

**DART First State – Delaware Transit Corporation Garners
2008 Federal Transit Administration’s
“Successes in Enhancing Transit Ridership Award”**

By Drew McCaskey, DTC Marketing Manager February 25, 2008

One of the highest honors and awards in American’s transportation industry is the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) annual “ Successes in Enhancing Transit Ridership Award”, and for 2008, it is being bestowed upon the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), which operates DART First State, and is a subsidiary of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT).

This award once again spotlights Delaware, DelDOT, and DTC-DART First State nationally and to the hundreds of transportation systems that are funded and serviced by the FTA, which is headquartered in Washington, DC, and a part of the federal Department of Transportation. The FTA administers federal funding to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the U.S., including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, monorail, passenger ferry boats, inclined railways, and people movers.

The FTA award recognizes transit providers who tried fresh approaches to boost their ridership between 2005 and 2006. In addition to netting more passengers, the new techniques must have the potential to be successfully transferred to other transit systems. Innovations included creative advertising campaigns, fare discounts, and sensible adjustment of routes to capture a greater number of passengers.

Winners were divided into four population categories, ranging in under 50,000 to more than a million. DTC is receiving the FTA award for the category of 200,000 to 1 million in population. Riding public transit in Delaware grew 7% from 2005 to 2006 thanks to many innovative programs. System wide ridership in 2005 was 8,720,350 passenger trips and in 2006 grew to 10,233,738 trips. Part of these ridership increases came from contracted SEPTA commuter train riders increasing by 12.68% and DTC’s Intercounty motor coach riders by 22.51%. The innovating programs resulting in the 7% rider increase centered on the unique marketing program of creating and placing mini-display

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transit ad boards, in partnership with Flagship Media, Wilmington, DE, in the restrooms of hotels, restaurants, and the Blue Rocks baseball stadium, and DTC’s special Get A Job-Get A Ride program for newly hired employees. Working with employers and hiring agencies, new employees obtain a free 3-week bus pass that provides them with transportation on any of DTC fixed route bus routes, and paratransit service for their first three weeks of work.

DTC will be presented the 2008 award and recognized by nation's top transit official, FTA Administrator Director James S. Simpson, at a special awards presentation in Washington, DC on March 10, 2008.

DART First State is Delaware’s bus, train, and intermodal transportation provider. The Delaware Transit Corporation, a subsidiary of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) under the direction of Secretary Carolann Wicks, operates DART First State. DART First State services include contracted SEPTA commuter trains, intercounty bus, fixed route bus, paratransit, seasonal resort bus, commuter assistance, Operation Lifesaver rail crossing safety, and the RideShare Delaware ridematching program. DART First State provides more than 10,200,000 passenger trips annually, removing up to 6,415,094 vehicle trips from area roadways. For public information for all fixed route services statewide, please call 1-800-652-DART. Paratransit reservations and GoLink information is available at 1-800-553-DART. More information is available on the web at www.DartFirstState.com. For media inquiries, please call DelDOT Public Relations at 302-760-2080 or visit www.deldot.gov.

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