

**OCL Study Session, July 15, 2015: How CNY Moves to Jobs**  
SUNY Oswego Metro Center at 100 South Salina Street in Room 129

Co-chairs: Heidi Holtz and Mary Kate Intaglietta

Attendees: Kim Armani, Laurie Black, Tom Carlin, Jim D'Agostino, Eric Ennis, Bradley Fetes, Chris Fowler, Chris Godleski, Chris Gorman, Deborah Hundley, Daniel Kelley, Annette Krisak, Janice Mayne Sarah McIlvain, Aaron McKeon, David Michel, Laura Miller, Jon Morgan, Martin Ours, Jane Rice, Eric Rogers, Sally Santangelo, Jai Subedi, Erica Tauzer, Mary Thompson, Scot Vanderpool, Loretta Zolkowski,

OCL: Sandra Barrett, Renee Gadoua

A Harvard doctoral student created the map of jobs based on U.S. Census Bureau information collected from employers. The Washington Post ran a story with the national map, and [Syracuse.com posted a local map](#), reinforcing information we learned in the last study.

Two questions for committee to consider:

1. How many people could you call for a ride to get you where you need to go for work, groceries, clothing, and doctor appointments?
2. How many of you would be willing to ride share for an unlimited time period and not ask for anything in return with the exception of maybe one cup of coffee a week?

**Panel** led by Mary Kate Intaglietta and Mel Menon, director of OnPoint for Jobs. **Panelists:**

**Shamal Matthews** - Environmental Services at Crouse Hospital (uses Avengers icon as avatar represents his love of art & he's an artist)

**Lugendo Muya and Mustafa Aden** - Members of the Safari Boys Soccer Team and local students with PT jobs

**Alia Anamaria** - Supervisor with The Talent Agency on the Near West Side

**Questions for panelists:** What goes through your mind transportation-wise when you begin to plan your day? Do you need a ride? Do you have someone you need to pick up? Do you have a direct route to get to work or school?

- If you need transportation how do you go about getting it?
- What leads you to choose the mode of transportation that you select?
- What are some of the challenges that you face regarding transportation? (safety, cost, over-crowding, rigid timeline, limitations of route, accessibility)

**Shamal:** In his mid-30s, from NYC. He lives on the South Side near Crouse employee parking lot with shuttle to hospital. Uses shuttle to get to and from work. Shuttle runs M-F, 5 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Challenges: Shuttle does not run on weekends. Centro bus route on Sundays does not begin until 7:30 a.m. Transportation options are walking or taking bus. He chooses to walk, as it is more convenient and allows him to save money. Saving about \$800 a year by walking. He is saving to

buy a car. Not many people on the South Side use the Crouse shuttle. His walk to work takes about half an hour.

**Alia Anamaria:** She lives on Carbon Street. Has a car and picks up colleagues. Friend gives her \$5 a week. Gets up at 7 a.m., picks up one colleague at 8 a.m., then another, then to work.

Transportation challenges include safety, convenience and car maintenance.

In high school, taking bus was a challenge. Bus was crowded and could not always carry portfolio. She had to plan ahead to ask for a ride from mother. “A lot of students walk carrying portfolios or projects. “There’s a lot of rude people (on the bus) who would yell at me for having such a large object.”

“Sometimes I would have to wait for the last bus and go to school late in order to take my art and keep it from breaking and not getting harassed. I had to explain it to my teachers sometimes: ‘This is why I’m late.’”

The route to walk to Talent Agency unsafe: “I tried to keep my head low and avoid certain neighborhoods to stay safe.” Sometimes walks a few blocks out of her way to stay safe. “I have a concern about people who don’t know the streets.” (The Talent Agency is a pre-professional program that helps students prepare for careers; transportation challenges related to 2014 OCL report on skills gap.) The Talent Agency has had trouble funding transportation. It’s located just beyond end of Connective Corridor.

Alia chooses some routes for safety, even if they’re longer. She works 8:30-3:30 but provides rides for friends working second- and third-shift jobs.

Her family uses her 2006 Nissan during the winter because theirs is garaged. “I try to take care of it,” she said. “It’s practically family. It’s coming to the end of its life.”

Legundo and Mustafa describe ride-sharing among the African diaspora in Syracuse

**Lugendo:** At age 12, when his father was ill, his bike was a lifeline. He found his way to Wegmans, where he was able to get food and medicine for his father. His experience highlights need for transportation and ingenuity of bike- and car-sharing.

He said Centro is crowded and uncomfortable. “If you have portfolios and documents and stuff to help your future, it’s hard,” he said. “It’s not set up for students.”

Challenge for people with unreliable transportation: “You can’t tell the whole story. He doesn’t care. You want to tell him and hope he has mercy.”

“Without my legs, I wouldn’t be here,” he said.

Sometimes three people would be on his bike. “People think we’re crazy, but we know where we have to be.” Sometimes he would ride bike to location with another person, go to his

appointment while the other person used the bike for own appointments or to get someone else to appointment.

Now he has a car: "I'm lucky," he said. But, "It's crazier. Having a car is like driving a Centro bus." Frequently someone will take his car to help someone else.

He does not take money for helping others. "I get the feeling of a smile or I can tell myself I helped someone."

Faith guides generosity: "Islam tells you to give zakat. You share what you have to show that you care."

"What's in it for me? Ah, love. That's what's in it for me."

Mustafa's family has one car. His brother needs the car to get to class at OCC. "You drop the person off, take the car and do what you have to do," he said.

Lugendo adds, "If you have your phone, you're not alone." You can call to get a ride. "There are people who work and never have rides. I try to help them. Sometimes we will be driving and see someone. We offer them a ride. It doesn't matter if you know them. I'll see people walking by and thin, 'Hey! That used to be me' and I pick them up."

Considers ride-sharing crucial: "We cannot rely on the buses or it might not be safe in your location."

**Jai Subedi, president of Bhutanese Center in Syracuse:** Used Centro 2009-2011 when he worked at a Subway in a high gang area. Said getting to work is a real challenge for refugees. There are not buses at night: "I have to go and pick them up."

**Alia:** When she takes bus to SU Warehouse and walks to Talent Agency, walks through underpass. "There are stories about people being jumped and problems with the homeless. I had to run away one time." When she's walking in the dark she fears getting jumped.

Crouse has a place to park bike, but Legundo's was never stored. "We always needed the bike," he said.

Human Resources at Tessy Plastics in Baldwinsville tried to start a shuttle system for certain shift. Worked with Labor Ready. Now business is on a Centro route, so shuttle use declined. Company helps coordinate ride-sharing.

**Mel Menon** notes that in our one-car, one-person culture, people take it for granted that they can take their coffee or bags or artwork in car."

**Deborah Hundley of Providence Services of Syracuse:** A lot of second and third shift jobs unfilled because Centro doesn't meet their needs. Safety and access big concerns.

## **Panelists' suggestions for Centro:**

**Alia:** Lower costs and better routes.

**Lugendo:** More frequent trips

## **Final thoughts:**

**Mustafa:** Centro should come every half hour

**Lugendo:** "Life is work. As long as transportation is available, people will move around and be successful."

**Alia:** "Ride-sharing is kind of hard, especially if you're getting up early in the morning. It's what you have to do and what you can do to help the community."

[Annette Krisak of JobsPlus suggested checking with Centro about Rides to Work program, funded by federal Community Solutions for Transportation grant. Jobs Plus used to refer clients to program. This information was provided by Centro:

*The Centro Rides to Work program was funded through Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grants and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants to New York State. Both these grant programs were provided by the federal government. The Community Solutions for Transportation (CST) grants were provided by New York State as a mechanism to provide the required matching funds to the both federal grant programs. Funding for the federal JARC program came to an end October 1, 2012 with the passage of the surface transportation legislation - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). With the elimination of JARC and the reduction of TANF funds available for transportation, funding for CST grants was subsequently reduced. In FY 2014, 63 individuals took 1,598 trips from the rides to work program. In FY 2015 no rides were provided.]*

## **Upcoming Meetings**

**Tuesday, August 4, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. – New Location! *How CNY Moves*: town planning, land use and development – panel – at **Interfaith Works, 1010 James Street** in the Room of Common Ground. The parking lot can be entered from James Street, 404 Oak Street, or Lincoln Park Drive. There is a drive thru between the parking lots behind 404 Oak St. and 1010 James Street. You may park in either lot. Please RSVP to [ocl@syr.edu](mailto:ocl@syr.edu).**

**Wednesday, August 12, 12 – 1 p.m.** Planning committee meeting to design the 9/1/15 session on *How CNY Moves on Two Wheels* at Gifford Foundation office, 100 Clinton Square, 126 North Salina Street, 3rd Floor. Pay parking on nearby streets. Bring your lunch, if desired. Please RSVP to [heidi@giffordfoundation.org](mailto:heidi@giffordfoundation.org)

**Wednesday, August 19, 12 – 1:30 p.m. – *How CNY Moves* those in need: health and human services – panel - SUNY Oswego Metro Center at 100 South Salina Street (Atrium office building on Clinton Square) Room 129. Pay parking on the street and in nearby garages. Bring your lunch, if desired. Please RSVP to [ocl@syr.edu](mailto:ocl@syr.edu).**

Submitted by Renée K. Gadoua, study writer