




We're Ready

Annual Report 2021





Pace Board of Directors

Pace, the suburban bus division of northeastern Illinois' Regional Transportation Authority, provides bus, paratransit, and vanpool services in Chicago's six-county metropolitan area. Pace is governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of mayors or former mayors from the suburbs, as set by state law. Pace's chairman is elected by the chairmen of the collar counties and the suburban members of the Cook County Board. The Pace Board's Chicago member is the City's Commissioner for the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.



Richard A. Kwasneski
Chairman



Rachel Arfa
City of Chicago



Christopher S. Canning
*North Shore Suburban
Cook County*



Terrance Carr
*Central Suburban
Cook County*



Roger Claar
Will County



David Guerín
*North Central Suburban
Cook County*



Kyle R. Hastings
*Southwest Suburban
Cook County*



Thomas D. Marcucci
DuPage County



William D. McLeod
*Northwest Suburban
Cook County*



Jeffery D. Schielke
Kane County



Erin Smith
McHenry County



Linda Soto
Lake County



Terry R. Wells
*South Suburban
Cook County*



Melinda J. Metzger
*Interim Executive
Director*



Nancy Zimmer
*Interim Chief
Administrative Officer*



Colette Thomas Gordon
Chief Internal Auditor

Chairman's Welcome



Dear Stakeholders,

2021 was both a challenging year and one that revealed a bright future for Pace. Vaccines rolled out, riders began to return, and life started to feel a little more normal. Pace continued to prioritize safety, service, and transparency as we maintained critical service and pushed forward with infrastructure plans made possible by the state's historic Rebuild Illinois investment. A major achievement for our agency and our region was the publication of our new strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*, and a commitment to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2040. As our state and nation prioritize climate stewardship, we look forward to working with governmental officials to secure the infrastructure funding to make this plan a reality.

Pace's ridership was devastated in 2020, but 2021 saw the slow and steady return of passengers. At the onset of the pandemic, ridership dropped to approximately 25% of our regular ridership. Today, we are providing approximately 55% of the trips we did prior to the pandemic. Our most utilized route, Route 352 Halsted, saw improved frequency and more reliable service thanks to the Fair Transit South Cook pilot. We are grateful to our partners at Cook County, RTA, and Metra for their efforts to bring more equitable transportation to southern Cook County.

One of my main focuses in 2021, as in past years, was advocating for the resources we need with our regional leaders, state legislators, and federal authorities. In October, I was appointed to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Executive Committee. As one of only 25 national transit leaders selected to serve on this body, I look forward to working with transportation

companies across the country to advance the needs of Pace. I am honored to represent our region in this organization, and I promise to advocate for our interests in the national discussion on infrastructure while bringing the nation's best public transportation practices back to our region.

Our service is made possible by the commitment of Pace employees who have worked diligently through the last two years to keep our region moving forward. I'm not the only one who has noticed their dedication. This year, Pace was awarded multiple, well-deserved awards, including the Waukegan Township's Drum Major award, the 2021 Gold Medal for Business Partnership by the National Association of Hispanic Publications, a National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA) Green Fleet Award, a Government Financial Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for our 2021 Budget, a spot on the 100 Best Fleets in the Americas in 2021 by the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA), and, in partnership with Metra and Cook County, a 2021 Innovative Transportation Solutions Award from the Women's Transportation Seminar Greater Chicago.

I am hopeful as we move forward that our riders, taxpayers, and stakeholders will appreciate our agency's hard work as they see their investments in our system come to fruition. It has been a difficult few years, but better times are ahead.



Richard A. Kwasneski
Chairman

Looking Towards a Bright Future

After leading Pace's operations since the agency's inception almost four decades ago, I thought I'd seen it all. The past two years proved me wrong. The challenges we've faced were unprecedented, but thanks to our dedicated team we continued to safely provide essential transportation to those who count on Pace while continuing to modernize our service to ensure we meet our passenger's needs today and in the coming years.

As we close 2021, it is a time for transition in several ways. The growth in ridership we've seen in the last half of the year should only continue on an upward trend as more companies bring back employees to offices, more residents get vaccinated against COVID-19, and community events get back on the calendar. We are reimagining service by thinking "outside the bus." In 2022, we will explore alternative services where traditional buses may not be the best solution. We will continue to integrate new technology to improve our passenger experience, especially for our riders with disabilities. We will begin acting on our new strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*. In everything we do, we will continue to prioritize safety and service.

Pace has also seen a transition in its leadership. Pace Executive Director Rocky Donahue retired at the end of 2021. His leadership over the years, especially throughout the pandemic, has been key to keeping Pace strong and innovative. His advocacy for Pace and our region's residents

has been unwavering. Through his efforts, Pace expanded its profile in the region, secured numerous state and federal investments, and set forth a vision for an innovative, efficient, zero-emissions future. His accomplishments put Pace in a strong position to emerge from this pandemic both financially sound and operationally efficient. We will miss his leadership and his friendship and we wish him well in his next chapter.

In November, the Pace Board of Directors named me as Pace's Interim Executive Director, and I assumed that role on January 1, 2022. This appointment is an honor and a privilege. I've spent my entire career serving the people of our region and embrace the opportunity to lead the agency as we reimagine our service to support our region's recovery and adapt to the new needs of those who rely on Pace. My team and I are confident that the worst is behind us, and that we have nowhere to go but up as we look towards a new and improved network of transit service in northeastern Illinois in 2022 and beyond.



A circular graphic containing a handwritten signature in white ink.

Melinda J. Metzger
Interim Executive
Director

A Thank You From the Executive Director Emeritus

Reading the pages of this report on Pace's challenges and accomplishments in 2021 leaves me with a bittersweet feeling. This was my last year as Executive Director at Pace, an agency I have worked at for 40 years. It was not an easy year. But it provided a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us to reevaluate our circumstances, reimagine our service, and begin to build back better from an unprecedented crisis.

As I depart, I have a strong confidence that the people who depend on Pace will be better served in the coming years than ever before. Capital projects will modernize the infrastructure that gets our passengers where they need to go. New technology will improve riders' experience. And new partnerships and service models will connect communities more efficiently than ever before.

Driving Innovation will be our roadmap towards this future. Our strategic vision plan was released this year with help from our board, workers, and the public we serve. The first steps towards the future it envisions are laid out in our 2022 budget—the most positive, forward-looking, and impactful budget I have ever seen Pace put forward. I am immensely proud that in the midst of such a challenging year, Pace was able to chart such a bold course forward.

We could not have done it without your help. Whether you are involved with the agency, you ride the bus, or you pay the taxes that keep our lights on, getting through the pandemic was a team effort. As I retire, I am grateful for the hard work of our board and our front-line and back-end employees, the patience and cooperation of our passengers, and the support of a public that sees Pace as a safe and critical part of the region. Funding from our state and federal governments and assistance from our partners in the community allowed us to take what could have been the end of our agency and turn it into a new beginning.

Thank you!



Rocky Donahue
Executive Director
Emeritus



Pace by the Numbers

2021 Ridership

15,190,000 Trips

Pace's daily ridership is more than 55% of its 2019 level, markedly better than our peers locally and nationally.



698 Fixed Route
Vehicles in Service



26,309,154

Vehicle Miles of Travel
by Fixed Route Vehicles



284 Communities
Served



296 Vanpools
in Service



5.75 Average Vehicle Age
of Fixed Route Vehicles (in years)



220 Fixed Bus Routes
(76 suspended and 18 reduced)

2021 Budget

Suburban Service
Expenses

\$240,331,022

Regional ADA Service
Expenses

\$193,015,359

Total Expenses

\$433,346,381



2.5 **Complaints**
per 100,000 passenger miles
(Goal is less than 4)



29 **Bus Shelters**
installed



2.87 **Accidents**
per 100,000 revenue miles
(Goal is less than 5)



25 **New Bus
Tracker Signs**
installed



**One of the
best-run transit
systems in the
country.**

FTA Triennial



Driving Innovation

● The Pace Strategic Vision Plan

On September 15, 2021, Pace's Board of Directors adopted a new strategic vision plan for the agency called *Driving Innovation*. The purpose of this plan is to identify and establish long-term priorities and major initiatives for Pace Suburban Bus, guided by goals, and organized according to an overarching strategic vision.

"Despite this pandemic, Pace's foundation is strong and its future is bright," said Pace Executive Director Rocky Donahue. "Thanks to the strategy laid out in *Driving Innovation* and the infrastructure investments funded through the state's capital program, *Rebuild Illinois*, Pace will significantly improve its ability to provide transit service and better serve the mobility needs of the communities we serve."

Driving Innovation's initiatives are organized into four categories:

Agency Priority Initiatives

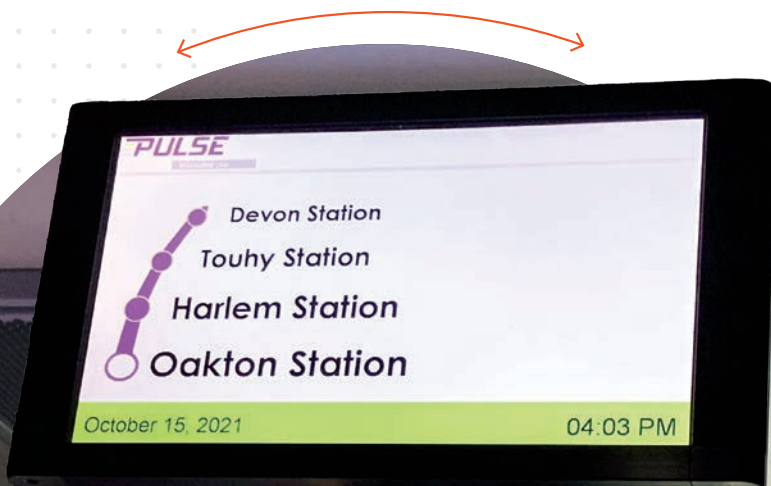
Initiatives in this category include:

- A-1 Electric Bus & Zero-Emission Fleet Transition**
- A-2 Capital Improvement Projects**
- A-3 Rapid Transit Program**
- A-4 Service Standards Framework**
- A-5 Network Revitalization & Service Restructuring**

Programs, Policies & Frameworks

Initiatives in this category include:

- P-1 Mobility Agency Transition**
- P-2 Strategic Administrative Functions**
- P-3 Transit-Supportive Development Engagement**
- P-4 Transit Fare Equity Programs**
- P-5 Funding and Finance**



“ Despite this pandemic, Pace’s foundation is strong and its future is bright.



Service & Infrastructure

Initiatives in this category include:

- S-1** Tactical Transit Pilots
- S-2** Coverage Service Transformation
- S-3** Paratransit Upgrades
- S-4** Dial-a-Ride Service Consistency
- S-5** Centralized Operations Control Facility

Technology & Insight

Initiatives in this category include:

- T-1** Current Technology Programs
- T-2** Customer Focused Engagement
- T-3** Integrated Transit Platform
- T-4 Open Source Multimodal Trip Planner**
- T-5** Connected and Autonomous Transit Vehicle Pilots



Pulse Dempster Line construction set to begin

Pace has awarded a contract for construction of our second Pulse line, which will operate on Dempster Street between Evanston and O'Hare International Airport. Connections to other Pace and CTA bus routes, the CTA Yellow and Purple lines, as well as to Metra's Union Pacific North, Northwest, and North Central Service rail lines will provide passengers with a variety of local and regional travel options.

On July 1, 2021, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's (CMAP) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program's (CMAQ) project selection committee approved proposed funding for its FY 2022-26 program that includes tentative funding for three exciting Pace projects, including the Pulse Dempster Line.

Dempster Street is a heavily traveled route with a variety of connections to major destinations, including O'Hare International Airport, and other public transit services, such as Pace and CTA bus routes and Metra and CTA rail lines. The Pulse Dempster Line will provide service between the Davis Street CTA/Metra Station in Evanston and the O'Hare Airport Multi-Modal Facility.

Pace's Board of Directors awarded contracts for Pulse Dempster's vertical markers and shelters in February and the general contractor for construction and installations in May. Construction is expected to commence in 2022.



New garage to support I-55 express services in southwest suburbs

Rebuild Illinois state capital funds are being used to expand Pace's successful I-55 Bus on Shoulder service, whose ridership has grown by more than 600 percent in the first seven years since the program launched in 2011. In January 2021, Pace officials, along with representatives from the Village of Plainfield and Northern Builders Inc., broke ground on the construction of a new 230,000-square foot, \$52 million facility at which buses will be maintained and stored.

The 12-acre site, located in the Plainfield Small Business Park, will allow Pace to expand the popular service, reduce deadhead times

(which reduces Pace's costs without any impact to passengers) and alleviate overcrowding on buses. The new garage is right across the street from Pace's Plainfield Park-n-Ride, the southernmost stop on the I-55 express bus routes.

Construction on the facility is nearly complete and is expected to open in 2022.



Pace opens Transit Center in Joliet

Pace's newest transit center opened for business on December 6, 2021, as part of a partnership with the City of Joliet. This new facility represents a modern, pedestrian-friendly environment for Pace and intercity bus riders, at which boarding and transfers are more convenient, information is easy to access, and buses will travel in an efficient loop to serve passengers and get back on their route. The Pace Transit Center has 11 bus bays dedicated to Pace service, further enhancing Joliet's multimodal Gateway Center, which opened in 2018 with an improved environment for Metra and Amtrak riders.

"At this gorgeous new facility, finding bus routes and transferring to other buses and trains will be simpler and safer for riders," said Interim Executive Director Melinda J. Metzger. "We are thrilled to bring this enhancement to riders in the Joliet area."

Even though the Pace bus terminal opened for business in December, finishing touches on the overall construction are expected to be complete in early 2022. That completion of construction will also include a plaque dedicating the facility to the late former County Executive Larry Walsh, Sr.





Moving ahead on major capital projects

Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pace staff has made it a priority to forge ahead with many capital projects that are vital to Pace's future success. Funding for many of these efforts is thanks to the Illinois General Assembly and their Rebuild Illinois legislation. Progress made during 2021 includes:

Southwest Division (Bridgeview)

The expansion of this garage supports service expansion and the Pulse 95th Street line implementation. Staff is pursuing a grant for design and construction work.

River Division (Elgin)

Pace seeks to expand the size of the garage that operates bus service in northern Kane County as well as the growing I-90 express service. This garage expansion will eliminate the significant cost of leasing a garage to house the express buses. On October 20, 2021, Pace awarded a contract for design and engineering of this expanded building.

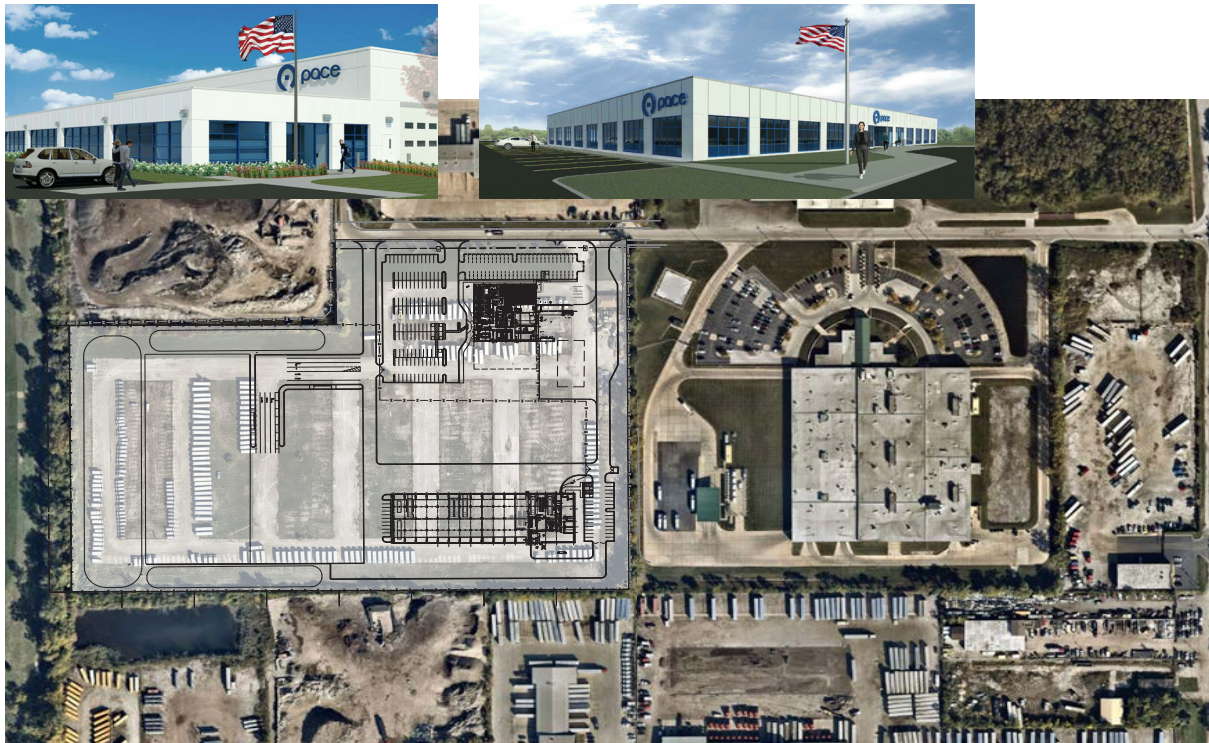
Harvey Transit Center Improvements (Harvey)

The busiest transit center in the Pace system will be reconfigured to allow passengers better connections to the Metra station. This project is a partnership with Metra, IDOT and the City of Harvey. Design is underway.

Northwest Division Garage (Wheeling)

Pace is retrofitting a building in Wheeling that will become the new home of Pace Northwest Division, replacing the aging facility in Des Plaines. This garage will be a CNG fueling station and will house 120+ CNG-powered buses. This effort reduces our carbon footprint while enhancing the fleet which operates the Milwaukee and Dempster Pulse lines. Design was completed in Spring 2021 and a construction contract is out for bid.





South Campus (Markham)

On July 21, 2021, Pace awarded a contract to construct a building that will replace our South Holland acceptance facility and house the Customer Relations, Technical Services and Maintenance Departments. Pace had previously acquired the property on which this technologically advanced building will sit, which is next door to our existing South Division.

Paratransit Transfer Stations and Technology

For the comfort of Pace's passengers with disabilities, paratransit transfer stations are being built in Schaumburg (construction project to be

bid in early spring 2022) and Calumet City (as part of a partnership with the City to build the facility on City-owned land). Funding will also be used to upgrade Pace's ADA Paratransit scheduling system, which will provide additional technology enhancements to riders with disabilities in northeastern Illinois.

Farebox System Upgrade

Pace is buying a new set of fareboxes for fixed route buses, which will replace outdated equipment to decrease service costs and improve fare collection. The bidding process is near completion, with expected project completion by the end of 2022.

Pace commits to a zero-emission fleet by 2040

According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the "leverage effect" of public transportation reduces the nation's carbon emissions by 37 million metric tons annually—equivalent to the electricity used by 4.9 million households. To achieve a similar reduction in carbon emissions, every household in New York City, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Denver and Los Angeles combined would have to completely stop using electricity. The lesson is simple: when commuters ride public transit instead of driving their own cars, air quality improves.

Pace recognizes our own responsibility for pollution reduction as an operator of hundreds of vehicles in our region. Therefore, one of Pace's top priorities is to reduce our carbon footprint and improve the quality of our community's environment:

- As part of our *Driving Innovation* plan, Pace committed in 2021 to making the North Division in Waukegan an electric-bus-only facility by 2026 and to converting Pace's entire bus fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2040.
- Pace has 91 buses at South Division which use compressed natural gas (CNG), a fuel source that emits fewer greenhouse gases than diesel. South Division became a CNG fueling station in 2016 and was retrofitted in 2017-18 to allow for indoor maintenance on CNG buses.
- A new Northwest Division facility in Wheeling is being retrofitted to become a CNG fueling station. More than 100 low-emission buses will be operated from this garage by 2023.
- At the other divisions, Pace follows federal guidelines relating to clean diesel and for the maintenance of different engine types to maximize productivity and minimize pollution. We use ultra-low sulfur fuels that meet all federal requirements.



Partnership with Cook County expands service for south suburban riders

On January 4, 2021, Pace Chairman Rick Kwasneski and Executive Director Rocky Donahue joined counterparts from Cook County, RTA, and Metra, to officially launch expanded service on Route 352 as part of the Fair Transit South Cook pilot program. This bolstering of service on Pace's busiest route was supported by funding from Cook County.

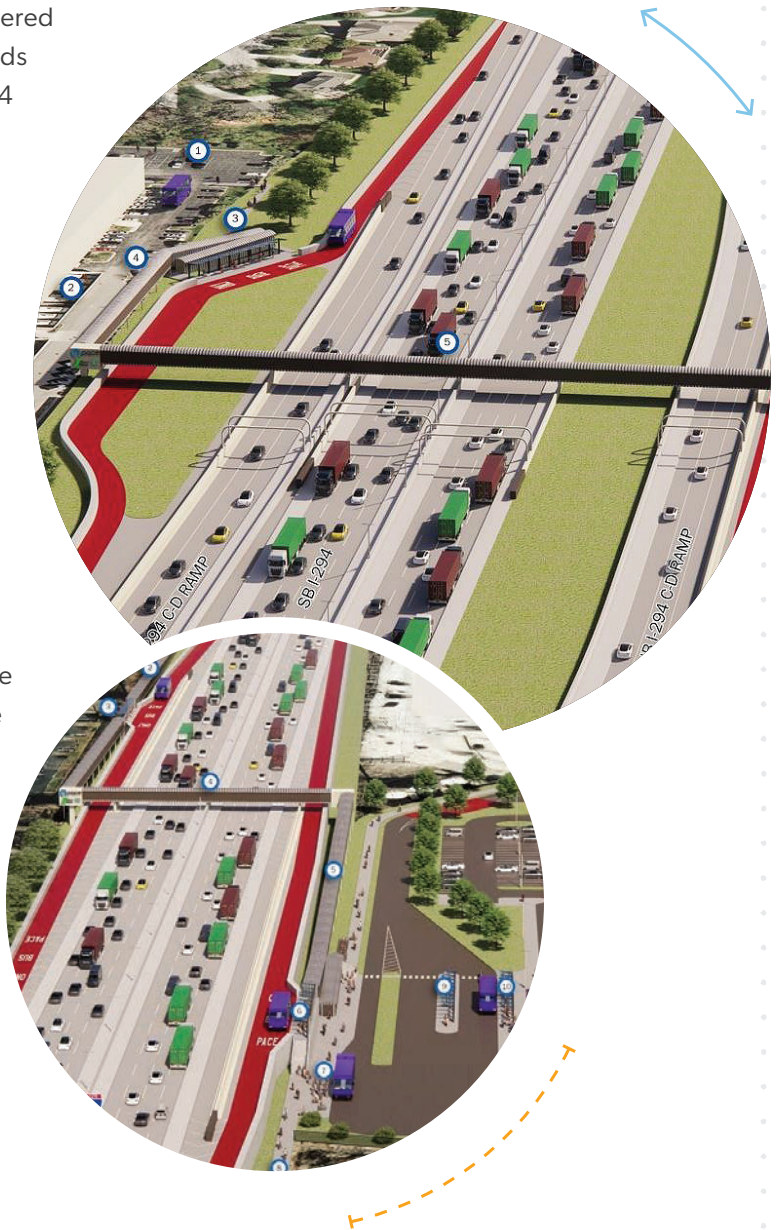
Cook County's Department of Transportation and Highways (DoTH), under the leadership of President Toni Preckwinkle, had established a partnership with the region's transit agencies to launch the Fair Transit pilot. The three-year pilot project enhances transit service and reduces costs for residents of the south side of Chicago, south suburban Cook and north Will Counties. The Fair Transit pilot provides south Cook County and north Will County residents with greater opportunities to make transit their choice for getting to work, school, shopping and regional destinations.

Pace also partnered with Cook County on promotional efforts related to this initiative, including ads inside buses, on shelters along Halsted Street, and on social media.



Tollway partnership leading to enhancements in I-294 corridor

Pace and the Illinois Tollway have partnered on a planning study with an eye towards an expansion of express bus service on I-294 (Tri-State Tollway). For decades, Pace has operated successful services between the south suburbs and destinations with heavy employment concentrations, such as Oak Brook, Lombard, Rosemont and Schaumburg. However, those buses—unlike Pace’s express services on I-55, I-94 and I-90—operate in regular traffic and are subject to the usual delays. The service expansion on I-294 aims to alleviate congestion and serve emerging transportation needs in the north/south direction, which isn’t well served by mass transit in northeastern Illinois. This corridor will offer Pace’s next “flex lane”, similar to the one opened in 2016 on I-90. As part of the planning study, park-n-ride station sites were tentatively selected for O’Hare/Schiller Park, Cermak Rd, and 103rd Street, while Meacham Rd and 127th Street were also identified as strong candidate station sites.



Pace developing shared use mobility projects

Pace, like many other agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic, has seen changes to the way the traveling public uses transit service and the convenience they expect. Considering these changes, Pace seeks to use the latest technology to connect the traveling public to the services that would be most useful to them. Pace is working to procure new software to help power many of the shared use mobility services the agency operates, such as the ten On Demand services. These technological upgrades aim to help Pace provide passengers with a modern trip-planning and booking experience, shortened wait times, and faster trips while reducing operating expenses for the agency. Pace will also be able to explore new service models throughout the region, such as all-day, shared mobility services, and potential upcoming service pilots with ride-hailing services, also known as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs). As part of the 2022 budget approved in November 2021, Pace included \$5 million targeted for TNC partnerships, which will likely involve the use of a TNC company to provide service to the general public in a designated zone using the software provided by the TNC.

While Pace ridership specifically—and demand for transit generally—has increased since the beginning of the pandemic, some service types, such as commuter routes that provide weekday peak-only service, may not see demand return to pre-COVID-19 levels. As identified in *Driving Innovation*, shared mobility partnerships may offer an opportunity to supplement existing Pace service or fill in service gaps while ensuring great stewardship of taxpayer funds. An expansion of the Naperville-Aurora On Demand service area is planned that would potentially supplement the existing On Demand service with TNCs to expand coverage and absorb excess demand. Other areas of the suburbs with large commuter workforces may offer opportunities to explore similar expansions and pilots. These new opportunities would provide passengers with increased options and better connections to the larger regional transit network.



Pace works with dial-a-ride partners to expand and improve service

There has been a trend in northeastern Illinois for many years towards coordination and consolidation of what had been nearly 70 separate dial-a-ride programs, usually jointly funded by Pace and units of local government, and often operating only within the boundaries of those local jurisdictions. However, after DuPage, Kane, and Will have successfully implemented programs that coordinate service across township borders and allow their constituents to travel to other parts of a county, other counties are taking note and pursuing projects of their own.

In McHenry County, effective January 2021, McHenry County DOT and Pace launched improved dial-a-ride services for residents. The dial-a-ride services, previously provided in select municipalities and townships across the County, are now offered countywide. The newly unified service, called MCRide, incorporates several of the previously separate dial-a-ride programs. The service also has expanded hours of operation, now available from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week, with no changes to the fare structure. Under the new program, members of the general public can get a ride to and from anywhere within the County in addition to seven popular destinations just outside the County boundaries.

On September 14, 2021, the Lake County Board approved a resolution to work with Pace on a new county-wide paratransit service known as Ride Lake County. Currently, several communities, townships and transit agencies offer paratransit options in Lake County, but all these services have different geographic boundaries, hours of service, rates, and more. The proposed Ride Lake County service aims to implement a single set of fare and eligibility standards for the service so seniors and those with disabilities can get to work, grocery stores, medical appointments and more throughout Lake County. Existing paratransit services will remain in place until the new service is launched, which is expected in 2022.

Pace is doing its part to support these efforts by local governments to expand service offerings for their residents through our approval of a 2022 budget that includes a \$200,000 subsidy increase for each of the five collar counties to support service expansions. That \$1 million investment for next year represents the largest increase in investment in dial-a-ride transportation in Pace's history.



Pace works with Members of Congress on federal funding

This year was an active one for Members of Congress and Pace's interactions with the Illinois delegation. Building on the two COVID-19 relief packages passed by Congress in 2020, this year saw the *American Rescue Plan*—the third allocation of operating funding for transit agencies provided by the federal government over the course of this public health emergency—signed into law by the President on March 11, 2021. Without that legislation, Pace would not have been able to continue providing critical transportation services to the level that essential workers needed during the pandemic.

Throughout the year, as discussions in Washington progressed on a reauthorization of the federal transportation programs, Pace continued to advocate for our needs and the benefits that federal investment in Pace would bring to the residents of northeastern Illinois. Pace also participated in a meeting with US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg in July, along with Governor Pritzker,

Cook County President Preckwinkle, several Members of Congress, and fellow transportation officials to discuss transportation in Chicago.

In November, the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, a bipartisan bill that provides five years of capital funding for transit agencies across the country, was signed into law. Pace was grateful that every member of the Congressional delegation from northeastern Illinois voted in favor of this legislation, which represents a significant increase in Pace's federal formula funding. That investment, along with discretionary grants that will be available over the next five years, will allow Pace to expedite our progress towards a zero-emission bus fleet and build projects that enhance our speed and efficiency, such as new transit centers, transit signal priority and additional Pulse lines.



Service reinstatements and 'We're Ready' campaign signal welcoming back of riders

While the COVID-19 pandemic has had a drastic impact on public transit service across the country, 2021 saw several changes that signaled Illinois was re-opening for business and commuters were returning to in-person work.

Both the City of Chicago and State of Illinois announced full re-opening of businesses without capacity restrictions, which took effect June 11, 2021. Leading up to and continuing beyond that date, Pace experienced a steady increase in ridership on ADA paratransit service. As of June 11, Pace no longer placed capacity limits on its fixed route vehicles, and ADA Paratransit passengers were more likely to experience shared rides. It was certainly good news that

more people with disabilities were getting out into their communities, but Pace also struggled to keep up with paratransit service demand due to a shortage of drivers.

Throughout the first half of 2021, Pace staff continued to monitor demand for service on the fixed routes that have been suspended since Spring 2020, and in July, Pace announced the reinstatement, effective August 8, of several routes that had been suspended or reduced, including trips serving schools for the Fall 2021 semester. Coinciding with those reinstatements, a team of Pace's transit ambassadors went out to high-traffic bus stops along those newly reinstated routes to welcome back riders and



distribute water and snacks.

Pace also launched in July the "We're Ready Even If You're Not" marketing campaign to welcome back riders who have been telecommuting during the pandemic. The campaign featured characters who were a bit out of practice with showing up to work in person, while reinforcing that they could count on Pace.

Another policy change that signaled Pace's emergence from the pandemic occurred February 8, 2021, when indoor passenger facilities at Elgin, Harvey, and Plainfield were re-opened to the public.

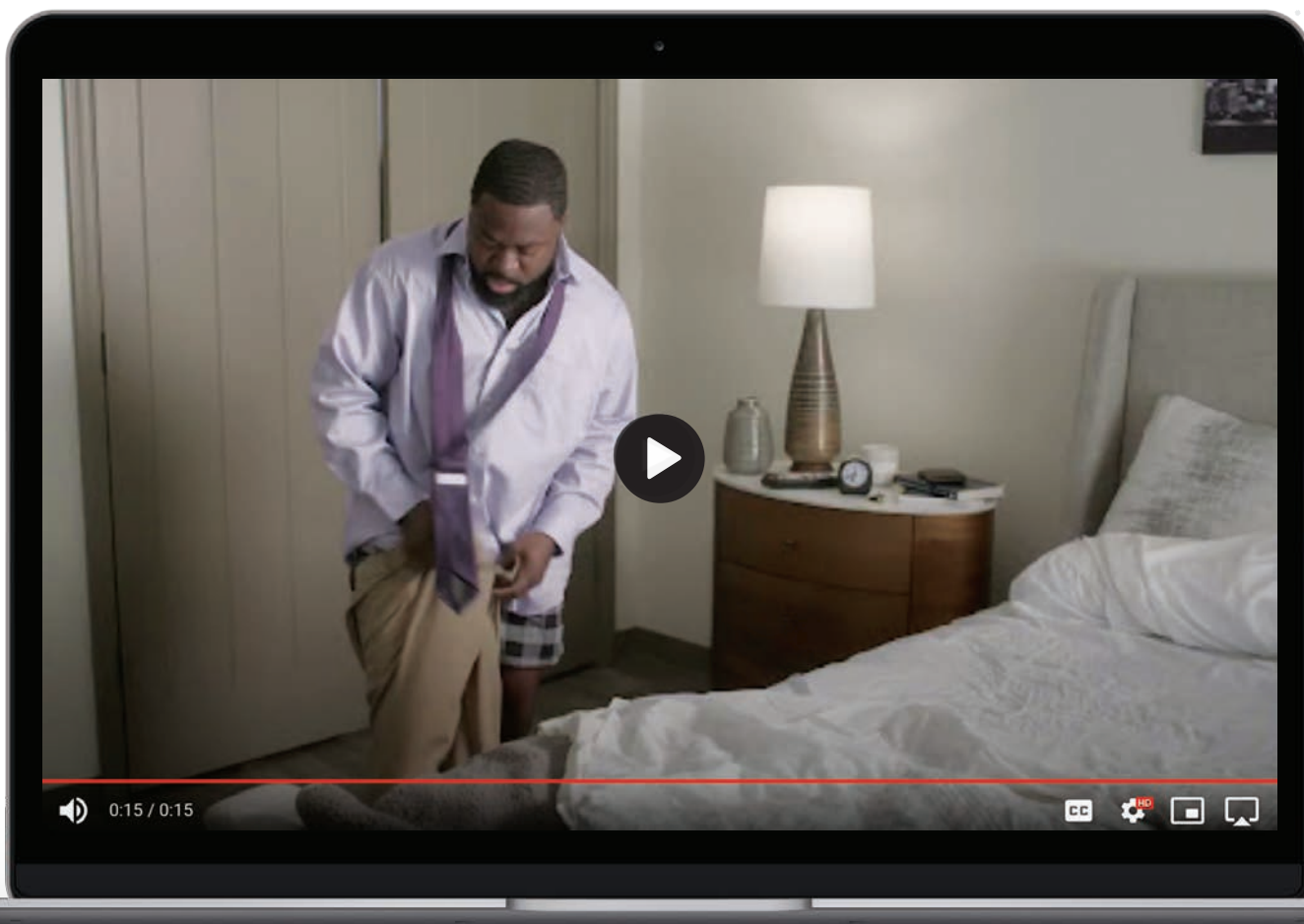


**We're ready to
drive you back
to the office.**

Even if you're not.



[PaceBus.com](https://www.pacebus.com)



Pace riders can now pay fares with Apple Pay and Google Pay

As of May 2021, Ventra Cards can be added to Google Pay for easy, contactless payments. Pace and CTA riders are now able to simply tap their NFC-enabled Android™ phone on at CTA rail stations or aboard CTA or Pace buses to pay for rides using Ventra Card in Google Pay. Customers using Google Pay are not required to carry a plastic Ventra card. After adding their Ventra card to Google Pay, there is no need for riders to unlock their phone; they can simply 'wake up' their phone to tap and go with Ventra Card in Google Pay.

Google Pay and the Ventra app work seamlessly together. Getting started in the Ventra app, customers can add a new Ventra card to Google

Pay or transfer a registered, plastic Ventra Card to Google Pay.

Within either the Ventra app or Google Pay, customers

can see their transit balance, check either pass expiration date, or review their recent travel history. Customers can add transit value and passes from the Ventra app.

A Ventra Card on Google Pay can't be loaded onto more than one phone at a time. Customers should load their Ventra card onto the phone they wish to use to ride. The Ventra Card on Google Pay works on NFC-enabled Android phones running Android 5 or later. Full fare Ventra Cards can be added to Google Pay. Ventra Cards issued through special fare programs like RTA Reduced Fare, Student Ventra Cards or UPass cards cannot be added to Google Pay at this time.

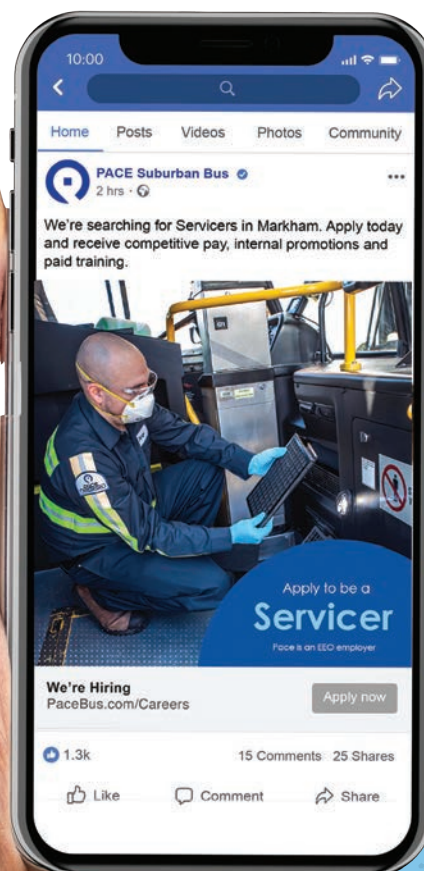
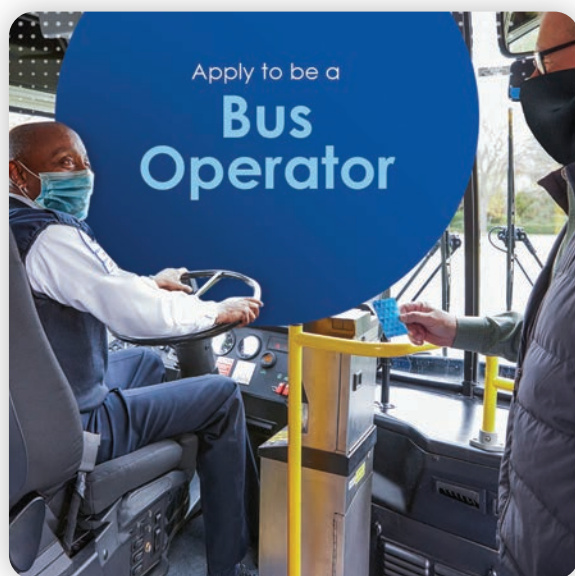
The introduction of Google Pay in 2021 followed the offering of Apple Pay as a northeastern Illinois fare payment mechanism in 2020 for iPhone users.



Pace aggressively recruits employees in face of nationwide driver shortage

Like nearly every business in every industry in the United States in 2021, Pace is hiring! Since 2020, it has been increasingly difficult to hire bus driver, mechanics, and other support staff. That shortage of bus operators has limited Pace's ability to reinstate services that continue to be suspended since Spring 2020. Our recruitment effort included a marketing campaign that appeared on job search sites and social media for most of 2021, spreading the word that we seek new people to join our team.

For those interested in joining a great team dedicated to public service, Pace has several job opportunities to advance people's careers in the exciting public transportation industry. Benefits include competitive starting pay, paid and ongoing training, promotion from within, health insurance, retirement benefits, and paid time off.



COVID-19 safety protocols continue to instill rider confidence

Even as masks had been required on Pace buses since Spring 2020, a TSA security directive took effect February 1, 2021 and carried the weight of federal law. It states that riders must wear a mask over the mouth and nose when boarding, alighting, or traveling on a bus and when at a transportation center. Children under the age of 2 and people with disabilities who cannot wear a mask are exempted.

In addition to requiring masks, Pace in 2021 continued its enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures to ensure all current and future passengers could ride with confidence that traveling on Pace buses is safe.

In 2021, Pace continues to:

- Prioritize the safety of our passengers and personnel.
- Deep clean and sanitize vehicles daily.
- Clean high-touch surfaces throughout the day.
- Refuse boarding to unmasked riders and require unmasked riders to exit Pace buses and transportation centers.
- Provide riders with hand sanitizer.
- Provide operators with PPE and thermometers for taking their temperature before reporting to work.
- Separate operators from passengers using temporary and permanent barriers.
- Report on COVID-19 cases at Pace.

With the growth in ADA Paratransit ridership in 2021, and in the face of a nation-wide driver shortage that continues to impact Pace's paratransit contractors, Pace continued to encourage riders in Chicago to use the Taxi Access Program and continued to waive those TAP fares. Pace also communicated regularly with ADA riders about the growth in ridership leading to the likelihood of seeing another passenger onboard. Pace asked its customers for patience as we work to accommodate an increasing number of riders in the most efficient manner.



Recognition of jobs well done

The National Association of Hispanic Publications presented Pace with its 2021 Gold Medal for Business Partnership, based on our longstanding partnership with Reflejos Publications, a bilingual newspaper published by the Daily Herald Media Group.

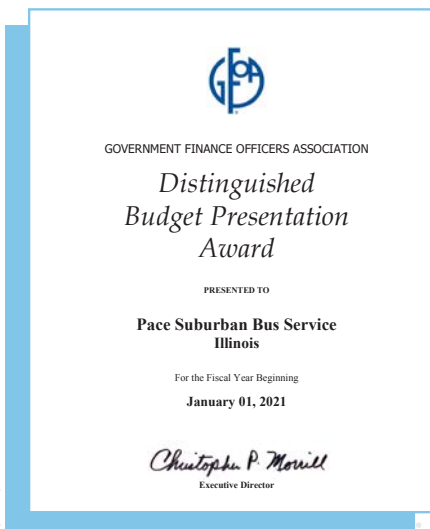
Pace was a 2021 awardee of the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA) Green Fleet Award. The Green Fleet Awards is open to both government and commercial fleets in North America. Government fleets consist of all federal, state, and local government fleets, including fleets that are operated by local government personnel or contracted services. The Green Fleet Award is a comprehensive set of criteria specifically tailored around the challenges and requirements of fleet professionals.



The Government Financial Officers Association (GFOA) presented Pace with its Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for our 2021 Budget.

Pace ranked 65th in the nation on the list of the 100 Best Fleets in the Americas in 2021 as ranked by the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA). The criteria for excellence used by NAFA in earning this recognition includes accountability, use of technology and information, collaboration, creativity, celebration of their successes evidence of a high trust culture, performance recognition, doing repairs right the first time, quick efficient turnaround, competitive pricing, staff development, and resources stewardship.

On March 5, 2021, the Women's Transportation Seminar Greater Chicago awarded the new Fair Transit South Cook pilot (a partnership between Pace, Metra, and Cook County) their 2021 Innovative Transportation Solutions Award. The group—dedicated to promoting the development and advancement of women in transportation—applauded women leaders at all the agencies involved in implementing the project.

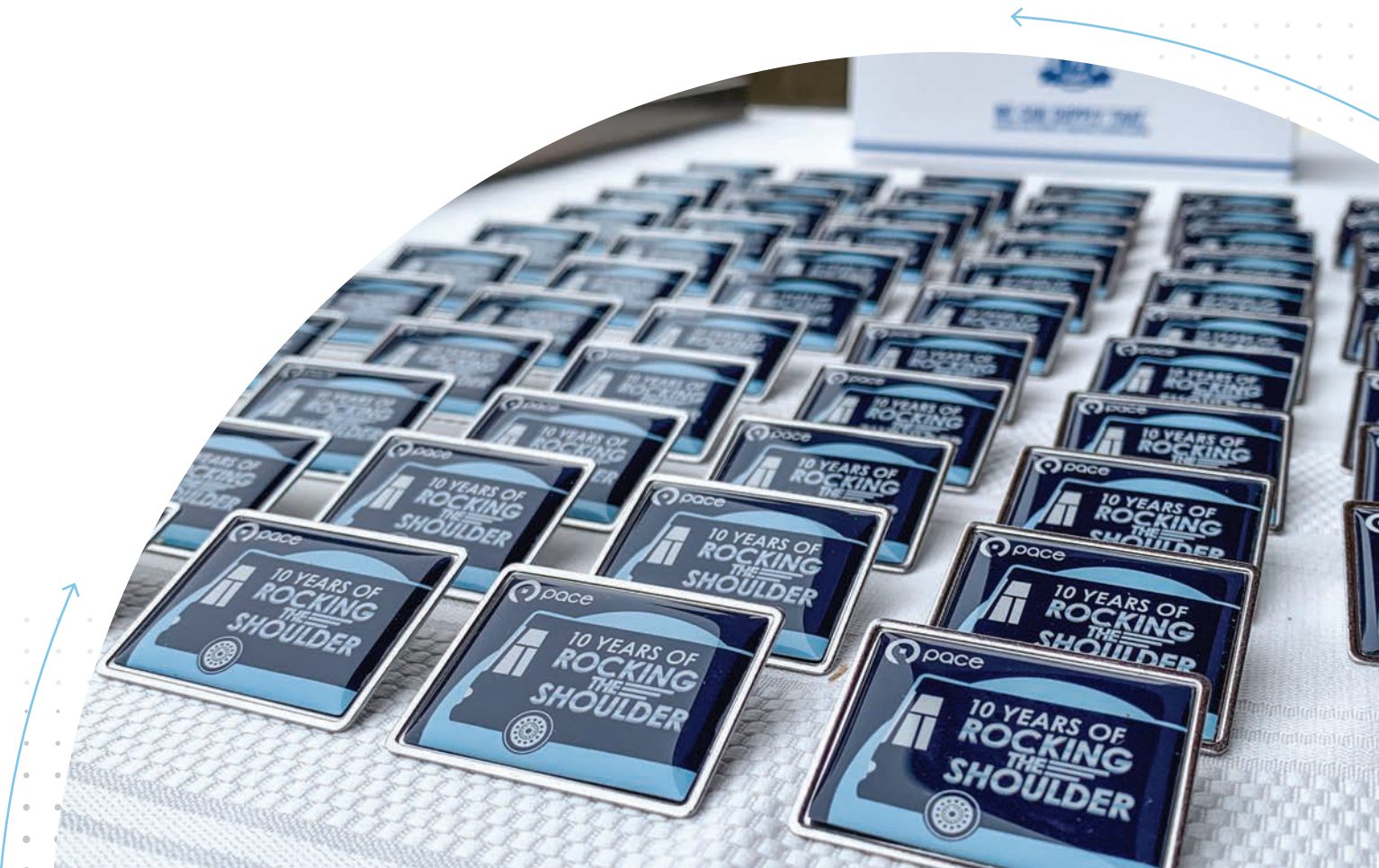


Pace celebrates 10-year anniversary of Bus on Shoulder

On November 15, 2021, Pace celebrated the 10-year anniversary of its bus on shoulder service. Since state law was changed in November 2011 that gave permission to Pace buses to bypass stalled traffic on the shoulder of I-55, more than 4 million trips have been provided on the I-55 express routes, and ridership grew 600% in the first seven years since the operational change was implemented.

The phenomenal success of the I-55 bus on shoulder service led to the creation of the “flex lane” on I-90, which similarly allows Pace buses to bypass slow traffic in a bus-only lane in the northwest suburbs, as well as a bus-only shoulder on I-94/Edens Expressway on the north shore. An additional flex lane is in the works as part of the ongoing reconstruction of I-294/Tri-State Tollway.





William Wolfe Inducted into Three Million Miler Club

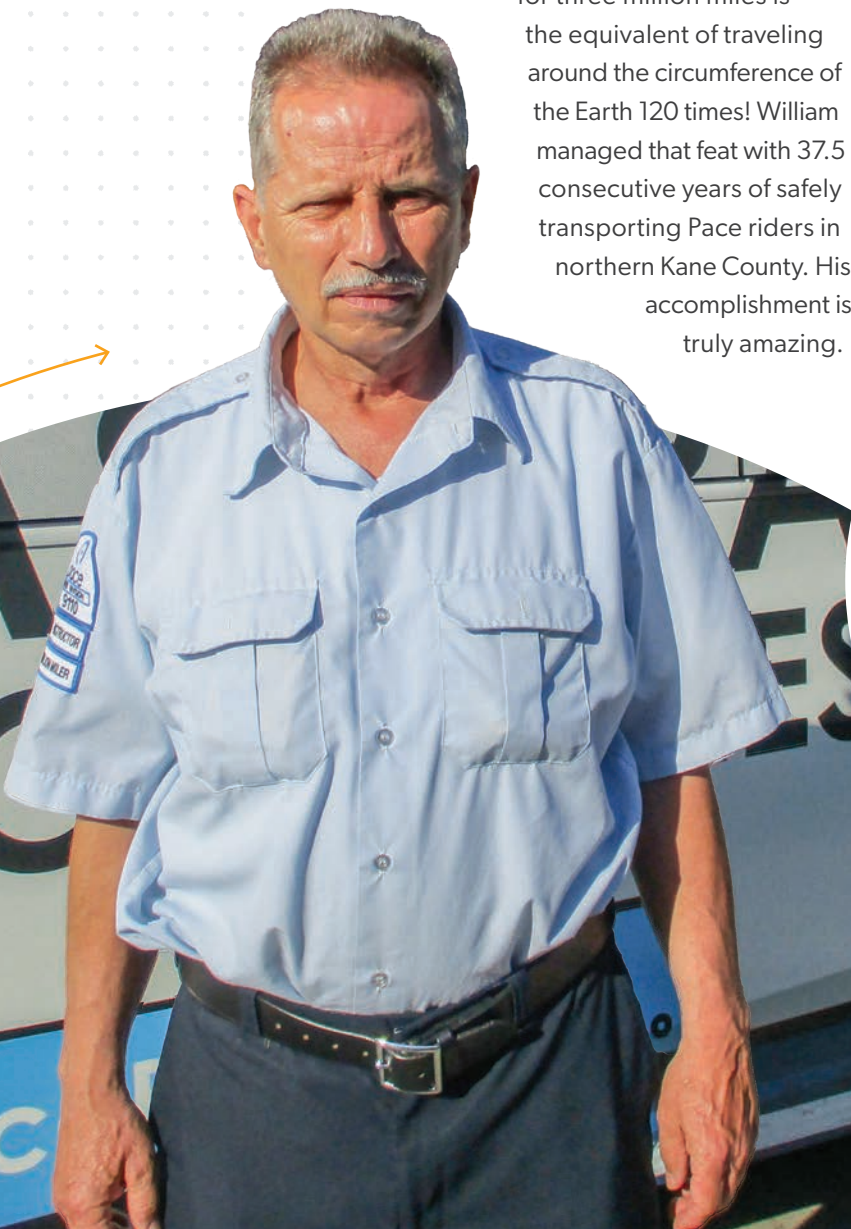
Yet another veteran Pace bus operator has been inducted into the prestigious Three Million Miler Club, a designation earned by driving at least three million miles of revenue service without a preventable accident. William Wolfe, a River Division (Elgin) bus operator, was honored in 2021 for reaching that milestone.

Did you know? Driving a bus for three million miles is the equivalent of traveling around the circumference of the Earth 120 times! William managed that feat with 37.5 consecutive years of safely transporting Pace riders in northern Kane County. His accomplishment is truly amazing.

"The safe driving habits of our employees being rewarded by the Million Miler program represent successfully achieving the most important goal any Pace employee has—to provide safe service to our riders," said Interim Executive Director Melinda J. Metzger. "At the heart of our operation is service to people, and I'm humbled to see the dedication shown by so many of our tremendous bus operators."

Pace has had only five Three Million Milers in its history. In 2021, Pace inducted 15 new One Million Milers and two new Two Million Milers into the club of bus operators whose safe driving habits over the decades have made riding Pace safer than driving your own car.

Driving a bus for three million miles is the equivalent of traveling around the circumference of the Earth **120 times!**



Dedicated employees receive commendations from grateful riders

“I would just like to compliment one of your drivers, April. She was so concerned about one of her regular passengers when they did not get on the bus at their regular time. She wanted to let him know that the bus route was going to change its normal route for a few days. She wanted to make sure he knew. I was so impressed by her that someone cared enough. She is an asset to Pace, and you are lucky to have her.”

“I am an 87-year-old man who walks with a cane and depends on Pace. One morning, I had an appointment at Hines Medical Center, and I was walking to the bus stop in Joliet. It was perilously close to when all the buses depart. I was stepping toward the ‘line-up’ when they all started to move. My 834 was headed toward the intersection where they all go in separate directions, and my bus was in a center lane. Somehow the driver saw my frantic waving and she pulled over to let me board. Her vision was blocked by a row of small trees, and so I consider her action to be that of an alert and considerate person.... That kindness meant a great deal because it was also starting to rain.”

“The 240 bus was pulling away. I ran to it with my hand up. The driver turned and saw me, stopped immediately, and opened the door to let me in. I know this is not some life-changing story, but the driver saved me 30 minutes of

waiting for the next bus on a cold day. She was polite and kind. It reminded me of how much I appreciate the women and men who drive the buses and trains, especially this past year during the pandemic—when many of us weren’t riding much because we were working at home. Thank you to everyone at Pace for hanging in there and providing reliable service during these unusual and difficult times.”

“I wanted to send a compliment to Pace Bus Operator #2830... I just wanted to make sure that Pace knows how much she is valued and appreciated as an operator by passengers. I know that COVID-19 has been a very difficult time to deal with the public. Not only are people worried about their health and their loved ones, but many people are having to cover additional duties that are not part of their job descriptions. I also know that during this time, Pace has worked tirelessly to keep transportation going, especially for essential workers. Pace has an excellent work quality.”



Heroes Moving Heroes



Willie Rouse

Willie Rouse has been a valued employee of Pace and our predecessors for 42 years, having begun his career in May of 1979. During the pandemic, Mr. Rouse has continued to assist with providing safe and reliable service to the public. Thank you, Willie!

Joe Bowen

Bus Operator Joe Bowen at Fox Valley. Joe has been with Pace for 27 years and still has the same enthusiasm for his job as he did when he first started. He is a favorite among passengers and coworkers alike. Joe is always one of the first operators to step up in a tight situation. Thank you, Joe!



Eugene Emory

Mr. Emory started with Pace Heritage Division in February of 2003. He is one of our Line Instructors and became a Million Miler in 2021. Eugene is always available to assist the operation when needed. Eugene notes he always looks out for his passengers by keeping his bus clean and his driving safe. Thank you, Eugene!



Steve Griffin

Steve is a Building Maintenance Specialist at North Division. He keeps our equipment and facility in good working order. Quick and responsive, Steve is an extremely dependable member of the North Division team. He stepped up and started disinfecting everything multiple times a day even before we required it. His willingness to help anyone in need and his ongoing efforts to keep our facility safe are some of his characteristics that his colleagues appreciate. Outside of work, Steve is active in the community with the Knights of Columbus and enjoys spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren. Thank you, Steve!

Jannie Lindsey

Jannie has been with Pace for 17 years. She is a bus operator for Fox Valley Division in southern Kane County. In that time, she has established herself as a favorite operator among passengers and coworkers alike. Throughout the pandemic, Jannie has made herself available to make sure all scheduled runs are covered without fail. She is an asset to the Fox Valley garage and Pace alike. Thank you, Jannie!



Maria Perez

Maria is a full-time Bus Operator at North Division with 15 years of service. She is one of North's true professionals and **a recent Million Miler**. Maria is an extremely dependable member of the North Division team. Thank you for all you do for our riders, Maria!

Thank you!

