



NEWS RELEASE



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Big Blue Bus Transit Store To Unveil Eco-Art Exhibits

- ***Art Institute students hope to inspire and challenge people about the environment by drawing attention to benefits of recycling and using public transit.***

SANTA MONICA, Calif. - March 17, 2008 - Big Blue Bus officials will hold a special dedication ceremony at Blue: The Transit Store on Wednesday, March 19 at 11 a.m. for the installation of several environmental exhibits created by students from The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles.

On hand will be Big Blue Bus General Manager Stephanie Negriff, officials from The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles, and the students who created the displays.

"We came up with the idea of approaching the art school because we wanted to set up a public private partnership with one of the city's finest education centers, for mutual benefit," said Dan Dawson, customer relations manager for the Big Blue Bus. "We thought the transit store would be the perfect palette for thought-provoking and creative environmental displays as a way to engage and inspire people as they pass by the transit store window."

"Over 50 thousand people come to the Third Street Promenade every day, and we wanted to offer something a little different and enticing within the store itself to draw people in to learn more about public transit," said Dawson.

Dawson said they felt it was important to get the young person's perspective on the environmental issues facing the world today. "We felt the students would grasp the concepts quickly, and with great creativity and originality. We hoped to end up with a beautiful display that told a story, and we got that and more."

"These students did an outstanding job communicating the importance of being both thoughtful and proactive," said Dawson.

Participating in the project were interior design students Laura Moyer and Sara Parras, and graphic design students Daniela Gill and Amanda Rios. Graphic design instructor Marwin Schiltz served as lead on the project.

"Working on this project has made me realize that it's not about changing the world, it's about changing yourself," said student participant Laura Moyer. "The Big Blue Bus doesn't ride around with their logo 'Go Green, Ride Blue' because it's catchy. They do it because they're saying, 'We changed, how about you?'"

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One of the exhibits consists of a periodic table-style display showing a "How to Go Green Guide" by showcasing a wide variety of everyday objects that can easily be recycled. The display involves actual objects reclaimed from a landfill painted in bright and engaging colors.

The second and third installations are graphic representations of how taking transit translates into less pollution. One display uses toy cars to make its point, while the other uses a variety of colorful materials spread across a map to show the impact driving has on the environment.

Michelle Estrellado, director of public relations and marketing for The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles, said the concept behind the exhibit was that students wanted to create something to spread the messages of conservation and overall awareness of the environment to as many of the younger generation as possible.

Said student Amanda Rios, "We can give back to the environment more than we think. As people, we need to learn how to support the environment rather than trash it. Although cars are convenient, we don't realize how much harm they cause to our health or the environment. I ride the bus, and although I know a car could be more convenient, I have realized there are more benefits by taking the bus."

"I have learned so much by working with my peers and the Big Blue Bus on this. I am ecstatic about sharing this with my community, and hopefully it will inspire improvements," said Rios.

This is the first of several exhibits by The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles students to be showcased at the transit store during 2008. This first exhibit is being dedicated to celebrate Earth Day, and will remain up throughout the months of March and April.

In addition to the store windows, the Big Blue Bus has commissioned the students to create other art projects involving animation, video and Web designs for the Big Blue Bus Web site.

The Big Blue Bus transit store and customer service center opened in November 2007, and has been a popular local fixture ever since. Located adjacent to the Third Street Promenade at 223 Broadway in downtown Santa Monica, the store offers trip planning assistance, maps, schedules, and a full range of transit fares. In addition, the store carries a custom-designed line of earth-friendly products and transit-themed merchandise. The transit store is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information, please visit www.bigbluebus.com. For media inquiries, please contact Francine Pares at 949-481-7559 or fpares@intelibrand.com.

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About the Big Blue Bus

The Big Blue Bus operates a fleet of over 200 energy efficient vehicles transporting more than 80,000 passengers daily across a nearly 52-square mile service area. Nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to a cleaner environment, the entire fleet operates on alternative fuels, including liquefied natural gas (LNG), which helps to cut emissions by over 80 percent. Serving Santa Monica and the Los Angeles area since 1928, the Big Blue Bus has an 86 percent on-time performance record, and has won numerous awards for its customer service, safety and efficiency.

About The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles

The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles is one of The Arts Institutes (www.artinstitutes.edu), a system of over 40 locations throughout North America, providing an important source of design, media arts, fashion and culinary arts professionals.