

# Smart COMMUTER

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*Commute Information for Business Executives & Elected Officials in Northern New Jersey*

## Meadowlink and Monmouth County partnership: A boon to welfare clients

For the second year in a row, Meadowlink in partnership with Monmouth County launched the *EZ Link Program* to help welfare clients with transportation for employment and job training activities.

Under this program a welfare client requesting transportation service should first contact their case worker at Monmouth County Department of Social Services. If approved, the case worker will then relay the request to Meadowlink who will help identify the most cost-effective commute option for the client. If there are no public transit options available to fulfill the client's request, Meadowlink will provide the ride using its own fleet of vehicles and drivers.

According to Meadowlink spokesperson, the program has been enormously successful. Last year, Meadowlink provided 2,720 rides for about 190 clients over a six-month period. A large number of the trips were from the western part of the County that has little or no public transportation. Some of the trips were over 40-miles long from places like Cream Ridge to Red Bank. The overwhelming demand and limited funding available resulted in the program being wrapped up prematurely. Meadowlink provides transportation services for welfare clients in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Monmouth, Passaic and Union counties that are largely funded by public sector funds.

For more information about the Monmouth County program please contact:

Wendy Arias at 732-462-3333  
warias@ezride.org



Ready for a pleasant trip: Mr. & Mrs. Nannetti, *Community Cars* members and Hasbrouck Heights residents are picked up by Volunteer Driver John Stapleton, who helps them into the car.

## Big win for *Community Cars* Program

Meadowlink's *Community Cars* outreach campaign slated for launch in Bergen and Passaic counties received a \$50,000 grant from the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation. The decision to award the grant announced September 19, 2012 by the foundation, not only gives the popular program a huge financial boost but also underscores the program's value to seniors who have been its happy beneficiaries.

The *Community Cars* program developed to provide transportation services for seniors was launched in 2008 with seed funding from the National Center for Senior Transportation (NCST). In 2010 the Beverly Foundation awarded the program their STAR of Excellence among Supplementary Transportation Program.

The *Community Cars* program provides affordable and customized transportation

for seniors. Rides are not restricted and can be used for shopping, luncheon with friends or medical appointments. Users pay a nominal annual fee of \$15. Additionally there is a \$2.50 fee for the initial pickup and a \$.55 per mile fee for trips less than 10 miles and \$1.10 for longer trips. Currently, the program serves more than 350 seniors in Bergen County.

The senior population in the US has been growing steadily for the last six years in a trend that is slated to peak in 2030, at 71.5 million seniors. That's one in every five Americans. New Jersey alone will see a 60% increase in senior citizens.

For more information contact:

Essex/Union-Ellie Ferrer (973) 961-6941  
Monmouth-Wendy Arias (732) 380-1299  
Passaic-Sjockier Jackson (201) 621-2577  
Bergen/Hudson-Kinga Skora  
(201) 939-4242

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## Meadowlink transportation programs and its impact on the communities

When it comes to transportation programs, nobody does it like Meadowlink. Meadowlink succeeds in developing “customized” programs that address specific needs of the community, large or small.

Meadowlink’s mission is simple: Implement transportation programs and services that enhance the quality of life, regional mobility, and economic opportunity for people while, at the same time, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. Its transportation programs not only embody the spirit of its mission but also go beyond. They, in fact, strengthen communities by helping people achieve the objectives set forth in their mission. Here is a rundown of how they do it.

- **Senior Transportation:** Increasing accessibility for all community members helps connect people, offers transportation options, and improves quality of life. For a nominal fee, the *Community Cars* program provides rides to people 60 and older. The program goes a long way in helping seniors become part of their community by giving them an opportunity to engage in normal activities of life like shopping, visiting friends, attending appointments.
- **Economic Development:** Meadowlink’s programs are more than just transportation services. They also yield a welcome by-product which is the increase in economic development. These services connect major hubs of economic activities and facilitate travel. The Shorelink program, which provides summer-time rides from NJ Transit train stations along the

Jersey shore, travels to local destinations within the community including the beach. The rides, available to visitors and residents alike, support economic growth for the towns in which they operate and provided much-needed alternate transportation solutions for beach-goers.

Last summer Asbury Park, Bradley Beach, Ocean Grove and Long Branch participated in the program. Meadowlink is in the process of initiating new shuttle services on the following corridors:

- Rt. 3 corridor, Clifton to Secaucus Junction
- Tonelle Ave, North Bergen to Journal Square in Jersey City
- Long Branch, linking Monmouth University, the train station and area businesses
- Neptune Shuttle from the train station along the Route 66 corridor
- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Initiative:** The SRTS program encourages parents and students to walk and bike to school, and focuses on making that choice a safe option. By working with the municipality or the school district, the program is bound to increase overall accessibility and safety in our communities.

Meadowlink is currently working with multiple school districts including Montclair, Newark, West Orange, Red Bank, Belmar, Freehold, Paterson, Maywood and Garfield in implementing SRTS programs.

To find out how these services can make business opportunities easier contact:

Blythe Eaman (201) 939-4242;  
beaman@ezride.org

# Employers In the Spotlight

## Lincoln Tech students discover a smart solution to save big

**T**heir solution: Carpooling. More than a thousand students of Lincoln Technical Institute from Paramus and Mahwah, the institute's two Bergen County campuses, readily signed up for the carpool program offered by Meadowlink.

When asked why carpooling is so popular among students, Marcia Sachs, Skills Enhancement Coordinator at Lincoln Tech in Paramus said, "Signing up for EZ Ride makes commuting more affordable for our students. We send a general e-mail, and talk directly with the students to have them sign up. The students are very pleased with the program, especially the emergency ride home!" She added that she encourages

students to carpool to share costs and reduce parking demand.

There are nearly 800 students already participating in the carpool. Some of them commute from as far as upstate New York and New York City. Meadowlink is actively seeking carpool matches for the rest.

About 5,000 commuters had signed up to carpool over the year. Schools like Union County College, Kean University, and Rutgers also have a large number of carpoolers.

To schedule a Commute Fair at your facility please contact:

Stephen Culpepper (201) 939-4242;  
sculpepper@ezride.org

## Special delivery from UPS to Meadowlink

**R**emember that well-known UPS slogan that gained foothold in pop culture: What can brown do for you? Well, UPS in Secaucus sure lived up to its spirit by signing up 246 of its employees in Meadowlink's popular carpool program. Add to this the employees already on the program roster from their Mahwah, Saddle Brook, Ramsey and Paramus locations, the number swells up to 722 employees participating in the carpool program.

The UPS facility in Secaucus is one of the largest in the nation but rotating shifts pose a major challenge for employees seeking to carpool. Access to an excellent public transit network makes transit

services the first choice. At the last "Commuter Fair" about 40 employees signed up for the carpool program.

More than 28,000 commuters participate in our carpool program. With the rising price of fuel more employees are exploring carpool options. In addition to educational institutions, a large number of employees from businesses like United Airlines, Wal-Mart, Vonage, AT&T, Jersey Gardens, and NJ TRANSIT participate in our carpool program.

To schedule a Commute Fair at your facility please contact:

Stephen Culpepper (201) 939-4242;  
sculpepper@ezride.org

## Latest Traffic Advisory to help people get to work on time

Traffic in the Tri-State Area is always a challenge. Nobody likes to head to work and find they will be late because of unexpected construction or changes in traffic patterns.

In partnership with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Meadowlink provides customized traffic advisories to help you plan your commute.

Receive advance notification about delays due to traffic congestion and construction and more.

Sign up for your **FREE** traffic advisory.

Kinga Skora (201) 939-4242;  
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Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to forward your thoughts on improving the

**Smart Commuter**

to Kinga Skora at (201) 939-4242

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# Service Updates

## Shore EZ Ride Wraps Up for the Season

The Shore EZ Ride jitney service to the beach from the train stations at Asbury Park, Bradley Beach and Long Branch came to an end this summer on Labor Day, September 3, 2012. The service was geared to serve the beach communities in Asbury Park, Bradley Beach, Ocean Grove in Neptune and Long Branch. Four buses were used to provide the service. The program, in its second year of operation, witnessed more than doubling of average daily ridership from 50 to 125.

The increase in ridership was credited to two major initiatives. The first was the Shore EZ Ride coupon that provides transit riders a free ride on the jitney, and the second was an effective outreach campaign

that included Ambassadors at the train station encouraging visitors to take advantage of the shuttle.

The federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program provides 75% of the funds for the program. The remainder 25% is provided by the local communities. The year 2013 will mark the third year of service for the program and the final year of federal funding.

Beach communities interested in participating in the program in 2013 should contact:

Wendy Arias at (732)-380-1299;  
warias@ezride.org

## Freebies galore.....

### Transit Display for your worksite

Meadowlink is an advocate for public transportation and has a 'transit-first' policy.

Transit displays provide easy access to NJ Transit's information. These displays are available for your worksite free of cost.

Meadowlink will customize and set them up at your worksite. Each display is designed to hold commute information such as car/vanpool brochures, as well as all bus and train schedules relevant to your location.

To obtain a FREE display, please contact:

Michael Jensen (201) 939-4242;  
mjensen@ezride.org