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MAYOR WELCOMES NEW CTA BUS DRIVERS FOR RED LINE SOUTH PROJECT

New Hires Among Hundreds of New Jobs Related to Reconstruction

Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined CTA President Forrest Claypool and CTA board chairman Terry Peterson today in welcoming 33 new bus drivers to the CTA, the latest jobs created as part of next year's Red Line South reconstruction project.

The new drivers are among 400 being hired by the CTA in preparation for the \$425 million investment in the Red Line on Chicago's South Side. The drivers will operate the shuttle buses and expanded supplemental bus service the CTA will offer customers during the construction project, which gets under way in May 2013. The drivers will become full-time bus drivers following the conclusion of the project.

"This is a banner day for CTA, when we can make an enormous investment in the infrastructure of our city, and create jobs for the residents of our neighborhoods," said Mayor Emanuel, who visited the new drivers at the CTA's 77th bus garage in the Chatham neighborhood. "These bus drivers are reflective of their communities and are well-trained, high-quality professionals, who will help Chicagoans move around their city and get to schools and jobs."

Most of the new drivers either attended one of the CTA's three bus driver job fairs this summer, or heard or saw the advertisements for the fairs, all of which were held in the footprint of the Red Line project between Roosevelt Road and 95th Street.



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“These drivers are now part of the CTA team as a direct result of our promise to promote employment opportunities as part of the historic Red Line South reconstruction,” said Claypool. More than 4,000 people attended the fairs at Chicago State University, the National Teachers Academy and Kennedy King College in July, August and September.

The bus drivers start out as part-time employees, but eventually become full-time drivers as other drivers retire or leave CTA employment. Drivers earn a starting wage of \$19.27 per hour with health care benefits kicking in after three months.

CTA bus drivers go through a 23-day training course before being assigned to bus routes. The training focuses on bus operations and customer service, with a strong emphasis on safety.

The Red Line South project will also offer hundreds of job opportunities to tradespeople and apprentices in carpentry, electrical, ironwork, laborers, operators, plumbers and other areas. While the CTA will not hire these employees directly, the agency is working with the general contractor, Kiewit Construction Corp., to ensure that opportunities are extended to individuals who qualify under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as displaced, out of work or otherwise economically disadvantaged.

In addition to the job fairs, the CTA also hosted several meet-and-greet sessions between the project contractors and potential Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms, to encourage participation in the project. The initial efforts were very successful: The track work contract award included more than 29 percent DBE firms, slightly exceeding the CTA’s goal. The contract for station work, to be awarded this fall, is expected to exceed that percentage.

More information about the Red Line South project is available at www.transitchicago.com/redsouth

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