

THE STP EXCHANGE

***SNAPSHOT
January 2008***

A NETWORK FOR STPs

HISTORY STPs (Supplemental Transportation Programs for seniors) are community-based transportation programs that complement existing services and provide transportation services to older adults. To a large extent, they meet some or all of the criteria for senior friendliness which are referred to as the 5 A's of Senior Friendly Transportation (availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability). STPs were first identified and surveyed by a partnership composed of the Beverly Foundation and the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Today, more than 800 organizations that identify themselves as STPs are included in a database maintained by the Beverly Foundation.

THE STP EXCHANGE The *STP Exchange* is a response to the call for a national forum for information sharing and exchange. It is a web-based resource for peer-to-peer communication; technical, informational, and financial materials development and discussion; and networking among members and the community at large. Not only does it provide members with the ability to tap into web-based information, it also enables them to engage in one-on-one sharing of information and ideas.

PROGRAM As a web-based resource, the *STP Exchange* provides a mechanism for developing and distributing conceptual and practical content generated by both the sponsors and the members. While much of the initial content was developed by the three sponsors (see below), ongoing content is developed by members and made available by taking advantage of the Internet's communication and information sharing technologies.

Content of the *Exchange* includes traditional text-based information as well as more robust multimedia materials. Such content includes research reports relevant to transportation options for seniors; publications and newsletters prepared by members; web links to major organizations and groups in the fields of transportation and aging; and web links to *Exchange* members. While the entire program is available to members, selected activities are available to the general public.

Examples of specific activities of the *STP Exchange* are included below.

a. An Interactive Member Map This 'clickable' map of the United States allows users to easily locate information about STPs and *Exchange* members in their geographic area. Links to each *Exchange* member can be accessed from the interactive map.

b. A Virtual Journey The Virtual Vehicle follows a scheduled route across an interactive map. Making "stops" at member organizations, the Virtual Journey is a focal point for exchange during its stay in an *Exchange* member's community.

c. Forums Message boards, chat rooms and video conferencing are available via the web technologies of the *STP Exchange*. An additional forum for exchange is a blog that provides an opportunity for members to contribute ideas and resources.

d. Internships Mentorship is a centerpiece of the *Exchange*. The purpose of the Internship activity is to enable students in aging and transportation to work side by side with managers of senior member STPs, and thus prepare them to be the transportation leaders of the future.

e. STAR Awards for Excellence are recognized as a national outreach and information program. The Beverly Foundation's STAR Search and STAR Awards for Excellence identify and celebrate STPs throughout the country. Members of the *Exchange* are eligible to participate in the STAR Search Survey and receive STAR Awards for Excellence.

Other activities include meetings in conjunction with national conferences, peer-mentoring activities, and member outreach and training exchanges.

MEMBERSHIP The *STP Exchange* includes two membership groups. Its Charter Members are leading STPs in America that reflect the organizational, geographic, and programmatic diversity of transportation services for older adults. Its General Members include STPs and other transportation services; and any organization, group, or individual interested in sharing information related to senior mobility and transportation, and in promoting the concept and practice of transportation for older adults in America. All *Exchange* members:

- must commit to provide information and ideas to other members;
- must be willing to participate in the *STP Exchange* program and its activities;
- must be located in North America; and
- all transportation services or programs must provide transportation (or plan to provide) transportation to older adults;

Membership dues are non-monetary in nature and based on the submission of program information, technical materials, and active involvement. For example, the initial price of entry is a completed profile-survey with questions on several technical topics for use in developing the *STP Exchange's* web-based information program.

SPONSORSHIP Co-sponsors of the *STP Exchange* are the Beverly Foundation of Pasadena, CA; AAFTS of Washington, DC; and the Independent Living Partnership of Riverside, CA. The planning and organization of the STP Exchange was assumed by staff of the sponsoring organizations. Future maintenance and administrative costs are expected to be covered by the sponsors.

For additional information about the *STP Exchange* and/or how to join, visit www.stpexchange.org or contact the Beverly Foundation

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