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E-News



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Tennessee Department of Transportation Civil Rights Division

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2017 Annual Title VI Employee Training

Thank you for your participation in the 2017 Annual Employee Title VI Training. There was a team effort on everyone's part to ensure TDOT reached its objective of providing a meaningful annual Title VI training; a training that equipped our employees with the tools and knowledge needed to run our agency's programs and activities in a nondiscriminatory manner. The Civil Rights Division (CRD) would like to thank the Title VI Liaisons for TDOT divisions and regions, who were responsible for ensuring the employees in their respective work areas had access to and participated in the training. Without their diligence and coordination efforts, the training would not have been as successful. Additionally, the CRD would like to acknowledge and thank Avery Poor (HR Division), Suzy Edsall (IT Division), David Haleman (IT Division), and Pamela Sharp (CRD), for their collaboration in the preparation of the 2017 training module. Thank you for your comments and participation in this year's annual Title VI training. The CRD is pleased to announce that 3,811 employees successfully completed the training, obtaining 100% participation.

The Mission of the Civil Rights Division is to ensure adherence to Equal Employment Opportunities, Title VI, and Small and Disadvantaged Business Initiatives.



2017 Title VI Advisory and Liaison Meeting

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The CRD Title VI Program held the last of its biannual and Title VI Liaison and Title VI Advisory Committee meetings on September 5 and September 7, respectively. During these meetings, Title VI staff shared results of the Annual Employee Title VI training, that TDOT had reached the goal of training 100% of the workforce. Pamela Sharp thanked all of the committee members, acknowledging their significant role in TDOT's success.

Cynthia Howard discussed the internal Title VI assessments, a survey was distributed to each division reporting on its Title VI programs and efforts. Howard explained the importance of completing and returning the assessments as the information provided will be included in TDOT's Title VI Implementation Plans.

The CRD Title VI Implementation Plans are due October 1. A state plan is provided to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission and a Federal plan is due to FHWA. In closing, Howard thanked everyone for their assistance in coordinating the Annual Title VI Training.



Cynthia Howard, Title VI Program Director meeting with Title VI Liaisons Committee Members

2017 FHWA and THRC Implementation Plans to be Submitted

The Civil Rights Division (CRD) Title VI Program Staff is required to report annually on its Title VI activities to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Tennessee Human Rights Commission (THRC). The CRD is only required to submit annual updates (which delineate program changes and highlights compliance reviews, accomplishments, outreach efforts, and Title VI complaints and resolutions). These reports, federal and state plans, provide the CRD an opportunity to highlight its interdisciplinary approach to accomplishing Title VI compliance within TDOT. Furthermore, it provides a platform for demonstrating how the CRD endeavors to ensure TDOT's subrecipients are in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. More importantly, it provides FHWA and THRC an opportunity to distinguish the "what, when, why and how" behind TDOT Title VI Program's implementation and execution of the Federal and State mandates.

The CRD's Title VI Implementation Plans are due for submission on or before October 1, 2017.



Title VI Regional Subrecipient Training

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Training on Title VI and the nondiscrimination mandates plays an intricate role in combating discrimination in federally funded projects and activities. That is why training is a huge component of TDOT's Title VI Program. Annually, the Civil Rights Division (CRD) Title VI staff conducts Regional Title VI trainings, one per region. From May through September, staff transverse the state, ensuring that TDOT's Subrecipients are provided an opportunity to participate in onsite training. The trainings enable newcomers and those wanting a refresher to interact with staff, providing answers to questions and facilitating discussions. The regional trainings provide an overview on the historical origin of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and supporting nondiscrimination legislation.

TDOT Subrecipients can, and do, utilize the automated online Title VI Subrecipient training. This fiscal year, nearly 600 people participated in the online training. The dates of the Regional Title VI training are forecast at <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/article/title6-training> where Subrecipients can also register.

Congratulations Kelsey Finch

The Civil Rights Division is pleased to announce the appointments of Kelsey Finch, Title VI Specialist, as a Director of the City of Knoxville's Industrial Development Board (City IDB) and the IDB Downtown Cinema.



Kelsey Finch

The City IDB is a public, nonprofit organization that promotes industrial development and provides job opportunities in the City of Knoxville. The board's authorities include, 1) accepting land grants from local government; 2) economic development incentives, including acquisition and development of land for project sites, construction or renovations of buildings and acquisition of equipment and other personal property; 3)

construction of onsite and offsite infrastructures, i.e., utilities, sidewalks, public parking, and other improvements; and, 4) tax abatements or PILOTS programs and tax increment financing (TIF).

The IDB Downtown Cinema performs public functions on behalf of the City of Knoxville. Authorized under State law, the Cinema IDB was formed for the purpose of financing, developing and administering the Downtown Regal Riviera Stadium 8.

Both boards, City IDB and IDB Downtown Cinema, consist of a nine-member Board of Directors who are nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. Finch's term of service is January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2022. Please join us in congratulating Mr. Finch.



2017 TSU NSTI Program

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Annually, the CRD administers the National Summer Transportation Institute Program (NSTI), which gives the Title VI staff an opportunity to focus on inspiring and shaping tomorrow's leaders. The NSTI is a four-week, federally funded summer program developed to increase the awareness of middle and high school students to the engineering field and other transportation related careers.

The College of Engineering, Technology and Computer Science at Tennessee State University (TSU) in cooperation with FHWA, TDOT, United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority sponsored this year's program. The 2017 NSTI was held on the campus of TSU from June 5 – June 30, 2017. Twenty 10th and 11th grade students from across the United States participated in this year's program. The students' schedule consisted of classroom activities, laboratories, field trips, guest lectures, and the commissioner's luncheon.

TDOT Week, June 5th – 9th, is normally observed the first week of the program. This week was filled with volunteer speakers from TDOT. The speakers delivered engaging presentations, discussing their roles and responsibilities within TDOT and other career opportunities available in the field of transportation. Additionally, This year's speakers included the following: Deborah Luter, Civil Rights Division Director; Jermaine Scales, Information Technology (IT) Executive Director; Van Colebank, IT, Product Owner; Tanisha Hall, Director, Long Range Planning; Larry McGoogin, Assistant Director, Comprehensive Planning; David Lee, Assistant Director, Data Management; Phillip Hodge, Environmental Program Manager, Archaeology, and Ryan Robinson, Environmental Supervisor, Archaeology

On the final day of TDOT week, the students were treated to lunch with TDOT Paul Degges, Deputy Commissioner / Chief Engineer and Toks Omishakin, Deputy Commissioner / Chief of Environment and Planning. Additionally, Joe Kirk, IT Division Director, was in attendance and gave pertinent insight on pursuing careers in Computer Engineering and Information Technology. The "Commissioner's luncheon" is one of the highlights of the four-week program. The informal luncheon gives the students an opportunity to discuss topics relevant to the transportation industry, TDOT, and its work environment, while meeting key members of the senior management staff. The CRD would like to take this time to thank our dedicated speakers.



2017 NSTI participants



NSTI participants listening to speaker present



NSTI TDOT Speaker's Week

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NSTI TDOT Speaker's Week



Day One: Deborah Luter, CRD Division Director speaking to the NSTI participants



Day One: Tanisha Hall, LRP Division Director; Larry McGoogin, and David Lee, LRP Assistant Director's conducting a group activity with the participants



Day Two: Van Colebank, IT Product Owner presenting to the NSTI participants



Day Three: Phillip Hodge, Environmental Program Manager, Archaeology and Ryan Robinson, Environmental Supervisor, Archaeology presenting to the NSTI participants



Day Four: Jermaine Scales, IT Executive Director speaking to the NSTI participants



Day Five: Commissioner's Luncheon with Deputy Commissioner /Chief Engineer Paul Degges, Deputy Commissioner/ Chief of Environmental and Planning Toks Omishakin, and Joe Kirk, IT Division Director (back row from left to right); Samuel Hargrove, TSU Dean of the College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science (second row far left)