



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 6, 2011**

**CONTACT: Wendy Williams**  
**Director of Marketing**  
**909.379.7151**  
[wendy.williams@omnitrans.org](mailto:wendy.williams@omnitrans.org)

## **Students Get a Free Ride to College**

*Omnitrans' Pilot Program Approved by Board of Directors*

**San Bernardino, CA** – Thousands of students enrolled at local colleges will get a break from the rising cost of higher education just by swiping their student IDs to ride free on Omnitrans' buses during the 2011-12 school year.

Students attending Chaffey College, Crafton Hills College, San Bernardino Valley College and California State University San Bernardino will be eligible for free rides when fall classes begin on August 15 for community colleges and September 22 for CSUSB.

The one-year pilot program is being funded by participating colleges and the 16 governments that Omnitrans serves: Chino, Chino Hills, Colton, County of San Bernardino, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Rialto, San Bernardino, Upland and Yucaipa. Cities and the County are utilizing monies they receive from the South Coast Air Quality Management District to fund projects that benefit air quality.

“We commend our city and county leaders for their vision and generosity in supporting the program,” said Omnitrans Director of Marketing Wendy Williams. “Based on calls and emails we have already gotten from students and parents, we expect many students to take advantage of the free ride opportunity.”

The Omnitrans program is modeled after successful programs implemented by Riverside Transit Agency. There, community college students overwhelmingly voted to approve student fees to continue the program after the free pilot phase. Omnitrans also will seek student support for fees through referendums on each campus next spring to maintain the program after the one-year pilot.

“We believe that this program will be immediately beneficial to our students, who will save money each time they leave the car at home and get on the bus,” said San Bernardino Community College District Board member John Longville. “And with more than 20,000 students attending our two colleges, this program, if it is embraced by students, will have a major impact on parking concerns at both colleges and on our local air quality.”

(more)



For three years, 2008, 2009 and 2010, Omnitrans offered free rides to local college students during the first week of classes. On average, 9 percent of students rode during the promotion period, compared to less than 4 percent normally.

“The Omnitrans free ride pilot program supports our environmental goals,” said CSUSB Commuter Services Supervisor Kathy Marron. “We encourage our students, especially those living on campus or nearby, to get onboard.”

Students can use their student ID card to ride Omnitrans at anytime on any route, not just trips to and from campus. When cards are inserted in the fare box near the front door of the bus, their magnetic strip will be read by the Omnitrans system. This will allow the agency to capture usage data by school, by route and even individual ID. Results will be shared with the colleges and the Omnitrans Board of Directors.

“We know our students are looking for low-cost transportation solutions,” said Sherrie Guerrero, Ed.D., Chaffey College Vice President of Instruction and Student Service, “and with our new transit center in the heart of campus, Omnitrans offers a convenient alternative to driving and searching for a parking spot.”

Normally college students would have to pay \$1.50 per trip or \$4.00 for a one-day pass to ride the bus; student 7-day passes are \$11 and student 31-day passes are \$35. All participating campuses are served by multiple Omnitrans bus routes.

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Omnitrans Routes</b>
California State University San Bernardino	2, 5, 7, 11
Crafton Hills College	8, 9
Chaffey College – Chino Campus	83, 365
Chaffey College – Fontana Campus	19, 20, 61, 82
Chaffey College – Rancho Cucamonga Campus	68, 80, 81
Valley College	1, 15

Omnitrans offers personalized trip planning at 1-800-9-OMNIBUS or online at [www.omnitrans.org](http://www.omnitrans.org).

*Founded in 1976, Omnitrans is the public transit agency providing 50,000 passenger trips each weekday across the San Bernardino Valley. Omnitrans is governed by a 20-member board representing the 15 cities served by Omnitrans and San Bernardino County.*