

Central Community Transit – CCT & Mid-Minnesota Regional Transportation Coordinating Council MMRTCC

WCCO TV– CBS affiliate
Volunteer Driver Story

Featured on the 6 p.m. evening news
February 10th, 2022



MMRTCC – Engagement Process

- MMDC Executive Director Eric Day and Transportation Resource Coordinator Terry Smith were impressed by a national CBS Sunday Morning news story that featured a retired high-ranking FBI official who stepped up to serve his community as a school bus driver.
- Saw the value media outlets bring as they elevate conversations to the public level and decided it would be good to reach out to television news outlets who regularly feature Greater Minnesota stories
- A MMRTCC Subcommittee member had a connection (2 degrees of separation) to WCCO reporter John Lauritsen, who is from Montevideo and regularly travels to and through the MMDC/MMRTCC Region.

Working with & Preparing for WCCO

- Smith reached out to Lauritsen and they spoke about the critical shortage of volunteer drivers, at Central Community Transit and throughout the state
- With very short notice Smith collaborated with CCT Executive Director Tiffany Collins to outline talking points that would be used during an interview with Lauritsen. Goal was to discuss:
 1. The volunteer driver opportunity
 2. The shortage of volunteers
 3. The potential impact to communities
- Both Collins and Smith worked to ensure volunteer driver representatives would be available to answer questions for the feature piece.

The Message

- Volunteers provide a critical service to those in need of transportation for appointments and daily living.
- In many rural areas, there are very few, if any, UBER, Lyft, or specialized transportation providers available to meet the need.
- More volunteers are urgently needed throughout rural MN



Partnerships Were/Remain the Key to Success!

- Good relationships between CCT and their volunteers
- Good relationships between CCT and MMRTCC staff
- Good relationships between MMRTCC Staff and MMRTCC Committee members
- Good relationships between MMRTCC Committee members and other key community connectors (e.g., the connection to John Lauritsen)

The WCCO story wouldn't have come to fruition if any of these great partnerships didn't exist! Tens and potentially hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans wouldn't have gotten this message. (WCCO TV's 6 p.m. news broadcast is one of Minnesota's most popular.)

The Importance of CCT's Volunteer – Staff Relationships

- Volunteer Driver Coordinators maintain regular contact with each volunteer.
- Coordinators know what each volunteer's availability is and what they can ask each volunteer to do.
- They've identified several volunteers who are happy to share their experience.



Questions and/or Feedback?

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