services who has been fine tuning solutions from using demand-response to fixed route, and when that didn't work for dialysis customers moving into van pooling and that still didn't work for the most unique customers, came up with a time banking model. Innovators. One of our innovators who can't be with us today is Jennifer O'Brien. And if you are here welcome. She's with Lawrence on Board, a rural road sharing project. She's been nominated as one of the social innovation challenge for 2014 and she's at 13 percent funding on the crowd sourcing site RocketHub.com. Innovators. And I know many of you have done the same.

What I believe we need to do is evaluate what we've been doing and scale it. I think that's our next step. But the future unfortunately we are seeing glimpses of it right now, funding cuts. Maybe new funding opportunities. We have transportation delivery systems that are changing in other fields other than the DOT that are inhibiting coordination and it's inhibiting our ability to use state funds as effectively as possible. And we have other partners in our field that are enabling better coordination. We have trends that we're going to hear about this morning and the afternoon, health care trends that are impacting the way we can deliver business and the way our communities can get healthy. We have trends that are happening that are affecting how we deliver job access services and enabling people to have successful lives and enabling them to take care of their children while also getting to a job.

So we have an opportunity these next two days to get the general shape of some solutions around job access and health care that we can then perhaps help change our field, not just in one community but

maybe with some solutions that can affect our whole field that we have. So I hope you will be able to play with us these two days, lend your expertise, lend your knowledge, share your ideas, and I encourage us to have a wonderful two days together. Thank you.

Next I do have the pleasure of introducing Tom Gottfried. He's the Program Director of the Office of Transportation Minnesota Department of Transportation ,to give us a welcome from Minnesota. Thank you.