

Special-needs transportation focus of conference

Marjorie Kaplan, Contributor Published 12:00 p.m. ET Jan. 21, 2018



PRINCETON - No aspect of New Jersey life is more relevant than transportation, and with new Gov. Phil Murphy indicating that improvements to the state's transportation offerings are a priority, this month's Transportation Innovations to Build Healthier Communities Conference and its emphasis on special-needs populations takes on an especially meaningful edge.

The conference, to be held in Princeton on Tuesday, Jan. 30, will welcome more than 200 New Jersey-based paratransit thought leaders to host EZ Ride's annual event.

The free conference will explore transportation opportunities, barriers and needs for the state's senior and disabled populations with representatives from townships, public-private agencies, transportation providers, for- and non-profit organizations that provide senior services and services to people with disabilities, county-level paratransit providers, and anyone else with a professional interest in providing transportation for seniors and those with disabilities.

"With seniors making up more than 15 percent and the disabled 6.7 percent of New Jersey's population, it is critical that we work together to find transportation solutions that are cost-effective for providers and users, and that maintain dignity for these populations who need and want to maintain their autonomy," said Krishna Murthy, executive director for EZ Ride.

"We're all living longer. Viable, accessible, public transportation options will bolster the quality of life and improve the health exponentially of those who rely on it."

The conference will explore:

- National Perspectives on Community Transportation
- Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan
- The Power of Partnerships
- Community Transportation Initiatives in New Jersey
- Growing Older, Better: What's Mobility Got to Do with It?
- Bridging the Digital Divide and Providing Affordable Transportation.

Conference speakers include: Perry Frenzel, chairman for EZ Ride; Robert Atkins, director for New Jersey Health Initiatives; Julia Stoumbos, program officer for the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation; Scott Bogren, executive director for Community Transportation Associations of America; Zenobia Fields, department director of planning at NJTPA; Michael Vieira, director of special transportation services for Essex County; Anna Magri, director of local programming/minibus support/community transportation for NJ Transit; Karen Alexander, managing director for NJTIP @ Rutgers; Cody Ward of Lyft; Josh Gold of Uber; and Nick Thelemaque of GoGoGrandparent.

The Transportation Innovations to Build Healthier Communities Conference will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the NJHA Conference Center at 760 Alexander Road, Princeton. Support for the event was provided in part by funding from the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, Lyft and by the New Jersey Health Initiatives, the statewide grant-making program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

EZ Ride is providing free shuttle transportation between the Princeton Train Station to the event. Visit www.ezride.org/schedule for shuttle schedule.

For a full agenda, and to reserve a seat at the Transportation Innovations to Build Healthier Communities conference, visit www.ezride.org/events or call 201-939-4242.

For more information about EZ Ride's healthy and safe transportation solutions, including its Shuttle Services, Ryde4Life on-demand program for seniors, and Safe Routes to School programs, call 201-939-4242 or visit www.ezride.org.