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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Big Blue Bus Celebrates 75 Years of Service**

Santa Monica, CA – The Big Blue Bus commemorated serving the community for 75 years with a ceremony held at the home of the Big Blue Bus on Colorado Avenue on Monday April 14th. Speakers at the event included remarks from Stephanie Negriff, Director of Transportation Services, Mayor Pro Tem, Kevin Mc Keown reading a commendation, and Keith Mason, a renowned poet who read a poem in honor of the Big Blue Bus.

The event was also used as an opportunity to honor some of the long-term employees of the Big Blue Bus. The honorees had a combined total of 129 years of service, and included Lewis Kelly, #1 Motor Coach Operator (MCO), who began working at the Big Blue Bus 39 years ago. Also honored were Donna Wells, Customer Service Representative, who began her career in 1977 as one of the original women MCOs, Ben Leivas, Mechanic, who began his career 28 years ago and specializes in bus engine rebuilds, and Michael Burton, MCO, who has been driving for 36 years and is a favorite among the regulars on Line 3.

The Big Blue Bus began on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1928 with service down Pico Blvd. Through the Great Depression, the Second World War, Vietnam War, up through the present day, the Big Blue Bus has been an integral part of the community. The original fare was 5-cents, and right from the start the promotion of the bus line was “Ride the Big Blue Bus”.

With a fleet of approximately 200 buses that transport more than 80,000 passengers daily across  
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a 51.4 square mile service area, the Big Blue Bus continues to meet its mission of ‘excellence in transportation services.’ According to measurements made in July 2001, ridership of the Big Blue Bus increased 17 percent between 1990 and 2000.

The Big Blue Bus is an award-winning operation, winning awards for its innovative website and the American Public Transportation Association’s “Outstanding Transportation System” award in 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2000. The Big Blue Bus also operates paratransit services and the electric TIDE Shuttle. For more information contact customer service at 310-451-5444, TDD 310-395-6024 or [www.BigBlueBus.com](http://www.BigBlueBus.com).

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