



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SWITA Receives the 2023 Iowa DOT's Regional Transit System of the Year Award

SWITA wins the 2023 Regional Transit System of the Year award and SWITA Transit Coordinator Kristen Templeton wins the Operations Person of the Year award at last week's IPTA meeting.

Atlantic, Iowa – Southwest Iowa Transit Agency (SWITA), Southwest Iowa's public transportation system serving all residents in Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie, and Shelby counties, received the Iowa Department of Transportation's 2023 Regional Transit System of the Year award.

"The Iowa DOT was pleased to honor SWITA with the 2023 Regional Transit System of the Year award at last week's Iowa Public Transit Association meeting," stated Kristin Haar, Public Transit Director with the Iowa DOT. "Using FY2022 statistics and equally weighting a combination of rides per person in the region, percentage increase in ridership from 2021 to 2022, and rides per dollar of operating expense, SWITA took the top spot among the 16 regional transit agencies in the state. Congratulations to SWITA!"

SWITA has shown growth whereas other transit agencies across the state have seen declining ridership. SWITA is projected to provide over 515,000 rides for FY23, which is a significant increase from 305,932 rides in FY20, 377,547 rides in FY21, and 480,229 rides in FY22. We have also seen our in-town routes and taxi rides almost doubling what they were in FY15. FY22 SWITA taxi rides were 42,836 and we are projected to provide over 55,000 taxi rides for FY23. Workforce ridership is one specific area of growth for SWITA, and ridership nearly doubled from fiscal year 2020 at 43,363 rides to fiscal year 2022 at 85,131 rides.

Also presented at last week's Iowa Public Transit Association meeting was the Operations Person of the Year award which was awarded to SWITA Transit Coordinator Kristen Templeton. Kristen was given this well-deserved award based on the impact she has made on the agency with her willingness to learn, go getter attitude, and her friendly demeanor. Kristen currently oversees six transit office staff and around 75 transit drivers. Kristen is also responsible for keeping track of a fleet of approximately 110 vehicles. The position of Transit Coordinator requires Kristen to be one of the first calls when weekend and off-hour issues arise. Kristen does the majority of the scheduling for the agency, which is no easy feat. It would be near impossible to provide the large number of rides

annually here at SWITA without Kristen's attention to detail, ability to match the right drivers with the right routes, and ability to juggle and adjust on the fly when things go wrong, which happens very quickly. Kristen has played an integral role in the growth of the agency and the number of rides we provide yearly. SWITA's growth has made her job considerably more difficult but she has risen to the challenge and excelled in her role. When Kristen started, SWITA only had one true 24/7 service but now we operate five. This is only one example of the growth we have seen here at SWITA since Kristen started. Throughout it all, Kristen has continued to be a valuable part of our SWITA team. She keeps a positive and friendly attitude every day and works day in and day out to get the people of SW Iowa where they need to go.

Iowa Public Transit Association also held the annual Driver of the Year awards dinner during the annual meeting last week which was a great opportunity to recognize the hard work and dedication of transit drivers across the state. SWITA's 2023 Driver of the Year, Dean Driskell, was recognized for his award at the dinner.

SWITA would not be able to operate as efficiently and as safely as it does now without the hard work and dedication of all the SWITA transit staff and drivers. To learn more about the services provided by SWITA, visit SWITA.com or call 712-243-2518 or 1-800-842-8065.

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