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Monday, January 14, 2019

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In 2012, MTS established a plan to “develop a world-class training department,” and in April 2013, MTS took a major step towards achieving that goal when Mike Perez was hired as a Bus Operations Instructor. Mike’s hard work and talent is now being recognized nationwide. In November, he was honored as the national training professional of the year by the National Transit Institute. The award recognizes the exceptional contribution and sustained impact of a transit training professional and the industry as a whole. The training professional of the year is chosen based on an applicant’s innovation, impact, professional development and nomination letters.

Mike is responsible for the development and facilitating of training materials and activities for all bus operators. In the 5+ years since Mike arrived at MTS:

- More than 660 people started in the new operator training program with a completion rate of 76%
- He developed the video-based familiarization/training that helped MTS launch Rapid in 2014
- Accident rates have dropped significantly system-wide
- The “Hot Spot” with the highest number of accidents experienced zero (0) accidents in the 12 months following an awareness campaign for both student and veteran operators
- MTS achieved a significant reduction in preventable accidents systemwide and went on to win the APTA Gold Award for Safety Excellence in 2015 and 2017

“The MTS executive team empowers everyone in the organization to be a part of the solution to improve safety,” said Perez. “The bus operators are persistent. They do a great job of applying the training out on the road.”

Congrats Mike!

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