

Reasons Why Our Volunteer Driver Service is More Dependable than Most

A stable and reliable service anchored in strong relationships

RIVERSIDE, CA, US, November 16, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 83% of the non-profit TRIP Program's elderly and disabled riders have continued to receive volunteer assisted rides during the Pandemic months, according to Richard Smith, CEO of the Independent Living Partnership (ILP). Smith says that he thinks this level of continuing service by TRIP volunteer drivers is remarkable.



TRIP Volunteer driver and TRIP rider.

In contrast with the continuing success of TRIP, he quotes a July publication of the Administration for Community Living of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, observing that "COVID-19 has led to the loss of this reliable unpaid workforce that had provided critical support to countless community organizations and a need to adapt the delivery of services in their absence."

Smith says that transit has been crippled by the coronavirus and he knows of volunteer-based transportation services for seniors and the disabled that have been curtailed or ended since the Pandemic began. He adds that, even in the best of times, recruitment of volunteer drivers and keeping volunteer drivers is generally a major challenge for volunteer supported transportation services.

According to Ivet Woolridge, ILP's Chief Operating Officer, TRIP is unique because of the relationship that forms between TRIP clients and the caregivers, friends and neighbors who have volunteered to drive for them. She says that the closeness of the bonds between TRIP transportation riders and drivers has persisted, even in the current public health crisis, because riders and their volunteers have become friends through regular and recurring transportation outings.

Smith suggests that a number of other characteristics of TRIP contributes to the stability and reliability of the service. He says that the business nature of the payment of mileage reimbursement for the volunteer makes it easier for a rider to recruit their own volunteer and the recurring payments help cement a continuing willingness to provide the rides. Also, he says that, because the arrangements for rides are made between the rider and their volunteer as mutually agreed, both feel in control and a strong sense of autonomy and freedom results, according to Smith.

This “rider-centered” volunteer driver service, anchored in strong relationships between riders and volunteers, has operated since 1993. Smith began directing the TRIP Program shortly after it began. He says, “every day hundreds of elderly, sick or disabled people in Riverside County are able to get to critical destinations because of TRIP.”

ILP is able to assist agencies and organizations across the country to [start and operate similar services](#) based on TRIP’s experience. Information about how to start a TRIP style volunteer driver mileage reimbursement service is available at ILPconnect.org. The Independent Living Partnership (ILP) is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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