

50 STORIES from 50 STATES

AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION
Women IN Buses 10TH ANNIVERSARY
BROUGHT TO YOU BY MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES



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Dear Women in Buses Supporters –

It is with great pride that we are able to celebrate stories by women from across the country as part of Women in Buses celebration for International Women's Day. This project “50 Stories from 50 States” and the stories included, share the path of an unknown, unsung, and quiet, yet significantly important segment of the private motorcoach industry.

This year “Women in Buses Council” proudly celebrates 10 years of existence of supporting women’s voices in the motorcoach industry. The Council creates advancement opportunities, recognizes achievements, and continues to advance the role of women through education, networking, resources, and government affairs.

I am proud and excited about the project “50 Stories from 50 States”. Each individual journey and reason for investing in small business is different. The reasons we continue to fight for the industry is unique. The 50 plus stories included enhance the women leaders of our industry and showcase the dramatic impacts women have had and continue to have on the private motorcoach, tour and travel industry. When equality is as prominent as ever in society, including government leaders, I am honored to share the voice of this wonderful industry and provide a platform to share individual journeys and stories. These stories included represent a small fraction of the population of amazing women in the industry.

I grew up in this industry. I love this industry and after almost 20 years supporting this industry, I am honored to continue to share the industry voice. Like myself, many of the women represented in these stories have spent years facing challenges we never expected. I look forward to continuing to discover and celebrate the amazing talented leaders at each of the 3,000 privately owned motorcoach organizations around the country.

With pride and gratitude to share the industry leading female’s stories –



A handwritten signature of Elizabeth Hall.

Elizabeth Hall
Women in Buses Chair
John Hall's Alaska



Elizabeth Hall
Chief Operating Officer – John Hall's Alaska
Chairman – Women in Buses

Thank You to:

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Motor Coach Industries

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ABA's Women in Buses Council has achieved great success in its short 10-year history. The **50 Stories from 50 States** project is another important marker in the Council's history. To bring together women in the industry from all 50 states and have their stories told, is a project that will have an impact on many future leaders and for some time. The women highlighted in this series, represents why the Council is still needed today just as much as it was when it began a decade ago.

Too often we have overlooked the role women have played and do today, in this industry. Many are CEOs, partners in business, part of a vital support network and the overall backbone to the success and future of the motorcoach industry.

When the Women in Buses Council was created, it was to ensure that everyone, especially the women leaders of the industry, had voices that were clearly heard. Today, that vision has grown to support and welcome all women in the industry no matter what role they play in a company.

The stories that follow are a testament to women who work in, lead, and support the industry. Our sincere thanks to BUSRide Magazine for giving these amazing women in the motorcoach industry a platform to share their challenges and accomplishments that have helped shape this industry.

The stories you read here will give you an insight into what it is like to work in an industry that has been evolving for over 100 years and many of these women are part of the third, fourth, fifth generation of their family's business. To understand that these families and companies have gone through so many challenges over the years including global conflicts, financial disasters, and pandemics like COVID-19, but they remain standing today and still moving forward. It is nothing short of amazing.

These **50 Stories from 50 States** is just a tip of the iceberg of the women in this industry and the contribution they have made to ensure its continued success. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did.



Peter J. Pantuso

Peter Pantuso
President/CEO
American Bus Association



On behalf of the American Bus Association Foundation (ABA), I would like to congratulate the Women in Buses Council on their efforts to gather stories from women in the industry. This project, 50 Stories from 50 States, is an incredible representation of the achievements as well as the challenges faced by women in the motorcoach industry.

Research from the ABA Foundation reaffirms that women are such an important part of the industry, at all levels. Forty-three percent of workforce of motorcoach companies are women. This includes drivers, mechanics, office staff and owners. This industry could not operate without the many women who are an integral part of its success.

The ABA Foundation is also led by a number of very engaged women who serve on the Board of Governors and help steer the scholarship and research programs as well as the fundraising objectives of the organization. These activities have helped provide more than 300 scholarships to industry employees and their children since the ABAF's founding.

Data garnered from ABA Foundation research shows that:

- Motorcoaches provide nearly 600 million passenger trips annually
- Motorcoach transportation is the greenest form of passenger transportation
- The motorcoach industry employs nearly 100,000 individuals
- Motorcoaches are the safest form of passenger transportation
- Annual direct motorcoach revenues total \$15.3 billion
- As a result of the pandemic, the motorcoach industry operated at less than 20 percent capacity

Working for a company that was led by my mother's family and in which my mother was an integral part of the business, and still is today at the age of 103, I am proud of the many contributions that women have made to the advancement of the motorcoach industry.

I wish all of the women featured here and the many that represent the industry, continued success.

Tom JeBran
Chairman
American Bus Association Foundation



Suzanne Thornburg
Capital Motor Lines & Colonial Trailways
CEO/President
sst@capitaltrailways.com

- Capital Motor Lines has two locations in Alabama and one in Georgia
- Colonial Trailways has one location in Alabama
- Our companies operate a current fleet of 65 full size motorcoaches
- Our companies, combined, employ approximately 80 Full Time and 85 Part Time positions

**Capital - Colonial
Trailways**

We're Going Places

Capital Motor Lines DBA Capital Trailways and Colonial Trailways are both motorcoach companies which operate in the charter and tour industry segment in the Alabama and Georgia markets. Our businesses are fifth generation family-owned companies which have also partnered with Greyhound Bus Lines for many years on schedule runs. Capital Motor Lines was formed in 1930 and Colonial Trailways, born of Monroeville Bus Lines, has operated since 1935. Our companies have been considered leading members of the bus industry for decades and are also long time proud members of several professional organizations including Trailways National, American Bus Association, United Motorcoach Association and the Women in Buses program.

The companies focused heavily on scheduled service revenue opportunities from the beginning, but as with many businesses, began making the transition into charter sales and tour packaging to add a more diverse offering to the customers in the mid 1980's. Capital and Colonial were founded originally by Avery Austin Crow, an innovative man who wanted to be part of the transportation movement during his lifetime. He had three daughters who eventually became the second-generation owners after his death in 1942 at the age of 51. Although his daughters were not involved in the day-to-day activities of the business, they did become active on the board of directors for many decades.

Capital and Colonial Trailways have passed their ownership through several generations and in 1994, Frank E. Montgomery III, the grandson of Mary Agnes (Crow) Montgomery, became the first family member to work in the day-to-day operations of the companies since his great grandfather, Avery Austin Crow. Frank learned the bus business through some industry legends including Tommy Hamilton and Wayne Phillips (former Presidents of the companies), Ed Sunday (former VP of Operations for the companies) and many others. He worked his way upward and was named President of Capital and Colonial Trailways in 2005. In mid-2006, Frank purchased the ownership interest of all existing family members, most of whom were second and third generation descendants of Mr. Crow. In 2010, the family, employees and companies suffered the untimely passing of Frank and his four children inherited the equal ownership of both Capital and Colonial Trailways.

Today our companies continue to partner with Greyhound on schedule routes and primarily provide charter and tour services to large travel groups, schoolchildren on fieldtrips, high school, college and university athletics, military and national guard troop movements, evacuees from natural disasters, semi-pro teams, seniors travel clubs, Greek Life organizations, Mardi Gras associations, sports fans, music groups and so much more. We are the lifeblood of safe travel and premiere transportation for many!

Suzanne Thornburg (formerly Montgomery) is the mother of Frank's four children and became a member of the board of directors representing her children's interest shortly after Frank's death. She has served nearly 25 years in the banking, finance, investment and insurance industries in multiple positions including branch management, private banking and commercial banking officer. On the announcement of the then current president's pending retirement plans in 2018, Suzanne was asked to become the new president and CEO of the companies and accepted the position and the challenge in May of 2019.

"Our companies were flourishing at the time I stepped into the day-to-day activities and management," Suzanne stated. "We were performing well in sales, service and revenue and focusing on shoring up the age of our fleet, improving technologies across our locations and streamlining processes to more effectively manage our operations. Little did I know that COVID-19 was to come. It truly devastated our industry, our companies and our employees. The heartbreak I felt in having to send my people home and not know if I would be able to call them back to work again after 90 years of industry existence crushed me. We still have some who have not been able to return. I truly believe in the power of prayer and that God has directed us through this plight. No man can take credit for where we have been, how we have changed and what we have persevered so far. We give Him all the glory for our survival to date and will continue to do so for our continued sustainability. My people have worked so very hard and have never given up on focusing on tomorrow. That's true commitment and that is what our industry as a whole is composed of, real people with grit and dedication. We remain faithful and continue to pray for God's guidance and direction to see us through COVID-19 and hopefully another 90 years."



Brenna Reeder
Alaska Coach Tours
Vice President of Tour Operations
brenna@alaskacoachtours.com



- Number of vehicles in fleet - 130
- Number of employees per summer, including Alaska and seasonal - 50 full time and 120 seasonal
- Number of year-round employees - 33, including 8 full time Alaska residents

Alaska Coach Tours is an Alaskan-owned and operated motorcoach company providing services throughout Southeast Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. The company was formed in 2004 under the concept to be an Alaska-owned motorcoach operator for cruise lines visiting Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan and Skagway, Alaska. In 2016, they expanded their operations to Seattle, Washington after seeing an increased demand for transportation and tour services throughout the Pacific Northwest. Partnerships include a variety of large and small vessels, fishing lodges and other tour operators visiting these areas. In 2015, Alaska Coach Tours became completely employee-owned, three of which are residents of Juneau-Douglas, Alaska area.

Brenna grew up in Juneau, Alaska where she saw first-hand the benefits of the tourism industry. She has worked in all sectors of the industry including retail and outdoor guiding. She first heard about Alaska Coach Tours while working seasonally for a helicopter company during her summer breaks from college.

In 2005, after learning more about the new company starting up in her hometown, and seeing some of the employees who were going to work for Alaska Coach Tours, Brenna decided to take a leap and try out a different aspect of the tourism sector, motorcoaches.



Looking back on that time now, she never could have imagined the impact that decision would make on her career, and life. Brenna advanced quickly in the company, starting as a dock representative and soon moving into motorcoach dispatch operations. It wasn't long after that she went on to manage the Skagway and Juneau divisions.

In 2015, Brenna was promoted to Vice President Tour Operations and became one of the seven employee owners, four of which are located in Alaska. She helped direct the company's expansion in Sitka, Alaska and continued development in the Seattle, Washington area. She currently oversees partnerships with over 250 organizations throughout Alaska and the Pacific Northwest, 150 peak-season employees and 5 separate divisions, many of which are only accessible by aircraft or boat.

Brenna's passion for tourism and sharing her home state are at the forefront of her leadership at Alaska Coach Tours. She remains a proud resident of Juneau and has expanded her family in recent years, setting the perfect example to her children of the value of the motorcoach industry. Brenna prides herself on holding a Commercial Drivers License, along with all the employee owners. After 15 years in the industry, some of Brenna's most memorable experiences include filling in as a motorcoach driver guide on busy days, a common task for all the owners at Alaska Coach Tours.

ALASKA



Lisa Pierson

Gray Line Tours/Citizen Auto Stage Company
Charter Manager/Dispatcher
tucsoncharter@graylinearizona.com

We are a third-generation family owned and operated company for soon to be 105 years in October. We have three divisions: Motor Coach, School Bus and Freight. We started in Nogales, Arizona and over the years have moved into the Tucson and Phoenix Markets. We are a founding partner with FlixBus, which has really helped us through the pandemic, and we have provided daily employee transportation for the mines 7 days a week. Of course, our charter business has dropped off and become almost non-existent, but the work is starting to come back.

Lisa has been in the transportation industry for 30 years and began working for an Airport Shuttle Van operation as a customer service agent. She eventually worked her way into management and found a need to provide customers with Charter Van Service for private events. The Charter Van Service grew into \$80,000.00 in revenue in the first year. Lisa eventually left that company and was lucky enough to land an entry level position with Gray Line as a Tour Coordinator/Receptionist.

Lisa has continually grown in the Motor Coach Industry wearing many hats depending on the needs of the company at any given time. About the only thing she would not do is drive the buses. I give our Motor



Coach Drivers a lot of credit for being safe and taking good care of our passengers. I really love what I do, and I cannot imagine working in a different industry.

Working for a family owned and operated company makes a big difference for me as well. I really do have a voice and am always included in the decision-making process. I have developed great relationships with our customers and some of them have become lifelong friends.

It is pretty amazing at how many changes the transportation industry has undergone over the years, but we have always endured and been able to land on our feet. However, this pandemic has hit everyone very hard. Not a day goes by that when talking with a customer or co-worker that we talk about losing family members, employees, dear friends, etc. to the virus. I sure hope that all of the people we know and partner with are able to stay healthy and bounce back.



Jana Cohen
Arkansas Destinations, Inc.
President
jana@ardestdinations.com



Jana Cohen was a woman with a vision – and good timing. As the founder and President of Arkansas Destinations, Inc., Cohen has used her expertise about Little Rock and Arkansas to use by starting a woman-owned Destination Management Organization dedicated to showcasing Arkansas' natural beauty and the attractions in and around the Clinton Library in Little Rock, Arkansas.

"I never really thought a woman owning a transportation company was anything unusual", says Cohen, who founded the company in 2000. "When the Clinton Library was announced, and then opened, we were poised and ready to go for tourists coming to town."

The opening of the Clinton Library was not the first time Cohen seized on Clinton's popularity. In late 1991, when then-Governor Bill Clinton announced his Presidential candidacy, people from around the world became interested in Arkansas. Cohen, who was still with the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, saw an opportunity. "During the Clinton campaign and election, I developed materials for tours coming to Little Rock that featured Bill Clinton and his old stomping groups", she said. "Those were eventually incorporated into Arkansas Destinations."

By the time Clinton's second term in the White House was coming to an end, several of Cohen's contacts had suggested that she start her own business. That push led to the creation of Arkansas Destinations, Inc, which has since grown from a single-woman operation focused on local tourism to a full-fledged transportation company that operates one luxury sedan, a 14-passenger van, a 14-passenger mini-coach, two 25-passenger mini-coaches, four 25-passenger trolley buses, three 40-passenger shuttles and a 56-passenger motor coach. Pre-pandemic, her team included about 25 employees. That has since gone down to about 14 currently.

Additionally, Arkansas Destinations serves as the primary shuttling for the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), the state's only medical teaching hospital that includes a medical school, pharmacy school, nursing school, college of public health, college of health professions, and a graduate school, as well as seven different institutes that specialize in aging, ophthalmology, digital health, spine and neurosciences, psychiatry, cancer and research.

Under the Arkansas Destinations umbrella, Cohen also operates the Arkansas Trolley Company, which initially specialized in local shuttling. After focusing on that for several years, the company branched out, becoming DOT certified to take 25-passenger mini-coaches on trips out-of-state. In its early years, as the only company in town offering multiple options for smaller buses, Arkansas Destinations carved out a niche servicing small and mid-sized groups.

Eventually clients began to inquire about transportation for larger groups. The exit of two motor coach companies from the market gave them the opening to move into the motor coach business. Since then, Arkansas Destinations has transported its customers from coast-to-coast, working primarily with education and religious groups.

Then came COVID-19. By March 15, 2020 all their bookings for tours, events and incoming and outgoing travel cancelled or postponed. "March 12 was the last day we ran a trip," says Cohen. "Overnight, half of our business disappeared, and we had customers asking for money back from deposits and pre-payments."

At the beginning of the pandemic, Arkansas Destinations caught a break when UAMS ordered more shuttles to promote social distancing. The additional shuttles have since ended, but Cohen said that she is "honored and blessed to be able to be part of the team that is the main COVID-19 treatment center in Arkansas." The shuttles have continued to run throughout the pandemic, with the company taking every possible precaution to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Every shuttle has been equipped with hand sanitizer dispensers, all drivers and passengers are masked, and the drivers clean the shuttles between runs with professional grade germicide.

Over the years all three of Cohen's children, who are now in their 20's, have helped-out in the business, welcoming visitors to Little Rock, washing buses, helping escort tours or working in the office. "This is a family business that we hope will make it to the next generation." We have been part of the fabric of this state for over 20 years, and I feel blessed to have been part of some exciting times, planned some wonderful trips and met great people". Afterall, that is what this business is all about.

Connie Giddens
Pacific Coachways
Billing Clerk
cgiddens@pacificcoachways.com

PACIFIC COACHWAYS



- Fleet Size - 18 Motorcoaches, 6 School Buses,
- 1 Mini Coach
- \$105,000 annually plate fees

I dated and eventually married into the bus business. Tom started driving the church bus when he was just 17 years old! We went to the same church and I thought the bus driver was pretty cute! I remember going on dates with him and we would dream and plan about owning a future bus company. When we were married in 1980, Tom was working as a Dispatcher for Robert's Holiday Lines and over the years worked at several other charter bus companies until on July 1, 1989 an opportunity arose to purchase Pacific Coachways Charter Services from Bob Fawcett. It was our dream come true but certainly was a lot of work! At first, we had nowhere to park the 4 MCI Motorcoaches, so we moved them from a parking lot behind a Target shopping center to our church parking lot to finally a rented space in another bus company's yard. I was working as a School Secretary at Holy Cross Lutheran School where our son Michael, daughters Susie and Noelle all attended. I also had a part time position at a furniture manufacturing company called Royal Coach Furniture as a bookkeeper's assistant. I also answered phones and dispatched for Pacific Coachways at night in our home office while Tom was out driving or washing and dumping the buses. Sometimes I was not sure which phone I was answering and was afraid I would answer "Holy-Coach- Ways!"

It was a busy and exciting time building our company as well as our family. A new baby (Noelle) was born in 1990 and when she started to crawl, I pushed Tom to find somewhere other than our living room for his office. We eventually found office and yard space for the buses and my days of working 3 jobs ended. In 1992 Tom wanted to purchase a new Motorcoach but his credit was overextended from

purchasing the company, so it was on MY credit that we were able to become the proud owners of a new Le Mirage Prevost Motorcoach! I attended most of the trade shows with Tom over the years, getting to know all the wonderful people in the bus industry but continued working as School Secretary until it sadly closed in 2009. I took a couple of months off between jobs then started working at Pacific Coachways, first just filing and trying to organize Tom's desk and office but soon moved to accounting and billing when that position became available. Our company celebrated our 30th anniversary on July 1, 2019 with a wonderful party where employees, friends, family, and industry friends helped us celebrate this milestone. The company has received many awards from the California Highway Patrol, IMG, UMA, Trailways and our California Bus Association.

I enjoy working with my husband Tom, son Michael and daughter in law Jennifer, and hope and pray we make it through this devastating industry wide shut down due to COVID-19. It will make me the happiest person on earth when we are able to do what we do best and that is safely take people where the need to go!

My favorite vacation spot is Lake Powell in Utah where our family enjoys houseboating each year. In my quarantined free time, I have organized my photos, and like to read and garden. We have quite the bumper crop of pumpkins this year making all our grandkids and neighborhood kids very excited as Halloween gets closer!

Tom and I celebrated 40 years of marriage on May 17, 2020 and we have three grandsons (Owen-6; Westley-4; and Rhys-1) from our daughter Susie and her husband Daren and one granddaughter (Hannah-5) from Michael and Jennifer. Hannah is well known and loved by many people in this awesome industry, and we hope she will enjoy many more years of attending shows and maybe eventually taking over running Pacific Coachways.





Sandy Everett
Ramblin Express
Director of Operations
sandy@ramblin.com

- Fleet Size - 38 active

Ramblin Express is a Colorado owned and operated passenger ground transportation company providing first class charter bus service since 1993. Operations and facilities include locations of both Denver and Colorado Springs. Ramblin Express with its two locations includes a variety of fleet vehicle types including motorcoaches, midsized buses and minibuses.

Sandy Everett started her own journey in the motorcoach industry over 20 years ago. While not the traditional route, Sandy's story showcases the potential of the travel and motorcoach industry. After starting as a position to raise her growing family, Sandy has since achieved executive level recognition within the same organization after 23 years of service to the Ramblin Express team.

Sandy's journey in the motorcoach industry started in 1999 as a driver for the organization. As the mother of three young children, Sandy was able to identify and start a position as a driver for Ramblin Express which had a significant impact on the time with her children. Working one position with Ramblin Express as a driver allowed her to spend more time with the children. The flexible hours and pay created one job opportunity verse sharing her time over two positions.

After showing her devotion and success to the Ramblin Express team, Sandy quickly received a promotion moving into the office and a year-round regular office schedule. During Sandy's time with

Ramblin Express, she has served as Office Assistant and Assistant to the General Manager, where her focus included maintaining motorcoach fleet records, Parts Inventory, operations licensing, and the many other important legal details in operating a motorcoach organization.

As Sandy's career in the industry continued to progress, Ramblin Express management had her fill roles in Sales, Office Manager, and driving when needed. As she continued to work full time in this fast-paced industry, Sandy continued to raise her family and maintain being a great role model showing the fruits of hard work, determination, and loyalty to a great organization.

After 23 years, Sandy serves as the Director of Operations, overseeing the dispatch and one-time scheduling drivers, all OTR's, teams and all motorcoach operations for both Colorado Springs and Denver locations. Pre-pandemic, Ramblin Express employed approximately 60-75 drivers covering their fleet of 45+ vehicles. Each day presents a new challenge, especially in light of the pandemic. However even on the difficult days, Sandy's love of the industry and is hopeful for the return of full operations. She has made lifelong friends throughout the industry during her time and earned the respect of many rising in the ranks from driver to an executive.



Pam Martinez

DATTCO

VP of Human Resources and Risk Management

pamm@dattco.com



While Pam has officially been in transportation for over 38 years, her involvement goes even further back than that. When she was in middle school, her mom worked at a bus company. Pam would walk to the bus terminal after school and find “little jobs” to do while waiting for her mom to finish working. From that point on, the bus business was in her blood! While in college, she did an internship for the bus company her mom worked for and, upon graduation, was offered a full-time management position in operations. During that time, she obtained her CDL when it first became required for bus drivers and still holds a CDL today.

In 2000, after 18 years, she left that company to work for DATTCO - a third-generation, family-owned Connecticut-based business - where she could pursue her interest in Human Resources while still being involved with buses. Within a few years, she also took on the responsibility for Risk Management and Safety for DATTCO. Under her leadership, in 2018, DATTCO received the prestigious International Motorcoach Group Safety Award, which is presented to the company that has demonstrated the highest level of safety throughout their organization. In her current role as the Vice President of Human Resources and Risk Management, she is responsible for Human Resources of approximately 2,000 employees and the safe operation of more than 1,500 vehicles. DATTCO’s strengths lie in the quality of its people and products to provide personal service and transportation solutions for customers. There is a saying you’ll see displayed on many DATTCO motorcoaches: “Our Buses, Our People, and You.” But this is not just a saying; it is the mission and the driving force behind everything Pam does daily.

Established in 1924, DATTCO experienced significant growth during its first five decades. They began providing school bus transportation in 1949 and now services twenty-seven school districts and Regional Education Service Centers throughout Connecticut and Rhode Island, transporting over 110,000 students. In 1964 DATTCO added its first motorcoach to transport Connecticut residents to the World’s Fair in New York. From there, our motorcoach business has grown to

a fleet of 169 vehicles providing shuttle services for corporations, universities, and paratransit, charter and tours for leisure group travel, commuter bus service in Connecticut and Boston, wedding transportation, casino bus service, and operation of Megabus intercity routes. The Sales & Service division comprises a commercial vehicle dealership and a network of locations across Connecticut and Massachusetts that provide preventative maintenance and fleet repair, collision repair, and parts sales to customers throughout New England.

Pam has an AS Degree in Administration and a BS Degree in Management from Quinnipiac College. She also has an MBA with a concentration in Human Resources from The University of New Haven. Pam has served as the President of the Connecticut Bus Association and is currently the Chairman of the Bus Industry Safety Council. She also has served on the Board of Governors for Quinnipiac University, held the position of Risk Control Chairperson of TRAX insurance, and was the Chairman of the Workplace Health and Environmental Safety Committee for the Bus Industry Safety Council for several years. Additionally, she has held several board positions for organizations, including the Northeast School Transportation Safety Institute, The Connecticut School Transportation Association, the Southington Chamber of Commerce, and the Milford Newcomers.

Pam has been a speaker for several organizations, including the TRAX Insurance Group, The Bus Industry Safety Council, The American Bus Association, United Motorcoach Association and the International Motorcoach Group, The Human Resources Council for the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, the Safety Summit, and Women-in-Buses.

Over the years, much has changed, but DATTCO’s company values and inherent family culture remain, ensuring the most important things continue to be its buses, people, and most importantly, the safety of its customers. Pam is an integral part of this dynamic and thriving company, and the company owes much of its success to her dedication.

Tina Madanat
Delaware Tourism Office
Sales Director & Group Tour Leader
Tina.Madanat@delaware.gov



Tina Madanat joined the Delaware Tourism Office as the Marketing and Public Relations Manager in 2009 when a State of Delaware team was first assembled to assist existing businesses to grow and prosper, market and promote Delaware as a desirable tourist destination and attract out-of-state visitors to the First State. In 2012, Tina moved to a sales position to fervently develop the group tour market.

Over the course of Tina's career, she acquired expertise in sales, marketing, communications and public relations. As a native Delawarean, Tina is proud of her home state and all of the wonderful things to do in Delaware. She was thrilled at the opportunity to join the Delaware Tourism Office and apply her talents and skills to the tourism industry.

Tina is most proud of single-handedly growing the group tour business by over 209 percent within 3 years of taking over the group tour market. Likewise, overnight visits have steadily increased over the past 9 years resulting in a 285 percent increase in total room nights for group tour sales.

Tina also raised awareness of Delaware group offerings by enhancing national and international industry trade show presence and conducting statewide familiarization tours. Additionally, Tina implemented the Delaware Motorcoach Rewards Program that provides welcome gifts to visiting groups and recognizes group travel planners for their patronage.

What Tina loves most about the travel and tourism industry is the ability to create lasting memories for people to treasure for years to come. She most enjoys working with group travel planners and industry partners, forming cherished friendships, and showcasing Delaware's vast group tour offerings. Tina attributes her business success to boundless energy and enthusiasm for the motorcoach industry and providing personalized service.

Working with the Visit Delaware Team has been a highlight of Tina's career. Over the past 12 years, the Delaware Tourism Office has launched progressive



sales and marketing initiatives to capture business in key tourism market segments resulting in increased visitation, tax revenue and economic development. The Visit Delaware sales and marketing team is passionate about driving economic impact through group tour, sports and leisure endeavors which, pre-COVID, contributed \$3.5 billion to the State's economy.

Today, Visit Delaware is an economic driver for the State of Delaware's tourism industry and is committed to transforming lives through travel and creating a united and connected world. Through innovation and advocacy, the Delaware Tourism Office is dedicated to helping industry partners and clients rebound from pandemic setbacks and to ensure safe, memorable experiences for all Delaware visitors.

Looking forward, Tina is poised to rebound the group tour market in Delaware. She continues to work diligently to provide exemplary service to group travel planners, work with industry leaders to form viable partnerships, lead the Delaware Group Tour Coalition and adeptly represent statewide hotels, attractions and services.

Contact Tina.Madanat@delaware.gov to plan your next exciting Delaware group adventure and to receive complimentary group welcome gifts via the **Delaware Motorcoach Rewards Program**.



Edna Dakkak
Dynamic Tours & Transportation
President
Edakkak@dynamicbuslines.com

D o n a m i c

My journey into the bus industry began with an invitation to lunch at the Univ. of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. I was a 17-year-old enrolled at the U of A to study Mineral Engineering. It was there that I met my future husband, Assad Dakkak.

A long story short, in 1978 Assad and I moved "home" to Jerusalem, got married, started a family and he joined his family business, Dakkak Tours, a tour and transportation company, which was founded in 1955.

In 1986, Assad decided that we would move back to USA and selected Orlando, FL to be our new home. We created Dynamic Tours and Transportation, Inc. on Feb. 21, 1991. First we purchased a sedan, then a van, then a limousine, then we bought our first minibus and haven't stopped since. We now have 58+ full size motor coaches in our fleet and have had such a journey.

Throughout our 30 years in business, we have had the pleasure of being involved in very exciting times. We have transported many groups; ranging from professional/big name entertainers, the U.S. Secret Service, Hurricane Relief, Florida Fires, State of Texas, major conventions in Orlando, Miami, New Orleans and Atlanta, numerous religious groups, transporting Disney World cast members and Special Olympics Groups to name a few.

I would have never dreamt of being in the transportation business, I married into it. I am happy to say that busing is now in my blood! We began from humble beginnings and remain to be humble, keeping our feet firmly on the ground. We remain focused on providing a comfortable ride with safe/confident drivers, solid equipment, and a dynamic team.

My official title is President but I continue to wear many hats, as does Assad. I recall our family sweeping, mopping, cleaning buses on our hands and

knees, dumping lavatories and washing the outsides. Our sons were part of the team effort also. We have the opportunity to work together in an industry we are very passionate about. We both head up our organization in Orlando. I predominately work in office/sales/business development, while my better half heads up acquisitions of equipment and oversees the shop and larger accounts. It is fortunate that we enjoy working together.

Our love for travel and buses has allowed us to both see the world and to visit numerous bus factories. We have toured bus factories in three Continents, even attending Bus World in Kortrijk, Belgium three times.

What other Southern girl can say that while in Paris she was not taking a photo of the Eiffel Tower but photographing buses? Only a "bus" girl!

Again, this has been a wonderful career and a dynamic opportunity to be of service to the community, our employees and be a partner in creating memories! Finally, I want to thank every person that has worked or remains working in our organization for these past 30 years, God willing many more to come. The road has been both eventful and dynamic.





Georgia Coach Lines, Inc. business philosophy revolves around “building customer relationships through satisfactory services.” They provide charter services that meets or exceed the highest industry standards which allows them to deliver seamless customer experiences to their clients. They understand the importance of keeping the customers well-informed throughout the experience with them. They believe in fulfilling their commitments to ensure that their customers do not only get a first-time excellent service from their staff and motorcoaches to provide an experience that will ensure continued business relationships.

Georgia Coach Lines, Inc. specializes in all types of group transportation including, athletic teams, band, corporate, conventions, schools, tours, civic groups, and weddings in Georgia and across the United States and Canada.

Wendy is the vice president of Georgia Coach Lines, Inc. (aka “Boss Lady”) in Fayetteville, Georgia. She oversees compliance, finance, and sales operations. Prior to coming onboard, she was a regulatory affairs professional in the chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturing industries for over 25 years. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Spelman College. She had no idea that one day she and her husband, Clarence would become the second generation owners of Georgia Coach Lines, Inc. When she met him, he was in law enforcement management and knew that he occasionally drove buses for his family business.

Wendy and Clarence took the reins in February 2017. With their qualifications and motivated management abilities, they led the team with the right passion to continue the proven success and growth of the company. They have realized the importance of upscaling business practices and procedures to stay competitive. They have established the company as a premium motorcoach charter service provider. In April 2020, the corporate headquarters and maintenance facility moved into a new constructed facility on 17 acres. They inherited the company with a fleet that consisted of two (2) motorcoaches located in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, and now have grown the fleet to seven

Wendy Hollingsworth-Cox

Georgia Coach Lines, Inc.

Vice President and General Manager

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Georgia Coach Lines, Inc is a family owned and operated motorcoach company since 1985. 7 MCI J4500s, 16 Employees/Motorcoach Operators, and 1 million miles driven over last three years.

(7) motorcoaches of which five are late model MCI J4500. In December 2019, they ordered and purchased the first brand new MCI J4500 motorcoach in the company's thirty-six year history.

She later formed a new division, GCL Tours that specializes in customized group travel touring packages. Her most requested packages, are the “I Am Black History Tour” to the National Museum of African American History and Culture and other black history attractions in Washington, DC., and “The Holy Land Experience” in Orlando, Florida.

The pandemic has had a devastating effect on the motorcoach industry, essentially grinding it to a halt on March 13, 2020. As always, Georgia Coach Lines prioritized the health and safety of both the customer and its employees to make sure that families are not devastated by this crisis.

They take pride in giving back to their community by partnering a non-profit organization, Caring For Others, with food, clothing and essential items being distributed across Georgia to help those that are less fortunate and have become unemployed during this pandemic.

Wendy’s greatest accomplishment as a motorcoach business owner was when she realized that Georgia Coach Lines would play an integral role in transporting family and dignitaries attending the final tributes to the U.S. civil rights leader, Rep. John Lewis. “All of our phones were ringing off the hook! We were on every news media in the county maybe even the world. Family, friends, employees, and colleagues were calling, texting, and send pictures from all over the country. Everyone was complementing us on how good the motorcoaches looked and just excited to see them rolling during the pandemic!” She remembers one colleague telling her – “There is not enough money that we could have paid for the publicity that we received today.” “It was an emotional time in our history and an honor for us to be part of it – this charter will be etched forever in the Georgia Coach Lines history.”

Secondly, I was extremely excited and honored when CNN’s Natasha Chen did a feature story on the effects of the pandemic on the motorcoach industry that featured Clarence and Georgia Coach Lines.



Kathryn Fischer
Polynesian Adventure Tours
Executive Vice President of Sales
kathryn@polyad.com



Polynesian Adventure Tours is a Hawaii corporation and was founded in 1977. Operations began on Oahu and shortly thereafter expanded to Hawaii Island, Maui, and Kauai. Poly Ad routinely operates services for numerous large meetings & conventions throughout the State of Hawaii as well as per capita sightseeing tours, ground transportation for inbound tour operator programs, cruise line shore excursions and ground operations, and charters which includes corporate transportation collegiate and professional sports teams. Poly Ad operates over 170 vehicles from five offices located in Honolulu, Hilo, Kona, Maui, and Kauai and as of January 1, 2020 employed approximately 350 full- and part-time staff.

Transportation Charter Services (“TCS”), an award-winning ground transportation company headquartered in Orange, CA. purchased Poly Ad in October 2017 from one of the major Cruise Lines.

Kathryn Fischer is the Executive Vice President of Sales for Polynesian Adventure. A position that is well deserved after a long history in the Travel and Tourism industry that began 26 years ago in Virginia Beach, VA. As Director of Sales for a busy oceanfront hotel that catered to group and leisure markets, Kathryn made lifelong connections with bus and tour operators, that she now calls friends and family. It was through these relationships that she met Terry, her now husband, at an Industry conference.

After 13 years in the hotel business, Kathryn moved to Seattle where she joined the Victoria Clipper working in the Receptive Tour division, Clipper Vacations. This opportunity allowed Kathryn to develop her skills on the other side of the business which included procuring hotels, attractions and motor coaches. Kathryn moved on from Clipper Vacations when her and her husband, Terry and his brother purchased Transportation Charter Services (TCS) in Orange County, CA. Kathryn then took her skills and experience as a meeting planner, hotel sales and receptive tour operator and now applied it to

selling for the motor coach industry. Kathryn has been an integral part of growing TCS from an 18 bus company to a 80 bus company over a 9 year period and what ultimately put TCS in a position to purchase Polynesian Adventure.

Kathryn was named the Executive VP of Sales for PolyAd and immediately began influencing the Sales initiatives beyond the market segments that PolyAd had traditionally been involved. PolyAd's focus over the past 40 years has primarily been per capita sightseeing, convention transportation and later servicing the cruise industry. Kathryn has been instrumental in developing new business with collegiate sports, professional sports, inbound tour operators, and student travel. Kathryn's oversight has inspired the Sales initiatives and brought a new energy that has changed the path of Polynesian Adventure and shaped the future of the company diversifying the revenue stream for a more sustainable business model.

Kathryn has established herself as a recognized Sales individual in the industry and is deeply involved with the International Motorcoach Group's (IMG) Focus 25 which is the Sales part of IMG. Kathryn has not only become the face of TCS and PolyAd but also a representative of IMG with her perpetual participation. Kathryn is also a member of the Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) Board of Directors which also demonstrates her engagement and commitment to the industry.

Sometimes life leads us down paths that we never anticipate. Kathryn is grateful for the unexpected turns her life has taken and being able to work in an industry that she loves. When Kathryn and Terry were married in Hawaii in 2016, little did they know that just over a year later, the magical place they love would come to be special both personally and professionally.

HAWAII



Tish Loshure

Western Pleasure Tours

President / Owner

info@westernpleasuretours.com

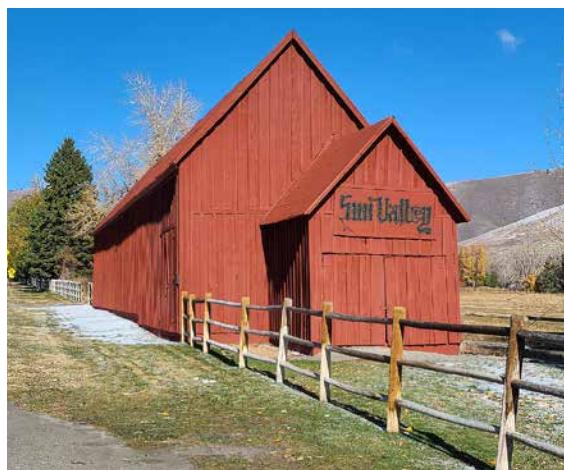


• FLEET SIZE – One 30 Passenger Temsa

Western Pleasure Tours is based out of the Boise area and is a new start up this year. We offer receptive services to the West, Pacific Northwest and the Western National Parks. In addition to working with tour operators and group leaders Western Pleasure Tours is offering retail tours from the Boise area. Tish is currently working on day trips and 1-4-night regional tours for residents in the greater Boise area.

Tish started her career in tourism almost 30 years ago in the hotel industry. Tish worked her way up in sales from a single property to a regional director position and all the way to the national level as a National Director of Tour and Travel for 3 different nationwide hotel chains. “After working with tour operators for almost 15 years I decided to make the switch and went to work for a large student tour company. I learned a lot about the other side of the industry in those first 5 years!”

After working for another 10 years with another student tour operator and a wholesale tour operator we come to 2020 and the challenges with that. Tish and her husband Scott sold their farm in Western Washington State and moved to Boise to be closer to Scott's parents. And being furloughed like so many Tish decided to start Western Pleasure Tours. And when the opportunity came along to buy a motorcoach, they jumped on it. “My husband was looking to sell his other business of 17 years, and we knew right away that driving the new motorcoach on our tours would be a perfect fit.”



So, we are looking forward to this spring when tours will slowly start to run. Tish is working on a calendar full of tours to showcase Idaho and add in the surrounding states not only to residents here, but to groups from all over the country.

“There is so much here in Idaho to offer, between the stunning scenery, mountains, high desert and farmlands we have wonderful museums, attractions, wineries and history galore! So, designing itineraries within Idaho and adding Idaho to bucket list spots like Yellowstone National Park are a top priority for me. I love Idaho and this will be my home for a long, long time! Come and see us!!”



Timi Hall Kaufman
Timi's Tours
Founder/Owner
[tmi@timistours.com](mailto:timi@timistours.com)

- Plate Costs (IL): \$1,000.18 per motorcoach per year
- Total Mileage:
2019: 128,000 miles
2020: 102,000 miles
- Avg. Mileage/Unit:
2019: 32,008 miles
2020: 25,627 miles
- 2021 Fleet Size:
6 Full-Size Motorcoaches
1 Mid-Size Motorcoach
2 Executive Sprinters
1 Luxury SUV



Timi's Tours and Transportation is based in Moweaqua, Illinois, a historic coal mining and present farming community, fifty miles from the Illinois State Capitol of Springfield. Our tour company, Timi's Tours, was established in this familiar Illinois town in September of 2006 beginning with only a few tours in that first year. Today, Timi's Tours has grown to offering over eighty tours per year...and our business is growing!

Our transportation division, Timi's Tours Transportation, opened in 2018 when a local motorcoach transportation company, who was a long-time, trusted vendor of Timi's Tours, suddenly closed their doors in August of that year. After unsuccessful attempts at finding a new motorcoach provider that offered the same level of service and equipment of our original vendor, Timi's Tours made the decision to purchase our own motorcoach to continue to provide top-of-the-line customer service in the style of motorcoach that our guests had come to expect.

Upon entry into the Charter Motorcoach Industry, word spread quickly of Timi's Tours purchase of a late model full-size motorcoach. It was an exciting time! Our first motorcoach was ordered with a Timi's Tours' specified 52-seat maximum which offer our guests generous legroom and luxurious comfort, which was only the start of the Timi's Tours attention to detail concerning the new venture into the transportation industry.

Under Timi's leadership, Timi's Tours has adapted swiftly to a COVID, and soon-to-be, post-COVID world. We are securing long-term contracts with major companies and large universities to provide services for years to come, building a strong base of transportation service in Central Illinois and not losing any traction in the process.

Timi's Tours' fleet has grown to include smaller vehicle options as customer demand has changed. Recognizing our changing environment with altered public options and shifting consumer needs has placed Timi's Tours in a position where equipment changes, such as size and options of a vehicle, has created new revenue streams that would have been missed if Timi and her management team had failed to modify their course according to the adversity presented to the tour and transportation industries in 2020.

In addition, Timi's Tours had entered 2020 with the construction of a brand new 60' x 80' Maintenance Garage and Charter Service Office, complete with living quarters for our drivers. This building, completed just prior to COVID-19, was driven by the exceptional performance of

Timi's Tours' first year of charter service and Timi's focus on implementing long-term cost and quality controls, as it related to our fleet and basic business services.

Her History

Timi grew up in a family jewelry business having achieved the title of Certified Gemologist from the American Gem Society. She was one of the first 100 women in the USA to earn that title at that time.

In the early 90's, Timi joined the direct sales team of a well-loved and familiar home party company and she spent nearly 25 years working with them, achieving many accolades and sales awards, including selling \$1.2 million in career sales managing a team of 100 under her leadership. Through her association with The Longaberger Company, she took groups to visit their Home Office on over 60 bus tours, an early indicator of Timi's eventual next step.

Timi's direct sales business faded following 9/11 and she started thinking on how to recoup her financial losses from that singular event. Always a true entrepreneur and someone not afraid of hard work, long hours, taking chances and thinking out of the box, Timi imagined that her Longaberger following would perhaps like to travel to other locations. She was so right! Timi's very first day trip sold out in five short days, the earliest days of what would become Timi's Tours and Transportation today!

Timi's Tours is truly a family business. Timi's three adult children are all employed at the company: Catherine (Office Manager), Natalie (Web Design), and Jack (Vice President, Director of Operations). Timi and her General Manager, Ken Summer, execute all the tour planning and act as our primary tour directors on over 90% of our tours.

On all single-day trips, Timi extends the opportunity for her Timi's Tours guests to donate to one of a series of local charitable organizations, by designating a specific product on each trip that each guest may bring to donate, such as laundry soap, tea bags, soup, or tissues. Timi's Tours collects these items and donates as much as we can, giving back to the communities that support Timi's Tours.

In addition, Timi has promoted Timi's Tours as a year-round drop-off, collection site for the collection of personal items for Veteran's Homes, collecting such items as new underwear, t-shirts and socks. Our U.S. Veterans are a special focus of Timi's generosity, holding a place very near and dear to her heart, recognizing each Veteran on every tour that Timi's Tours directs and runs.



Jennifer Gregory
Royal Excursion
General Manager
jgregory@royalexcurison.com

Royal Excursion

Founded in 1998, Royal Excursion has been continuously owned and operated by Kaser Fleet LLC. Shannon Kaser entered the passenger transportation market fresh out of college in the late 90's and quickly grew to become one of the largest privately held passenger transportation companies in Indiana.

Royal Excursion provides management and operation of fixed-route public transit systems, operation and management of charter services, as well as operation and management of various universities, corporate and other shuttle systems.

Jennifer has worked in the motorcoach industry since 1994. During the past 27 years, Jennifer has worked in every position, including safety, training, dispatch, charter representative, general manager, and vice president.

Jennifer has been responsible for the fleet operations of over one hundred buses as well as providing safe, quality and reliable charter and shuttle transportation for several thousand passengers on a daily basis. In the past, she has been instrumental in building, growing and managing commuter shuttle services for such clients as Northwestern University, Loyola University, Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Robert Morris College, MACOG, City of Valparaiso; as well as several Northwest Indiana Casino Lines.

My career began with the Van Der Aa Family in South Holland, IL at Royal American Charter Lines. Eventually, we relocated to Chicago, concentrating solely on Fixed Route Services. I remained there for 14 years, serving as both company GM and VP of Fixed Route Services.

A chance encounter at an industry event in Nashville the early 2000's with Shannon Kaser began a relationship between the two companies that lasted for several years until Royal American Charter Lines closed in 2008. During this time, Royal Excursion significantly began to grow & expand. I joined the Royal Excursion

Team in 2009, where I now serve as our company GM and Director of Fixed Routes & Safety. Combined, Shannon and I have successfully managed and executed the startup plans of over fifty (50) major contracts for elite, influential clientele with contract revenues of over \$15million plus.

In 2012, we opened our second location in Hammond, IN bordering Chicago City limits. This location allows us easy access to both Chicago and neighboring Northwest Indiana cities where we service three casino line runs.

In January of 2018, we acquired Excursions in Fort Wayne, IN thus becoming our third location. Shortly afterwards in August of 2018, we opened a fourth location in Valparaiso, IN after being awarded the City of Valparaiso Fixed Route Transit Services contract.

Our latest venture was in the winter of 2020, with the successful launch and startup of Royal Zoom Airport Shuttle Service. Our line run service ran from South Bend, Michigan City, Valparaiso, and Griffith, IN transporting passengers to both O'Hare & Midway Airports in Chicago. The service went live on March 3, 2020 and ceased operations on March 15 due to COVID.

Pre-pandemic, Royal Excursion employed over three hundred employees, operating over one hundred revenue vehicles. Due to our diversified clientele and contracts, we have been able to remain operating approximately 40% of our Fixed Route Services in 2020. Charter Services were severely down approximately 95%. We are hopeful for a steady increase in Charter Services and the return of stalled Fixed Route Services to begin resuming travel as restrictions ease and COVID numbers continue to go down.

We can't wait for the day until we are welcoming back all of our employees, traveling with all of our customers, and looking out the window to an empty bus parking lot again!



Kim Grzywacz
CIT Signature Transportation
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I, Kim Grzywacz, never noticed motorcoaches on the road until I began dating John Grzywacz. What a world he opened up to me. As an elementary education teacher for 18 years, I never dreamed my life would go down this road. Two years into our marriage, I joined John at our company. I was going to work part time (you know, less than 12 hours a day) and from home.

Our company, located in the heart of Iowa, was created in 1988. Beginning as a school bus operator serving the Ames Community School District, John grew and evolved over the years. Motorcoaches and transit buses have been added to the fleet and school buses subtracted. No longer do we provide school route service. Now, we provide private charter services.

We are proud to move groups of any size to their destinations locally, through the continental United States, and Canada. We love the challenge of moving 7,000 plus guests during their conferences, and delight in making student athletes feel special when we pull up to the curb and take them to their competitions. Spring break for us is about taking youth on unforgettable trips with their choirs/bands, and college students completing service trips across the country. And, speaking of student trips, we are thrilled to bring youth to Washington D.C. making history come to life. We are also honored every time we assist our military personnel getting where they need to be in order to serve our country.

While John has been involved for over 30 years, my full involvement began 8 years ago. It amazed me as my skills as a teacher became very relevant to this new position (organization, record keeping, meet and greets, taking care of clients...) I grew from being a bookkeeper to running our sales department. I am proud to say that our sales grew 40% and our passenger miles went up 120% in this time. When my team wanted a new bus, John said we had to earn it. Earn it we did! Growth is part of our mission to be an enhancement to the people, places, events and activities our clients graciously invite us to participate in.

John knew the importance of holding leadership positions in the community and industry organizations. He encouraged my growth within the industry, too. First, I joined the Motorcoach Marketing Council. My next step was to become involved in Women in Buses. I served as the Membership Chair, President, and am now completing my last year as Past President. During this time, I joined the American Bus Association Board of Directors. (That path began when I accepted the position of Marketplace Chair for our 2019 Annual Meeting/

Marketplace. This is also where I took possession of the bus my team earned.) More locally, I now serve as the Vice President and Treasurer for the Iowa Group Travel Association. (Iowa is GREAT, and people need to experience it!) I am proud to be on the inaugural board of directors for the Iowa Travel Industry Partners, as well. Through this industry, I have also met individuals with organizations that I hold close to my heart, and I serve on 2 other non-profit board of directors.

Over the past year, I have discovered just how important our relationship is with our elected officials. It is impossible for them to know everything they need without our assistance. I consider it my job to give the information needed. Here are some “cold, hard facts” (some pre-COVID) about CIT Signature Transportation:

- Fleet Size = 25 (13 motorcoaches, 6 transits, and other assorted small vehicles)
- Employees = 60 (20 full time)
- \$3.5 million company
- Motorcoach Cost = \$550,000 base price (\$10,000/month payments on a 5 year note)
- Insurance = \$11,000/year/vehicle
- License = \$1,000/vehicle

As you can see, we are a capital intensive industry. Federal law dictates we must have a \$5 million insurance policy. We have \$10 million as many of our clients require this amount.

We are also a highly regulated industry. We embrace these regulations because of the safety-sensitive nature of our business. We move people. However, these regulations do come at a cost. On-board logging systems track our drivers every move to ensure they are staying within their legal hours of service limits. After the cost of this equipment, we must pay a monthly service fee per vehicle AND per driver. Inspections by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, per legislative mandate, occur every two years. Recently, we also had the Iowa State DOT complete an inspection of our fleet.

3,000 companies nationwide, we serve our communities diligently and quietly. We are often unnoticed. I know. Remember, I was one that didn't notice them before I met my husband. Now, when I see them on the road, I know the company, the owners, and many times employees. There is so much to these small, family owned businesses. I am proud to be one of a handful serving the state of Iowa. CIT Signature Transportation looks forward to continuing for generations to come.

IOWA



Uniquely enough, Village Travel didn't start out as a motorcoach operation. When the Wichita-based company was founded in 1980, they were focused on planning ski tours to Colorado, shuttling customers to the airport and arranging rides to the slopes upon their arrival. One thing led to another, and by the end of the first ski season, the original owners had purchased their first motorcoach – an Eagle Model 10. In the last 40 years, Village has grown to be one of the largest charter bus and bus tour companies in the nation. Today, they plan 220+ group tours each year and operate more than 140 motorcoaches. Since 2011, Village has either expanded into another market or made an acquisition every year. Today, they have 7 locations throughout Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri.

In 2018, the company established a Senior Leadership Team to help navigate these changes and cultivate a culture that would allow them continued success for many more decades. Serving as part of this group are Jenny Keeton, Director of Tour Operations, and Amy Hendricks, Controller. These two women are an integral part of the Village Travel team, and have led the company well through the adversity COVID-19 introduced.

After a successful 2019, which included a rebrand and new corporate headquarters, Village entered 2020 with a lot of momentum and a full calendar. In early-March, their plans came to a screeching halt. The formerly busy spring break schedule was wiped clean in a matter of days. While not ideal, Village has been extremely fortunate to have ongoing charter work providing healthcare shuttles in both New York City (March-July) as well as throughout the state of Texas (beginning in July).

AMY HENDRICKS, VILLAGE TRAVEL CONTROLLER

Amy Hendricks isn't a stranger to the transportation industry. Prior to joining Village Travel in 2016, she worked as the Director of Financial Planning & Analysis for a critical-care air-transport company, which operates helicopters and airplanes across the United States. "You only needed their services because it was the worst day of your life. Now as part of Village Travel, I like to say, if you use our services, it will be one of the best days of your life. I was very excited but had come reservations about working for a bus company because it was such a different industry. In reality, they were very similar. Both transported people, had operations in multiple locations, required skilled mechanics to insure the revenue generating assets were maintained and ready to roll when requested, had dispatch centers to coordinate trips and handle changes or resolve issues during the trip and both had experienced significant growth over the last 10 years and

Amy Hendricks / Jenny Keeton

Village Travel

Controller / Director of Operations - Tour Department

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- Fleet Size – 119 Owned Seated Coaches, 23

Entertainer Coaches, 5 Semis

- In 2019, our fleet traveled 7.3 Million miles and used \$3 Million worth of diesel fuel. In 2020, those numbers were slashed by more than 50%.

had a commitment to continue that growth. The biggest difference; the people being transported by Village Travel are having fun!" said Amy.

At Village, Amy is responsible for the accounting department which includes all cash receipts & disbursements, revenue & expenses, fixed assets, inventory, allocations and financial statement preparation. In addition, she manages all the insurance, taxes (IFTA), property taxes, licensing related items for all the Village coaches, facilities, and vehicles. She also collaborates with Jeff Arensdorf (CEO) on growth, strategies, and recommends alternate financial strategies for the business.

During her 5-year tenure, she seen the company experience tremendous growth, growing from only 88 motorcoaches to the current total of 141. After an acquisition in 2018 that resulted in a record 33% increase in the number of coaches in one month, it was time to reinforce the company's foundation and focus on systems and company structure. Amy's team dedicated 2019 to implementing a new accounting system, payroll system, and maintenance & inventory system all based in the Cloud.

JENNY KEETON, VILLAGE TRAVEL DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS - TOUR DEPARTMENT

Jenny Keeton joined Village in 2018, leaving behind a 12-year career in the Technology field. Throughout that career she managed Village's account and had to learn the technical ins-and-outs of their organization. When Jenny was promoted to an operations role, she had to delegate her accounts out. "I knew I needed to keep Village as my client. I had so much knowledge of their industry and built strong relationships, I couldn't pass them over," said Jenny. As the Tour Division grew, Village Travel needed to add talent to their team.

Jenny's tenacity and ability to problem solve are two of her greatest strengths. She's implemented several new processes which have improved workflow for her team and customer deliverables. Jenny oversees several employees, including Tour Coordinators, Tour Reservationists, Tour Directors and Drivers. Together as a team, Jenny and her employees help our travelers from the very beginning to the end of their tour, ensuring their happiness and safety for the entire journey.

The tourism industry has been drastically affected by COVID-19, but Jenny has remained determined, innovative and optimistic. "Navigating through the pandemic has been a bit of a roller coaster. We've had to establish stricter health and safety protocols, become more creative with our tour offerings and develop different marketing strategies. The key for me was communicating with our customer base so they know we're here when they are ready to travel," said Jenny.



Melissa Stegall
Miller Transportation
Group Packages
melissa@millertransportation.com



Growing up in rural Louisville, KY, Melissa's father, uncle and grandfather all had side jobs as school bus drivers to supplement their primary source of income derived from farming hay and soybeans. In the early 70's the brothers, Tom and Emmett Miller, saw an opportunity to bid on an additional school route. This meant they would need to buy another bus, hire a driver and so was the birth of Miller Transportation! By the late 70's the family farm housed not only horses and cows but a dozen school buses. With the growing complexities of accounts receivable, payroll, fuel bills, licenses etc. it was time for Miller Transportation to hire office staff to handle the paperwork side of a bus company. This is when 14 year old Melissa Miller took on the challenge of helping to figure out how to run the office of a school bus company that evolved to include motorcoach tours!

In 1982 there was regional focus on tourism as the World's Fair was hosted nearby in Knoxville, TN. This was the company's first tour offering on a shiny, new to them, GM Buffalo acquired from Greyhound. To work the kinks out on this new type of bus the entire

family loaded up for a trip to Florida where the brothers smoothed out the gears and learned how to put the bus in reverse, so the family did not have to get out and push it backwards. From then on Melissa had a passion for motorcoach tours. While working to receive her BS in Business Management at the University of Louisville Melissa developed custom group tours with a love for school group tours. As Miller Transportation expanded to include facilities in Indianapolis, IN and Columbus, OH so did the Miller Tour department. Pre COVID, Melissa's student tour bookings dominated the motorcoach schedule but now the pandemic has decimated the industry.

Melissa is married, mother to a stepson and twin teenage daughters and continues to help manage the day to day operations of Miller Transportation. Melissa is actively involved in marketplace at ABA and both values and rewards the connections she makes there. She is excited to see the industry bounce back stronger than ever and bring business back to her travel partners.



Julie Chalmers
Hotard Coaches
General Manager
JulieC@hotard.com



Hotard Coaches is headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana, with additional offices in Lafayette, Louisiana, and Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Hotard was founded in 1935 by Julie's great grandfather, Etienne Xavier Hotard, as a line run service connecting the river parishes to the city of New Orleans. Hotard eventually grew into one of the largest motorcoach companies in the Gulf South. Currently, Hotard serves a variety of customers, everyone from 1st graders to Professional athletes, airport transfers to extended tours across the country. In addition to Hotard's numerous repeat customers who have become part of the family, Hotard is extremely proud of their relationship with the United States Military, transporting thousands of troops each year.

Even though Julie grew up visiting her grandparents and playing on the motorcoaches with her cousins any chance she got, she did not officially join the company until 2007. First hired by her uncle, Callen Hotard, Julie was responsible for employee engagement and outside sales. As a former collegiate athlete, Julie really enjoyed working with the local universities and securing the business for many different athletic departments and professional sports teams. Developing relationships with customers has always been a priority for Hotard Coaches and that came naturally to Julie having spent her entire professional career in the hospitality industry. For several years, Julie worked as the Director of Sales and Marketing, leading the sales department as they continued to expand their footprint and increase the fleet size.

In 2017, Julie was named General Manager of the charter division, putting Hotard Coaches under its 4th generation of family leadership. "I have been learning since day one, and it has not stopped." Julie enjoys working with the entire team at Hotard Coaches. "There is such a family atmosphere, and everyone works so hard to ensure we are providing the safest, most enjoyable charter experience. Working with such amazing people is one of the most rewarding parts of the job." Julie also appreciates the role Hotard plays in the community.

Participating in community walks, volunteering at food banks, and hosting blood drives are just some of the ways Hotard works to be a great community partner. "I love that we are able to give back to the community that has contributed to our success over the years."

Hotard is fortunate to be headquartered in one of the busiest cities in the country and enjoys being a part of the many events. "Superbowl's, National Championships, Mardi Gras, Music Festivals, you name it and we are there. Maybe hanging out in the parking lot, but we are there. I love being a part of whatever is going on in the city." When Hurricanes threaten or hit the area, Hotard has a major role to play as well. "We will help with evacuations before a storm hits and then provide transportation for utility workers once the storm has passed and power needs to be restored. During those times, it is long days and long nights, but it is so rewarding to be a part of the progress. This past year, trying to work through COVID-19, that has been the most difficult part: sitting on the sidelines. We are so used to

being a part of the recovery. This has been a new experience for us." Julie and Hotard are seeing some life come back into the industry and slowly rolling out of the yard again. Julie knows that all those relationships that Hotard has fostered over the years are exactly what is going to get them through this rough time. "We miss our customers and I know they miss us. Starting to reunite with them has been wonderful and I cannot wait until we are rolling at full force again."

Julie often wonders what her grandfather and great grandfather would think of the business today and the events of this past year. Hotard has enjoyed almost 9 decades of success and although 2020 was an unprecedented year and brought a lot of struggles it is not slowing them down for the long term. "We are working every day to get our drivers back behind the wheel and our motorcoaches on the road. I loved seeing them on the road prior to 2020, but now I have an entirely new appreciation, one that will bring a smile to my face for many years to come."



Becky Whitmore
Cyr Bus Lines
Bookkeeper
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I was born into the bus business. In 1912, my great grandfather, John T. Cyr and his oldest son, Joseph, were awarded a trucking license by the city of Old Town. With this license and two sturdy horses, the family operated a local freight and livery business, known as John T. Cyr & Sons, Inc. The father and son team transported everything from passengers to mail to lumber to the world-famous Old Town Canoes.

My father, Joe, took over the company in 1967 upon the death of his father and his father's brother. At this point in time, my dad's focus was on school buses. In 1978 he was awarded the school bus contract for the city of Bangor and this secured a foothold in the region. We still hold this school bus contract today.

In 1975, my father purchased his first motorcoach. More motorcoaches were added over the next few years and my dad became known in the industry for his uniquely decorated fleet of buses. In 1990, my mom (Sue) and my dad purchased an existing tour company and this became Cyr Northstar Tours. In addition to school buses, John T. Cyr & Sons, Inc. now had a fleet of luxury motorcoaches available for retail and personal charters.

Over the years the company continued to grow adding more and more vehicles each year. Today, we have a fleet of over 250 vehicles, including 20 motorcoaches and 200 school buses. We have 6 locations in the state of Maine and employ more than 200 people. Our company services 15 different school districts, half a dozen local colleges and universities as well as a variety of retail customers.

I may have been born into the bus business, but I never thought I would join the bus business. Frankly, living in Old Town and working for the family business

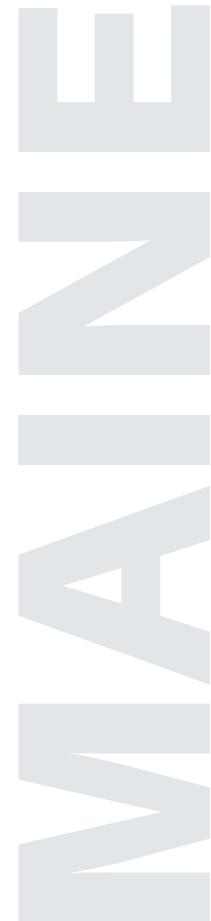


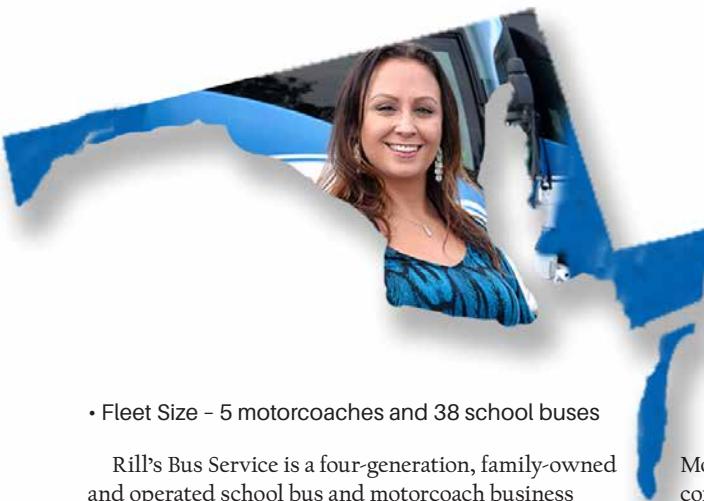
was never on my radar. Thankfully, my family never pushed me to join the company and they encouraged me to forge my own path in life. And so I did. I went away to Colorado College, I traveled and then I moved to a small island off the coast of Maine where I worked as a sternman aboard a lobster boat, something I had always wanted to do. I loved island life, but in 2007, I did move back to Old Town to figure out what was next.

Before long I was working at Cyr Bus Line answering the phones and helping out where needed. After a few months my father's long term bookkeeper approached me about his pending retirement- did I want his position? After a few weeks of deliberation, I took the job and I have not looked back since! Not long after starting the job, I met my future husband and before long we had a daughter; and a few years later a son! Working in the family business has given me the flexibility to be a mom and continue to work. I have always felt very fortunate to have the best of both worlds because I truly love both "jobs".

These days my duties at Cyr Bus include A/P, A/R, payroll, H/R among various other tasks. Even though things have slowed due to the pandemic, we are fortunate that our local schools are still in session and our universities are slowly beginning to travel again. I love my job at Cyr Bus. I am very proud of this company started by my great grandfather, grown by my father and now led by my brother. We continue to employ an amazing staff of managers, drivers, monitors and mechanics many of whom have been with us for 30 years or more. I know my great grandfather John T. would be proud of the company he created over 100 years ago.

Link to our documentary: <https://vimeo.com/302690054>





- Fleet Size - 5 motorcoaches and 38 school buses

Rill's Bus Service is a four-generation, family-owned and operated school bus and motorcoach business located in Westminster, Maryland. The business, owned by Paul and the late Anna Rill, began in 1968 when they purchased their first school bus to transport students to and from Carroll County Public Schools to supplement their farming income. In 1984, the business added their first motorcoach to their growing fleet for charter trips and company tours. The company now operates 5 MCI motorcoaches and 38 school buses providing transportation for a wide variety of needs, including but not limited to, regular public-school routes, sports, field trips, shuttles, special events, retail tours, and charter trips for groups including senior centers, colleges, churches, & other social/community organizations.

The Rill's daughters represent the second generation - Dianne Grote (operations manager) & Doreen Reger (dispatcher). The third generation of the Rill family working in the business include Dianne's three daughters - Lauren Grote (group travel planner/administrative), Rochelle Grote and Selina Salas (school bus drivers/administrative). And the fourth generation, ranging in ages from 3-23, are currently growing up in the business, helping with various duties.

Lauren's passion for the bus industry began at a very early age as she grew up traveling around the United States and Eastern Canada with her parents and sisters onboard Rill's retail motorcoach tours; rode Rill's school buses daily to school; and attended Maryland Motorcoach Association conferences with her grandmother, Anna. As a young teenager, she helped out waxing school buses during summer break. Lauren officially began working for the company in April 1997 performing basic secretarial duties in the office alongside her mom and aunt, while caring for her newborn daughter and completing school courses. For 12 years, she worked a second job waitressing at a local restaurant until her grandmother "passed on the torch" for her to lead Rill's retail trips as travel coordinator. Growing up on these tours and learning admirable traits from her family, Lauren was honored and quickly fell into her new role accompanying both day and short overnight tours with retail passengers. As a result, her love for travel grew even more, and she started creating the company's group tour packages with the desire to offer their customers memorable experiences with a personable touch. Realizing the importance of networking in the industry, she began building long-lasting relationships with customers, fellow operators, and suppliers. In 2010, she proudly completed the American Bus Association's CTIS program. Lauren is currently the secretary of Maryland

Lauren Grote

Rill's Bus Service

Group Travel Planner

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Rill's Bus Service

Motorcoach and School Bus Travel

Motorcoach Association and sits on their legislative committee. "It's rewarding that my relationship with MMA has come full circle now, from growing up going to their conferences, and now awarded the opportunity to sit on the Board with such a wonderful group of people." Of course, with a family business, you tend to do a little bit of everything, and Rill's is no exception. In addition to escorting and creating tours, Lauren also shares in other business duties including marketing, payroll/accounting, customer outreach, legislative issues, and attending conferences.

Working & growing up in the family bus business over the years has taught Lauren the importance of both family and hard work. Lauren is very thankful that each of her three daughters - Nikkeia, Ariana, and Angelina - were by her side daily as she worked, growing up in the business, just like her mother was able to do with her. "I didn't have to put my kids in daycare, they were able to be with me every day." She is also thankful that her fiance, Tyran, and daughters are able to occasionally travel with her just as her family had done when she was young.

Lauren truly enjoys her job, takes great pride in her family's business, and is thankful for the opportunity to be a part of such a great network. She values the relationships that are built with passengers, employees, suppliers, and industry friends, and realizes the extensive impact that the bus industry holds. During this time of COVID-19, the bus industry has faced many daunting challenges, so instead of her usual duties, Lauren has been spending her time being educated about COVID and policies, joining the legislative petitions for CERTS Act and advocating for the bus industry, participating in many travel industry virtual meetings, and thinking outside of the box to get the wheels on the buses rolling again. She is in awe and forever grateful of the support shown throughout this resilient industry, coming together as one to survive the shutdown caused by the pandemic.

Lauren is confident that the industry will eventually bounce back and prays for its continued survival. She looks forward to getting back on the road with Rill's precious cargo and awesome drivers, traveling and creating memories that will last a lifetime, and anxious to resume in-person conferences to network with her beloved industry partners. Rill's Bus Service can't wait to get back in the full swing of what they have been doing best for over 53 years...providing safe, quality transportation for countless groups and people from all walks of life. Lauren's ultimate goal is to preserve and continue her grandparents' legacy for many years to come.



Erin Ducharme

Bloom's Bus Lines

Director of Accounting & Financial Control

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Who is Bloom?

Bloom is a third-generation family owned and operated school bus and motorcoach company servicing Southeastern Massachusetts. The Bloom family opened its doors in 1946 and is celebrating their 75th anniversary this year. Their founding philosophy is to provide safe and reliable transportation at a reasonable cost. They pride themselves on their late model equipment, in house vehicle maintenance and training that they provide to their drivers.

Erin Ducharme began her career at Bloom by chance. Erin recalls “when I first started at Bloom, I did not know anything about the bus business. I graduated college with a business degree and then went to work in finance. Leaving the corporate world to join a family-owned transportation company was outside of my comfort zone”.

She started in the industry in 2007 at the age of 25 as an assistant controller for the two companies, H&L Bloom, (school bus division) & Bloom's Bus Lines (motorcoach division). Over the past 13 years, she has gained experience in all aspects of the business. Her leadership roles have expanded to director of finance and accounting as well as running customer service, marketing, and the tour division.

Erin helped create Bloom Tours 12 years ago and has grown this business to over 200 tours annually. She actively manages Bloom's website, social media channels, pricing strategy, training the Bloom tour guides and drivers, as well her financial and accounting responsibilities. Through these positions, she interacts daily with all the departments within the organization from maintenance to operations to customer service. Erin says “Bloom has a fleet of over 200 school buses, 100 vans and 28 motorcoaches. I believe the only true way to



learn the diverse business is take a hands-on approach on a department level. This approach gives me a feel for the costs of each part of the business, and where we need to invest in to motivate our team and grow business profitably, while also getting to know the employees.”

Her various roles within the organization keep her a part of the day-to-day operations. “What I appreciate most about my job is that I never have a boring day. We have a great team, and we are always thinking of ways to become a better organization.” The owners of the company are very engaged in the business and supportive. This mentality is why Bloom has been prominent fixture in Massachusetts for 75 years.

During her tenure at Bloom, she obtained her MBA, going to school at night and working full time. She has also become involved in American Bus Association as a member of the education committee and on the leadership team for Women in Buses. Erin says, “I love being able to use the knowledge I gain from people and experiences to become a better leader and help others in the transportation business.”



Kimberly Stange
Compass Coach
Executive Tour Planner
kastange@yahoo.com



Compass Coach Inc. operates 23 full size motor coaches from its home office in Cedar Springs MI and 6 full size motor coaches from its secondary garage in Mt. Pleasant, MI. Up until March 13, 2020 we employed 57 wonderful and brilliant motor coach drivers, sales staff, administration staff, cleaners and technicians.

With our annual mileage of 1,165,000 in 2019, my company transported over 1,400 trips to everyone from youth groups traveling to camp in Colorado, semi-professional local sports teams, high school athletics, university/college teams and departments, churches and local tour operators to every part of this wonderful nation one mile at a time. We have grown our business every year with more safely traveled miles and more groups to places yet to be discovered.

My journey in the motor coach world began with a younger, very naive version of myself. Unlike my husband, Trenton, who grew up in the tourism and travel industry, I had only ridden a bus three or four times prior to February of 2000. In February of 2000, after my husband painted a beautiful picture of being an owner/operator of a motor coach company I agreed that it would be "nice" to set our course on being entrepreneurs. "Why not," as I explained to my parents "we don't have any kids, we don't have any debt and we are not settled into the community." The funny thing about this statement is that by the end of February, we listed and sold our house in 36 hours, I found out I was pregnant and Trenton had quit his job as a marketing director in exchange for a \$5,350 monthly bus payment for a bus which we had no business. But, we had already cashed the \$10,000 Citibank check we received in the mail...you know the one with the 24% interest... and headed to Chicago to pickup up our slightly used but shiny VanHool T2145. We simply had to make this work.

During the first 10 years, I was the bread winner for the family, working for the State of Michigan as a parole agent during the day and helping my husband answer and return sales calls at night and on weekends while he was driving. During these initial years, I also

learned to plan and operate group tours which I found enjoyable. 10 years ago I decided to end my employment with the state and take a bigger interest in our motor coach company. We had just 2 years earlier, moved into our brand new bus facility which featured 15,000 square feet of office and maintenance space. By this time we were operating 15 coaches and had 2 full time staff members and a full time technician. It was apparent that to continue with positive growth, someone needed to take the reins on the most important aspect of busing.... the safety aspect. I placed myself in charge of Safety and became the DER for the company, with an emphasis on the driver qualification files and mounting FMCSA regulations that accompanied them. I found this position within my company challenging but rewarding since I am detailed oriented to an unhealthy level as my husband has mentioned to me many of times. I have also not given up group travel and am celebrating my 20 years as a successful tour operator.

Over the past 22 years, I can contribute part of our success to ABA and UMA networking and annual events that have provided on-going learning and the wonderful relationships we have had with our industry partners. The other part that has made us successful is the contributions that our staff has made. Late night phone calls and early morning departures makes this industry never boring and ever changing.

Having looked back, I am proud of the women who have made a positive contribution to Compass Coach. Just to mention a few: Our GM Gwen Scalici who has been with us since 2009 and running the day to day operations to Janet Jaglowski our dynamic sales director. Jamie Lukas is the most caring and effective dispatcher we have ever had. Our cleaning crew has been led by Linda Pinks for the past 4 years and the numerous women motor coach drivers who constantly bring polish and professionalism to their field.

I look forward to many more miles and years ahead in this industry and will always provide an opportunity for women in the motor coach industry.



Bethany Schubert / Becca (Schubert) Atkinson

Trobec's Bus Service

Vice President / Sales Manager

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TROBEC'S
BUS SERVICE, INC.

Trobec's Bus Service has been a staple in Central Minnesota since 1938 when their company opened. There was a need to take older children from the small town of St. Stephen to a neighboring city that had a high school. That is when Tony Trobec purchased his first bus and began bringing children to school. Since then, the company has blossomed into what it is today - a school bus and motorcoach company, serving two school districts and a large part of Central Minnesota. Today, Trobec's operates nearly 70 school buses, 14 motorcoaches, and two mini coaches and employ about 120 people.

Bethany Schubert and Becca (Schubert) Atkinson grew up in the bus industry, as their dad was the General Manager for Trobec's Bus when they were young. Both had dreams of a career far away from the bus company, but as they grew into young adults, their passion for the business grew too. The two girls used to beg their dad to take them to work with him in the summer so that they could spend the day at the bus garage. Riding along on bus trips he was driving, led to a bond on the road that has led them to where they are today.

Bethany didn't intend to follow in her father's footsteps, but after taking a temporary job detailing and cleaning buses while on Christmas break from Winona State where she was studying nursing, she realized Trobec's Bus felt like home, and she never went back to college there. Since then, Bethany has worn many hats, but the role of visionary is one she loves most, and she will say she does some of her best thinking while in the wash bay or behind the wheel of a bus. Bethany is proud to be the First Vice president of the Minnesota School Bus Operator's Association, and also holds a board position on the UMA Board of Directors.

Her sister, Becca Atkinson, also works for Trobec's Bus as the company's sales manager. Becca began working for Trobec's when there was a need to hire a manager for their school bus routes. Becca came in that summer and helped the team pull off the start of the school year flawlessly. She finished college the following year, and began her work in community psychology. After a while, that job began to take a toll on her mental health and she was looking for something else. Tim Schubert was out of the office for an extended period of time, and Bethany was finding it difficult to run the business alone. That's when her and Becca came up with the idea to propose to their dad that Becca should join the

family business. It took a little bit of convincing, but he was on board. Becca began as a dispatcher, and held that role for a few years until moving into her current role. Becca is not afraid to get behind the wheel of a bus, and helps out as often as needed cleaning buses on the nights and weekends. She is also excited for the future possibilities of taking on volunteer positions in the many associations we are a part of.

Together, with the guidance of their father, the Schubert sisters have stepped up to lead Trobec's Bus into an exciting new era. Under their leadership, the business has completely transformed. From the way they manage expectations and accountability, to their sales and dispatch processes, training, and more, they are always looking towards the future. They are constantly pushing each other, and their team, to be the best they can be. They are excited for what the future holds for them, and they look forward to pushing the industry forward. With the two women at the helm, Trobec's was honored to receive the Small Operator Vision Award from UMA in 2018 and the *BUSRide Magazine* Industry Achievement Award in 2019.

In 2020 Bethany received the 5 Under 40 Award, an award that recognizes young leaders in Central Minnesota that are raising the bar and setting standards for other business leaders. Trobec's is proud to be members of ABA, UMA, Spader, Women in Buses, Minnesota School Bus Operator's Association, and Minnesota Charter Bus Operator's Association, along with many local organizations.





Karen Sanders
BCSI Tour and Travel
General Manager
karen@bscitours.com

Wow! 35 years in this wonderful industry! I feel so lucky to have a job that is an adrenaline rush every day. Like so many of us, we basically tumbled into this business and it didn't take very long to realize that we now work 24/7. Because of that, it became a love / hate relationship. Those of us that have stayed, love this BCSI

Believe me, our business has changed so much. Keith and I bought our first motorcoach to tour with Preservation Hall Jazz Band. From there we started our own tour company, BSCI Tour and Travel.

We did escorted tours over the entire United States. One of the many different groups that we have felt proud to pull were the multiple bus band trips. We have taken groups to march in the Rose Parade in California, Chicago, District of Columbia, New York, Bowl games in Florida, and so many more. All of these were 4 to 8 Motorcoaches each. We have always had a great reputation for coordinating multiple bus moves.

Since we are DOD certified, we do a lot of military moves.

After closing our tour company, the international market has been a large part of our business. We provide transportation for quite a few companies. Our drivers loved working with them.

Keith and I realized years ago that the owners are not the most important people in a company. Our drivers and other employees are. We feel so thankful to have some awesome people that have made this company great. Some have been with us over 20 and 30 years. They are family to us.

I believe the most valuable thing that we can do to be successful in this industry is to belong to Associations like the American Bus Association.



I have been very active in the South Central Motorcoach Association. From their beginning, I have served on their board and am a Past President. We are and have been members of NTA, UMA, ABA, SCMA, AMA and TMA. Right now I am on the Board and Executive Board of the American Bus Association. I love this entire Industry. The contacts we have made over the years are invaluable. So many have become close friends and are like family to us.

Like so many of us in the motorcoach industry, Keith and I had no one to step in to take over Bus Supply Charters. Our 3 children grew up working with us and hated it because it is 24/7. We have some RV Dealerships and 2 wanted to work there. The other has a car dealership. Keith and I were so fortunate to be friends with John McCommon who has Cline Tours. We sold him our business in 2015. I am now employed as General Manager for as long as I want to work.

I pray everyday that we will all still have our businesses when COVID is gone!



Kim J. Dolniak / Debbie Rudawsky
BEST Transportation
Co-Owners
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debbie@countycab.com



Sisters Kim J. Dolniak and Debbie Rudawsky never envisioned themselves carrying the family business into its third generation.

Their grandfather was the founder of St. Louis County & Yellow Cab in 1935. Kim & Debbie grew up in the family business and even as kids would often help stuff monthly charge account invoices to be sent out to customers. (Long before technology took over.) When their father took over the reins of the legacy operation later it was Debbie's husband, Basil that stepped in to help run the taxi operation. The sisters decided to follow their own paths when it came time to establish their careers.

"Debbie and I had no desire to work in the taxi business," Kim admits. She went on to spend 18 years in the hospitality industry with Drury Hotels beginning her career as a Corporate Sales Trainer and ending her tenure as the Director of National Sales & Marketing. Working for this highly successful family business gave Kim a strong foundation of leadership & hospitality experience that she could bring to her family transportation business.

Debbie joined the taxi business in October 2001 "part time" which lasted about a month before deciding to jump in to help take the taxi operation to new places. Debbie is a CPA and worked for many years in private and public accounting. "Debbie's knowledge of the financial aspects of many different industries coupled with incredible skills to develop solid process management has made a huge impact on the successful growth of the family business." says Kim.

An example of that growth began shortly after Debbie and her husband Basil, decided to start BEST Transportation in July of 2002. Debbie says. "The black car trend that began on the East and West coasts was really starting to come alive in St. Louis. We saw an opportunity to expand and thought, let's create our own."

That idea of venturing into chauffeured transportation was more than just sedans. We started with several sedans, two limos, a van and two mini coaches. Focusing primarily on weekday corporate business. In 2005, Kim joined the family business and brought her leadership, sales & marketing experience to the team. At that time, we decided to begin diversification of our fleet and business segments. Adding more mini buses, party buses, limos and additional vehicle types as we developed the markets.

Weddings and weekend social events were a major growth area for the company.

In 2009, GO BEST Express shared ride shuttle division was created after being awarded a 5-year St. Louis Lambert Airport Transportation contract. This was a great opportunity to further diversify and grow all aspects of our transportation business.

Over the years we have had many challenges, the 2008 recession, Uber launching in St. Louis which impacted our sedan and taxi business, Ferguson riots in 2014 resulted in multi-year convention cancellations impacting GO BEST Express and then we had 2020 with Covid!

Despite so many transportation companies being hit hard, Kim & Debbie credit their strategy of business diversity, building an incredible leadership team and commitment to the company's mission statement that is helping our company keep our team and vehicles moving. The company's mission statement is: "Our family of companies commits to Going that Extra Mile for our customers, team, independent operators, and community. We will exceed expectations in everything we do: It's how we do business."

In 2018, it was BEST's own empowered Executive Team who passionately advocated for buying new motor coaches for our fleet. The owner's credit this team "for making motor coaches a reality at BEST." We began with 2 new TEMSAs and plan to add more motor coaches as business rebounds post Covid.

Already in 2021, the demand for large vehicles has increased since BEST is a Department of Defense supplier, has many college, private schools and sports teams accounts that drive the need for the larger buses. As the company delves deeper into the charter work, their next growth area will be more tour and long-distance jobs.

Kim & Debbie currently have more than 200 families that rely on our family of companies "to provide for them and to give them this longevity," which is a responsibility we are keenly aware of. "If these businesses aren't successful, we're not the only ones affected by that," Kim says.

With developing such a great team Kim & Debbie are blessed to get to spend more time with their husbands enjoying time away (or working remote) from their Florida homes. Even when away from St. Louis the sisters are still actively involved in their businesses!





Mel Pomeroy
Karst Stage
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KARST STAGE

Karst Stage was born from a young entrepreneur, Pete Karst, in 1902. Pete bought a stage coach and some horses to deliver workers down the Gallatin Canyon. He branched into vehicles, owned a dude ranch, started a general store, and even created Montana's first rope tow up to a ski jump. In the 50's he sold, and in nearly 120 years, it is only under its fifth owner: Dan Martin. Today, Karst has over 20 motorcoaches that deliver workers to job sites, take high school and collegiate athletes to their games, run summer tours in Yellowstone, and anything in between. Karst has a small school bus operation in West Yellowstone. Their airport shuttle operation with 12 vans and a few minibuses runs about 10,000 passengers per year to Big Sky and West Yellowstone to ski and snowmobile. Karst is also contracted to run Streamline Transit in Bozeman and Skyline Transit in Big Sky which combined haul over a half a million passengers per year. Mel is an integral part of the team that makes Karst run smoothly.

Mel, an Ohio native, started her love for Montana at an early age on a family trip. She explains how she ended up in Yellowstone in 2011, "I visited the park as a part of the 'Great American Road Trip' as a child and thought it would be a great place to figure out what was next after college...instead I fell in love with the Mountains and never moved back to Ohio." In 2011 she applied to Yellowstone on a whim, as a way to build some job history after college. After spending one summer working at a park hotel, driving the tour buses seemed like a great way to see and enjoy even more of that beautiful area. As she trained in the knowledge

and resources needed to discuss park history, zoology, geology, etc, she also trained on (and tested in) the 1975 MC5B motor coaches still in use at the time. "I kind of jumped into the deep end, learning how to double clutch while learning the ins and outs of maneuvering a large vehicle." After a few years of jumping from park to park, Mel decided to set up a home base in Bozeman Montana, and started driving for Karst Stage in 2014.

Mel's first year at Karst marked her as a "Jack of all Trades" in a business that runs two transit systems, an airport shuttle operation, school buses, and charters. In a fleet and business models as diverse as Karst has, there are infinite combinations of vehicles and shifts to drive. "It felt like every day I was going to places I hadn't been or I'd be stepping into a vehicle I'd never seen before."

In 2015 Mel transitioned into a dispatching position and became a "Jack of all Office Positions." In addition to dispatching full or part time (depending on the season and needs of the office), she has stepped into sales roles, and special projects as the need arises. Karst owner, Dan Martin, adds, "Mel has done everything in our operation except turned wrenches, and I'm not sure we haven't had her fix a few clearance lights along the way. In fact, she spearheaded our dispatch and maintenance software conversion which went off without a hitch. Her institutional knowledge is invaluable in our operation."

When she is not bouncing around the office, Mel is out enjoying the beautiful places around Montana on foot or by car. She still maintains a Yellowstone Guide Card, and does many of Karst's summer tours in the Park helping others experience the wonder of the area we live in.



Chelle Cooper
Arrow Stage Lines
VP of Human Resources
chelle.cooper@arrowstagelines.com



My background is in Human Resources and that is where I have made my career. I have several years of Human Resources experience in a variety of industries, from a small manufacturing operation to a very large global insurance company with employees all over the world.

While I did not have any experience working in the motorcoach industry when I started, I did have experience in the trucking industry. So, I was familiar with many of the DOT regulations, long hours of service, and drivers spending time away from home.

The opportunity with Arrow Stage Lines presented itself through a friend of a friend type of situation. Upon learning more about the position and more about the company, I knew it was a good fit for me and have now been with Arrow Stage Lines for almost six years.

The transition to the motorcoach industry was an easy one for me. This is a people-centric industry and that is the part I enjoy most about Human Resources; building relationships and working with people to help them grow, develop, and achieve their goals.

I am fortunate to work for a company that values Human Resources and what I can bring to the table. As our organization continues to evolve, grow, and adapt to the challenges we encounter, I am part of an amazing Senior Leadership team, who has helped guide our company through the hurdles of the pandemic, remained committed to our mission and vision statements, and continued to stay passionate about the well-being of our employees.

Over the years, there have been a lot of changes in the industry and with the way we manage people. Human

Resources has also had to adapt and has many more roles to fill now. We are teachers, leaders, role models, and coaches. We minimize risk and liability for the company, while also remaining vigilant with changing legislation. We provide benefits for our employees, and make sure our payroll is accurate and on time every pay period. We provide opportunities for training and development. It is our role to be the culture keepers, keep our employees engaged, create a welcoming onboarding experience, and retain our employees.

Working with a company like Arrow Stage Lines, has also allowed me to be part of something bigger than just Human Resources. I am part of the team that helps set strategic goals for our company's future. I have always been made to feel like a valuable member of our team and truly appreciate that.

Our company is owned and operated by the Busskohl family; the same family since 1928. Arrow Stage Lines is a larger company that operates on family-owned values. We have a great reputation in the industry and that in large part is due to the owners and their generosity and faith-based foundation, as well as our employees who are eager to provide world class service to their customers and peers. The people are what makes this place so amazing! I enjoy being a part of a company that continues to look for new ways to be better, more efficient, and productive.

My goal is to remain in the motorcoach industry and continue to be a part of the evolution of what is to come!



Sandy Allen
Royal Coach Tours
President
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Family owned and operated since 1960, Royal Coach Tours is the premier provider of luxury motorcoach transportation for San Jose, Silicon Valley, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Over the years, the company has continued to grow its fleet and a loyal client base—and shows no signs of slowing down any time soon!

Royal Coach Tours works hard to ensure that every client gets the “ROYAL” treatment and that every journey is magical. Whether driving for local tour groups or out-of-state excursions, RCT goes to great lengths to make guests feel safe and at home on their adventures. The company’s large fleet of 76 vehicles provides versatility and convenience for groups of every size, from simple airport transfers to large school functions like Grad Nite trips to Disneyland. Royal Coach Tours tells its clients, “We’ll take care of the logistics—so you can take care of the fun!”

Driven to Succeed

For most guests, the fun starts with their driver. Royal Coach Tours has a rigorous screening process to hire drivers who are reliable and experienced—and who also have energy and enthusiasm to help foster fun-filled excursions. Drivers study and plan out their routes before every trip to make sure guests enjoy a smooth trip and arrive at their destination safely and on time.

Royal Coach Tours knows that its drivers are the keys to the company’s success and try to make sure they feel like family. RCT has a long tradition of giving paid birthdays off to their employees as well as celebrating all holidays, anniversaries, and other special occasions. CEO Greg Gallup contacts every single employee to wish them a happy birthday and thank them for their loyal years of service. General Manager, Earl Reed, has been with RCT for 22 years and part of his job is to listen to employee concerns. He believes in treating everyone as family and has a name plate on his desk that says, “Director of Smiles.” Thanks to personal touches like these, RCT enjoys one of the lowest turnover rates in the industry.

The trophy case at Royal Coach Tours is another testament to the company’s commitment to excellence. California Bus Association (CBA) has acknowledged RCT drivers Philip Jetson and Angel Gonzalez with Outstanding Driver Awards and the company’s SPAB Certified Trainer, Candida Hemphill, as Trainer of the Year for the last 3 years in a row.



Safety First

Royal Coach Tours strives to keep miles ahead of the industry when it comes to safety. All of the company’s buses are equipped with the top integrated safety technology, including Event Data Recorders, Fire Suppression Systems, and Tire Pressure and Temperature Monitoring Systems. Royal Coach Tours has an outstanding FMCSA safety rating and has received numerous CBA awards, including the Safety Management Award.

The Royal Treatment

From private parties and sports teams to corporate shuttles and school field trips, Royal Coach Tours takes guests where ever they need to go in style. The company has a long track record of serving top professional and college sports teams as well as high school and youth sports. In the last five years, the company has expanded its employee shuttle programs for the high-tech companies of Silicon Valley.

Royal Coach Tour’s fleet includes a range of motor coaches in different sizes and configurations. All vehicles are meticulously maintained and loaded with amenities to ensure that guests have a comfortable, safe and enjoyable ride. The company recently added Wi-Fi to all of its coaches for riders’ convenience.

Giving Back

Allen and Smith, are strong believers in giving back to the local community and take pride in supporting several non-profit organizations. One favorite holiday event is “Shop with A Cop,” where children are each assigned to a police officer, who takes them to Target and pushes the cart while the children pick out Christmas presents for themselves and for their families. Another fun event is “Christmas for Kids,” where donated clothes and necessities are given to children in need. Owner Sandy Allen takes part every year.

Throughout the year, Royal Coach Tours also proudly supports the fight against breast cancer by putting the Pink Ribbon on its coaches. The company also donates coaches to the Fallen Officer Foundation to help respect and honor the brave men and women that keep us all safe.

With more than 57 years on the road, Royal Coach Tours is still looking ahead. The company will soon roll out a brand-new website, with a dynamic and responsive design that will be more usable and engaging for prospective clients. The company has also recently partnered with different Bay Area cities to offer new sightseeing destinations and wine tasting trips.

With its loyal workforce and outstanding reputation for safety, reliability and superior customer service, there’s no stopping Royal Coach Tours!



Belinda Grace-Leonard
New England Coach, Inc. / New England
Coach Tour and Travel
Vice President
belinda@newenglandcoach.com



New England Coach

- One 56-passenger Prevost motorcoach

New England Coach is in Raymond, NH which is centrally located in the middle of New England. The company was started in 2001 with 1 motorcoach, then quickly grew to 16 coaches by 2008. With the recession of 2008 the decision was made to restructure the business and move its focus from a charter bus company to a full-service tour operator. The astronomical costs of running a fleet of buses was difficult enough in a good economy but in a bad economy it does not take much for the cards to start to collapse.

Belinda joined New England Coach specifically to develop the tour department. Belinda has always had a love of travel and a love of the hospitality business. Her background is in business management. She dove into her new position with fresh ideas and enthusiasm. Putting exciting itineraries together which included unique destinations, offering one-of-a-kind experiences, and guaranteed that her clients have fun while making memories. She is often asked what her favorite destination is. The answer is always the same, "wherever the next tour takes me". She has gained a loyal following of clients due to her way of engaging groups into new experiences.

Now being a part of the motorcoach industry family means more to her than ever before. It is not just the common interest in what she does for a living, it is much more than that. Being part of this family means that she is there to support, encourage, lend a hand, be a resource, cheer on and look out for others in her industry.

Although she may never meet each member of this family, she knows that industry wide they are all rooting for one another's successes. Motorcoach owners have firsthand knowledge of what every business in the industry is going through. The motorcoach family consists of other motorcoach companies, tour operators, restaurants, hotels, attractions, destinations, and the endless numbers of people who rely on our services to enhance their lives in one way or another. The industries partners work hand and hand to be successful.

When you see a motorcoach rolling down a highway, think about who is behind it. Is it a corporation or is it a family? More than likely, it is a family that has a history with generations in the business. That bus probably has a story of it being purchased. What sacrifices or goals were met before such a purchase was made? Back at the bus yard where it is kept is a pile of invoices with that bus number attached; \$2,000 for 2 front tires, \$1,200 preventative maintenance, \$1,000 monthly insurance bill, \$1,800 registration among many others. At 6 mpg it does not take much to imagine the fuel costs either. Being a part of the motorcoach industry is not for the weak. It is a dedication that is often without reward. Our greatest rewards have never been in our bank account. It has been a way to support our families, send our children to college and hopefully one day pass the torch on to them. Belinda hopes that someday this torch will be passed along to her daughter Samantha who has been working for New England Coach for 8 years.



Michelle Petelicki
Panorama Tours
Owner and CEO
michelle@ptibus.com



- Fleet size: 18 motorcoaches and 1 mini coach

Panorama Tours is a charter bus company located in Wallington, NJ which is less than 20 miles outside of Manhattan. Michelle is a second-generation owner of Panorama Tours which was founded by her father, Joseph Zak, in 1995. Panorama does not specialize in any specific type of travel, per say, as diversity has always been a big part of its success. The company caters to all groups, inclusive of seniors, universities, military, as well as all events, such as weddings, family reunions, athletic events, with an emphasis on safety and customer care, that has earned and continues to maintain Panorama's impeccable reputation with employees, customers, and industry peers.

Michelle graduated from Rutgers University and joined her father at Panorama Tours in 2002 to help with reservations and office work. It didn't take long for her to fall in love with the bus business. She quickly started taking on more responsibilities including regulatory paperwork, organizing, selling and guiding tours, solving various dispatch and logistical challenges, and more. Michelle's love for the business took an extra step forward when in 2003, while being a guide on a Panorama bus, she met her now husband, Michael while he was a guest on the trip. They were engaged later that year. In 2007, their son, Jonathan was born and in 2008, their daughter, Viktoria. The kids have been present at many UMA Expo's throughout the years.

In August of 2008 Michelle became majority owner and President of Panorama Tours. In 2010, she graduated from the Bus and Motorcoach Academy with an "Accredited Passenger Transportation Operator" certificate. Michelle is the visionary and the driving force of the company. She is well known and respected in the Motorcoach industry, from coast to coast. Panorama is a member of UMA, ABA and GNJMA, Spader 20 group, BISC, Women in Buses, and Motorcoach Professional Alliance not to mention



many community organizations and various chambers. Michelle, also, sits on the executive board of Greater New Jersey Motor Coach Association as secretary.

By being involved, Michelle keeps herself informed of all the rules and regulations pertaining to the industry and due to this hunger for knowledge and information she is able to continuously push Panorama to be better. Furthermore, she also enjoys sharing that information with others. Michelle always has an open door and encourages her neighboring small bus companies to come to her with questions on changing regulations or just advice. Michelle believes in the importance of elevating the standards for all bus companies. This will, in turn, also advance the positive perspective of the traveling public when it comes to motorcoach travel.

Over the last 25+ years, Panorama has seen much growth and change but with every new chapter that has been written in its history, success has been found in the same thing - company culture and Panorama Professionals. COVID-19 has presented the largest challenge yet, however, Michelle and her team are ready to tackle this challenge head on. "We don't know what our company or even our industry will look like once we get past this pandemic, but we are ready to drive forward; safely and with the same quality care that Panorama is known for."

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Denise Boyea
New Mexico Texas Coaches
Owner
deniseb@1800buslimo.com

- Fleet size: 38 vehicles
- Two locations: Carlsbad, New Mexico; and Lubbock, Texas

One of the most unique stories of the motorcoach and transportation industry is Ms. Denise Boyea, located in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Not only is it unique, but follows a non-traditional route of involvement in the business. Her story shares that persistence and goals come in a variety of areas, influence and life events, including outside the motorcoach industry.

Denise's journey in the motorcoach industry started in 1989 when her husband then, Jack Knittel, purchased a vehicle to provide transportation to railroad crews to and from the work locations. After seeing success, the business expanded into provided local resident transportation and in the mid 90's, secured a life changing contract with a sub-contractor of the Department of Energy to provide employee shuttling. The contract was secured by thinking outside the box and providing opportunities to an organization that had not previously existed. This contract solidified the family-owned business in the motorcoach and transportation industry. Significant growth, including adding a brick and mortar shop followed in the mid to late 1990's.

While Denise was alongside her family's side during the entire process, her role was a bit different. Denise was a practicing lawyer even before her husband, decided to enter the transportation industry. Denise played a key role in setting up New Mexico Texas Coaches for success providing legal advice, contracts and other corporate paperwork necessary to establish and operate the businesses. Denise completed this work alongside her full time position as a lawyer, focusing on criminal defense and later guardian ad litem work representing children in foster care, eventually opening a practice of her own.

In addition to being a lawyer, Denise's favorite job was being a mom to daughter Monica and son Chris. Monica and Chris grew up in the bus shop. Monica and Chris were regulars after school at the business learning their strong work ethic from both parents. Chris recalls playing around the motorcoaches. Chris took pride in helping his dad Jack wash motorcoaches and prepare for the next adventure.

In 2006, New Mexico Texas Coaches expanded across state lines with an operation in Lubbock, Texas. This location provided an opportunity for business name update along with significant growth in contracts with colleges such as Texas Tech University, Lubbock Christian University and others. The company obtained Department of Defense certification, and has an excellent working relationship with the military providing transportation to soldiers, National Guard troops and onto military bases.

After Jack's unexpected passing at age 52, Denise made the decision in 2012 to purchase the motorcoach company from Jack's family allowing Monica, Chris and Denise to run the operation as business partners. Today, Denise serves as the City Attorney for Carlsbad, New Mexico. She is still involved in the motorcoach organization efforts, growth, operations and most recently, downsizing due to the significant impacts of COVID-19 and the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, New Mexico Texas Coaches largest customers included employee shuttling contract for a Department of Energy contractor, college sports and event transportation, allowing for careers and jobs of 50 plus employees during the peak.

While significant challenges lie ahead for the motorcoach industry, Denise is hopeful for a return and resuming operations in 2021. Her primary concern is resuming operations for the livelihood of her children, Monica and Chris and their families.

NEW YORK



Cam Morris

Hale Transportation

Manager - Oneonta Division

cam@haletransportationgroup.com

Hale Transportation, also known as Hale's Bus Garage LLC, has been in business since 2006 specializing in charter trips for all groups/organizations as well as collegiate contracting and United States Department of Defense transportation. The company's main office and garage facility are located in Clinton, New York and in 2017, expanded to a second office and garage facility in Oneonta, New York. We pride ourselves with a top management team that has well over 90 years of experience in the motorcoach industry including leadership representation within state and national industry organizations. Our top of the line motorcoaches feature Wi-Fi, outlets and/or USB ports, DVD players and are operated by experienced and skilled drivers. The entire rooster of Hale Transportation drivers are New York I9A Certified and have been screened and approved by the United States Department of Transportation as well as the New York State Department of Transportation. We strive to provide exceptional customer service from the start of your trip planning to the end of the trip with our office staff and drivers. Our goal is a SAFE, comfortable and exceptional trip experience!

I am extremely honored as well as humbled to represent New York State in this Women In Buses project of "50 Stories form 50 States". I always say that Women In Buses is very near and dear to my heart as I served as its' first Chairwoman when it was formed. Today this organization continues to highlight the important role of women in the motorcoach industry, provide members with education, professional growth and mentoring opportunities and encourages membership for all! I couldn't be prouder of where we have come since 2012! This industry has provided me many personal opportunities in the 32 years that I have been part of it. From my earliest days as a tour escort, travel



opportunities took me from Europe to the Panama Canal, Alaska, Hawaii and the beautiful continental United States and Canada to an office position where I planned retail and charters trips. All these experiences helped lead me to managing the entire company and becoming involved at an entirely different level in the industry. I served as the Chair for the newly formed Women In Buses, became a Chair of the ABA Marketplace in St. Louis, was invited to join the ABA Board of Directors, became President of the Bus Association of New York and have served on numerous special committees as well as have enjoyed many speaking engagements on the industry and motivation. Four years ago, I made an employment change from one company to another for a new opportunity and challenge! And throughout this last year, many of us became politically active to fight for the survival of our industry. All of the accomplishments attained in my career have only been possible due to the relationships that were formed over all the years in the industry as well as the support of my two sons, grandson and family! We are an industry built on relationships, strength, commitment, and hard work!



Mellonee Owenby / Melissa Jones /

Heather Paul

Christian Tours & Burke International
Owner / Tour Operations Manager /
Customer Service & Personnel Director
Mellonee@BurkeChristianTours.com /
Melissa@BurkeChristianTours.com /
Heather@BurkeChristianTours.com

Christian TOURS



www.BurkeChristianTours.com

2021 ushers in many exciting events, including the 43rd year of travel adventures for the three women running Christian Tours & Burke International Tours! Daughters, Heather Paul and Melissa Jones work side by side to support the leadership of their mother and company president, Mellonee Owenby. Mellonee is the second generation of strong women at the helm of the family businesses - Christian Tours & Burke International Tours and follows in the footsteps of her parents, Udean & Nancy Burke. Nancy & Udean founded Christian Tours in 1977 and Burke International Tours in 1982, purchasing 2 motorcoaches to meet the requests of people to visit the Worlds Fair in Knoxville, TN. Christian Tours has expanded over the years to encompass motorcoach tours all over North America and Canada, fly tours to destinations domestic and international, educational trips for students, and preformed group travel. Burke International Tours has continued to grow, providing 50 Prevost motorcoaches available for charter transportation for schools, sports teams, wedding parties and guests, families, church groups, and, well, anybody else who has a group of people they want to move from one location to another!

These ladies not only manage the details of the tours, they oversee everything involved in managing a fleet of 63 commercial vehicles. Christian Tours campus, in rural North Carolina includes the parking and maintenance facility for their fleet, the building where the office staff works and where passengers meet prior to embarking on their adventures, and the beautiful grounds maintained by a staff of groundskeepers year-round.

One of the most note-worthy traits of these three ladies is their ability to attract and hire the best people for the job. Their staff includes almost 130 of the finest folks in the travel industry! Top notch motorcoach drivers, well-seasoned and knowledgeable tour directors, the finest garage and service personnel around, and a staff of office professionals who excel at all of the many puzzle pieces required to complete a final product with results to serve passengers again and again.

Mellonee and her daughters, Heather and Melissa, have been a steady rock during the most turbulent time in the travel industry that no one could ever have imagined. Their ability to lead comes from a strong faith in the Lord, and a lifetime of experience in the travel industry.

In the early years, Mellonee worked alongside her parents and had calls forwarded to her home as she was raising her children; many times answering the phone from a closet to focus on the conversation. Eventually the business grew from running a few tours a year, to days when every vehicle in the company was out on the road for an extended length of time. When Heather & Melissa were in grade school they would help the office staff with their duties and were often caught giggling as well. After college, Heather & Melissa joined the family business full time and for a number of years, three generations of the family worked in different positions within the company, including Mellonee's husband, Sonny, who managed the company garage maintaining the large fleet of company vehicles.

As time goes by, families change, loved ones pass on and new members are added. When the Lord called Nancy and Udean to their heavenly home, the family mourned, but the bond remained. Adjustments had already been put in place and Mellonee continued the role of company president while Heather and Melissa moved into their new roles as Vice-Presidents. Christian Tours & Burke International Tours continued to evolve, adding an ever-increasing number of tours, transporting even more people, and taking a multitude of passengers to destinations all over the US and the world.

2020 started out in January with their annual Open House held on the beautiful campus of Christian Tours. Folks from all over North & South Carolina look forward every year for the chance to come to the campus, visit with the staff and fellow travelers, find out about the new tours for the upcoming year, and sign up on-site for tours with an extra special discount.

Then came March. COVID raised its ugly head. Things came to a standstill, and the travel industry took it hard. Christian Tours was certainly no exception. But these three ladies stayed strong, kept the faith, made some hard decisions, and continued to lead the company into the future. Soon 2020 will be in the past and travel will resume, bouncing back harder and stronger than ever before. And these three ladies will still be leading the charge, blazing new trails, and giving travelers the opportunities to visit places near and far!

NORTH CAROLINA



Ashley Nordstrom
Motor Coach Industries (MCI)
Human Resource Manager
Ashley.Nordstrom@mcicoach.com



Ashley Nordstrom, Human Resource Manager for Motor Coach Industries (MCI) – an NFI Group Inc. company – began her career in Manufacturing, October of 2019. The majority of her last career was spent in the healthcare industry, so this was a quite a big switch. Ashley recalls “I was fascinated when I started with MCI and mostly with what the Pembina, ND facility receives, which is a shell of a coach to start, with the end product being a fascinating complex machine. It really had me reflect on teamwork and how it takes a whole team to build a functional unit. Every part and person matters.”

Being a Human Resource professional, it's important to Ashley to learn about the business and one that she's gained experience of the industry and the operation. “I always strive to learn about the business as a whole as it helps me help others to understand certain situations or to explain and communicate the organization's strategy.”

Ashley is thankful that this opportunity happened

as her and her husband were able to move back to the town in which they both grew up in to raise their three children, close to family. Her kids are quite excited to see the coaches on the road along with seeing them on TV. Ashley says, “I love being able to promote to others the work that our whole team puts in along with what's produced.”

Ashley has a passion for the local community as well as the HR profession. She serves on the Job Development Association Board for Pembina County as well as the state Human Resource Board as the College Relations Director.

“What I appreciate most about my job is helping people. Every day is different and it's fascinating to see the amazing, and complex product that MCI produces. I really appreciate how connected we all are across all of NFI Group.”



Lisa Pfouts
Eagle Rock Tours
Manager
eaglerocktours@centurylink.net



Eagle Rock Tours, located in the small central Ohio town of Fredericktown, offers group tours and custom charters for private groups, such as schools, churches and family and friends, as well as pre-planned tours for customers throughout Ohio. Lisa Pfouts manager, citing the importance of excellent customer service as she designs and escorts tours coast to coast.

Eagle Rock Tours was established in an unusual way, as a community action program, and has been in the same location for over 35 years. Philip Brown, director of a federally supported multi-county agency formed to address community needs, saw the potential of the motorcoach industry for creating jobs and economic development. He purchased a couple of coaches from a nearby AAA, and formed the Muskingum Coach Company. Eagle Rock Tours was created as a separate operation as tourism grew. Upon retiring from the agency, Brown purchased the expanded Muskingum Coach Company and Eagle Rock Tours, which were family operated until 2016 when the Swartzentruber family, owners of Pioneer Trails of Millersburg, Ohio, purchased the businesses. Pioneer Trails specializes in Amish transportation.

Lisa Pfouts started out 11 years ago escorting tours using vacation time from a full-time job, becoming office manager and agent in 2010 and assuming more responsibility in 2016. Lisa says "I have a great job. I am always looking for new places to take the next group to see and enjoy. Our outstanding staff and drivers are a great team that helps to make a wonderful trip for everyone. Passengers become friends and friends become family that we look forward to seeing year after year."



Starla Fleming
Kincaid Coach Lines
General Manager, Oklahoma
sfleming@kincaidcoach.com

- Number of motorcoaches: 20
- Average age of fleet: 2016
- Number of operators: 41
- Miles traveled per year: 1,166,800

Kincaid Coach Lines is a family-owned motorcoach company founded in 1977. From a modest beginning in and around the Kansas City area, the company has grown into one of the top motor coach operators in the central United States with terminals in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Kincaid Coach Lines specialize in luxurious, yet affordable motor coach charters. The team of professional drivers provide transportation for athletic teams, conventions and meetings, school events, church camps, government and military contracts, weddings, and anything in between. The fleet of state-of-the-art buses includes optional in-cabin Wi-Fi, on-board restrooms, individual reading lights, outlets for charging, TV monitors, reclining seats, adjustable footrests, and more.

Starla has been in the motorcoach industry for over 20 years serving in a variety of roles. Her talent and hard work led Kincaid Coach Lines to select her as General Manager of the Oklahoma operations where her performance has been superb. She is an empathetic leader who strives to facilitate excellence, both from herself and her team. Starla exemplifies Kincaid Coach Lines' Four Core Values – Family, Safety, Service, and Respect – on a daily basis. Lance Moore, Director of Operations at Kincaid Coach Lines was proud to hear Starla would be featured in Women in Buses. "We are honored to see Starla recognized among the women that help make this industry great," said Moore.

Starla was also honored to hear she was being featured. "When I think of all the great women leaders I have met throughout my career in this industry, I feel very humbled and honored to be selected for this



opportunity," said Fleming. During her time with Kincaid Coach Lines, Starla has worn many hats and has played an integral part in helping grow the business. She said of her career to this point, "As a young adult, my career began as a Bus Detailer and I worked my way up through dispatching and operations. I feel I really grew up in this industry and quickly developed a passion for the dynamic and challenging environment that motorcoach transportation offers. I found some of my most satisfying times have been the calm moments after a hectic day of seemingly impossible challenges I worked through with my team. I have been fortunate to work with, in my opinion, some of the best operators in this industry, whose commitment and experience has shaped not just the company's, but my success in this industry."

Looking Ahead

Moving forward, Starla is very excited to see what the future holds for Kincaid Coach Lines, the motorcoach industry, and women's role in the industry. "The mentorship and development I have experienced with Kincaid Coach Lines, especially during these unprecedented and uncertain times for our industry, has deepened my drive for success. I am certain that through chaos, opportunity, by nature, will emerge and that motorcoach travel will play a crucial role in this opportunity. I am excited to see how the prevalence of women in leadership roles has grown during my time in the industry and can't wait to see these roles expand to all aspects of our business," Fleming said when asked about her outlook on the future.



- Member of IMG, UMA, ABA, SYTA, Travel Portland, Travel Oregon, Visit Central Oregon
- Awards: Fastest Growing Private 100 Companies, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 by the Portland Business Journal; Lighthouse Award 2016, Top Women Owned Businesses 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, Most Generous Corporate Philanthropists 2018, Inc 5000 Fastest Growing Private Companies, Travel Portland's Sustainability Award, American Bus Association's Green Spirit Award, First Motorcoach company in history to be awarded Trusted Carrier plates by the Department of Transportation for stellar safety record

NorthWest Navigator Luxury Coaches is part of a story of over a decade of strong growth, part of an industry that ranked as the 13th largest global economy, according to the 2018 Global Economic Significance of Business Events study, a report that concluded business events generated more than US \$1 trillion in direct global spending and 30 million jobs worldwide. 2019, as with other Motorcoach operators, saw another year of substantial growth for NW Navigator, increasing fleet size to 20 matching luxury Prevost motorcoaches, 4 Executive Mini's and Touring coaches, 3 Executive Mercedes Sprinters and 2 Luxury SUVs.

With locations in Portland Oregon and Central Oregon, NW Navigator has rapidly grown from 1 motorcoach in 2009 to the 29 vehicle fleet it now operates and has been recognized with multiple awards for growth, operations, safety and sustainability.

Luxury, Service, Safety, Reliability and Sustainability is at the heart of NW Navigator, serving iconic corporate groups such as Nike, Adidas, Columbia, Intel and Microsoft to name a few. Tourists inbound from International destinations comprise most of NW Navigator's summer and fall business which turns toward College, professional sports and athletic team transportation through spring. Military work has been strong and the fires in Oregon last year gave the company a welcome boost with evacuations and rescues.

Roxanne Gillis is the founder of NW Navigator and leads the company with her husband, Joseph. She is

Roxanne M. Gillis

NW Navigator Luxury Coaches and

NW Microbe Free Solutions

Founder/President

roxanne@nwnavigator.com



passionate about entrepreneurship, taking over her family's jewelry business at age 22 after earning her GIA Graduate Gemologists degree, and served generations of clients for the next 25 years serving high end clientele with customer service, educating them in diamonds and colored gems while designing custom creations. Her customer-first approach has crossed over into NW Navigator, where the client Experience is the driving force behind everything they do.

Roxanne leads as a progressive visionary and, together with her husband, enjoys running and building businesses together. In 2020 they opened NW Microbe Free Solutions, after months of research and investigation into the best ways of disinfecting, sanitizing and protecting passengers and operators from COVID 19. The new venture is helping other bus companies as well as colleges and businesses re open.

Her employees know that she respects and appreciates them as if they were customers and NW Navigator has built a strong culture of trust and shared responsibility which has built strong loyalty throughout the company.

It is assumed by the majority of affiliates Roxanne meets that Joe is the owner of NW Navigator. Rightly so, as this is clearly a male dominated industry. Pair that with Joe's charismatic and outgoing personality versus Roxanne's more quiet demeanor and it's understandable. It is unusual to find a woman leader in the bus and Motorcoach industry, but to find one at the helm is quite rare.



**Tammy Wolf-Baker and
Tracy Wolf-Stroyny**
Wolf's Bus Lines
Owners
tammy@wolfsbus.com
tracy@wolfsbus.com



- Fleet size of 26 vehicles ranging from 14 to 54 Passengers.

Three generations. One legacy of service.

Our roots stem back four generations to Edwin & Leah Wolf, who owned a humble service station that sold trucks to the local York Springs community. In the early 1930's their son Paul acquired the business. In 1938 he added a single school bus to the list of services provided in order to offer transportation to any student attending York Springs High School.

Paul continued his parent's tradition of offering great service, and in less than ten years, Wolf's grew to include multiple buses and a shuttle system for soldiers and commuting workers. In 1947, after earning the regulatory authorization for bus chartering, Wolf's Bus Lines was officially born.

Since then, our fleet has continued to grow and our services have expanded to offering motorcoach trips and tours to some of the country's most popular destinations. Over the years as ownership passed down to Paul's sons, Edwin & Bradley, and now Bradley's daughters, Tracy & Tammy, the family's commitment to ensuring our passenger's safety, comfort, & delight has never wavered.

The Wolf Family

For three generations, our family has been dedicated to the same time-honored values Wolf's Bus Lines was founded on about servantly years ago: unrivaled service, hospitality, reliability, and loyalty. No matter the journey, you can trust Wolf's to make you feel like a true member of the pack. The very moment you step on board a Wolf's Bus, you will see why we lead the pack in tours, charters, and experience that you will never forget.

Today, Wolf's Bus Lines is run by the third generation of the Wolf Family – Tammy Wolf-Baker and Tracy Wolf-Stroyny. The fourth generation Gage Baker has joined the family business and will graduate from Shippensburg University May 2021. We pride ourselves on being family owned and operated, allowing us to



continue the values and traditions that have made this bus company what it is today.

TAMMY WOLF-BAKER

Married to both her high school sweetheart, Larry, and the business, Tammy is the dynamo behind the tourbook. She plans every detail of every trip and then she translates that to print. She may be small, but she slays this Herculean task! Her job does not stop there. She also quotes charters, books buses and holds the office together. When she does take a break from work, you can find her at a hockey rink somewhere on the East Coast watching her boys, Gage and Cade, both devoted hockey players.

TRACY WOLF-STRONY

Recently married to the love of her life, but never forsaking her family business, Tracy's been full time with Wolf's since a few years after high school. She's the keeper of the cash and the one who creates the splash. Tracy takes care of accounting and marketing! She is skilled enough to wear a variety of hats – and does it well. Always in fashion and the brains behind many of our new ideas, Tracy is a vital part of what Wolf's is today. Here's a fun fact you might not know – Tracy was born in England!



Suchada "Poe" Kumnerdsupapol

Flagship Bus

Vice President of Finance and Administration

suchada@flagshipbusri.com



Flagship Bus RI is located in Cranston, RI, just minutes away from our capital City of Providence and within earshot of TG Green airport. Our company began in 1981 running casino trips to Atlantic City. Since then, we have grown into an 18 coach full service charter company and we now provide statewide student transportation service for the Rhode Island Department of Education as well.

Suchada Kumnerdsupapol, aka, "Poe" took a very long road to land at Flagship in 2006. Poe grew up in Chiangmai, the second largest city in Thailand. She graduated from Chiangmai University in 1999 earning her bachelor's degree in public administration. She continued her education in Switzerland at University Center "Cesar Ritz" adding a post graduate diploma in hotel and restaurant management to her educational credentials. Her quest for more knowledge led her to Providence, RI where she enrolled in the MBA program at Johnson & Wales University in 2004. She graduated in 2006 with an MBA in Hospitality & Tourism Global Leadership with a concentration in Marketing. With time remaining on her student visa, she decided to try and find work in the US to gain some real-world experience. This is where her Flagship story begins.

Flagship worked with the University and posted a position for an opening to work in our tour department. As luck and perhaps fate would have it, Poe applied with us and thus began her career in bus transportation in 2006. In a very short time, Poe demonstrated a keen understanding of our business and industry along with the passion that it takes to run a bus company. As time went on, the clock on her student visa began to wind

down as well. With her obvious dedication and value to our company, we knew that we could not afford to let her go for lack of a visa. Together we began the long journey to US citizenship which she earned in 2017.

Her title at our company is now Vice President of Finance and Administration, but, she does so much more. Poe is involved in every aspect of our business; accounting, payroll, sales, and dispatch and, when necessary, she can handle the washbay too. She works closely with our drivers and has learned the art form of charter bus scheduling, always finding a way to get it done, sometimes as if by magic. When she needs someone to step up and take on a last-minute job or change, we all know that- "you cannot say no to Poe!"

From Chiangmai, Thailand to Cranston, Rhode Island is a journey of 8,202 miles with lots of places in between. Of all the possibilities for her to chose, Poe landed in Rhode Island at Flagship and that is absolutely one of the very best things that could have ever happened for our company. As we struggle to find a way to survive the devastation of the pandemic, Poe remains steadfast in her commitment to Flagship demonstrating that each and every day. While our company was literally shut down from March until August, she never missed even one day. She has become an expert in all aspects of the creative financing that is required to navigate these tumultuous times. She does it all with a cheerfulness and optimism that is an inspiration to our entire team, especially now with the challenges we all face. For us, Poe is truly the glue that holds it all together.



Mary Young

Capitol Tours

Co-Owner

Mary@capitol-tours.com



Capitol Tours

Mary Young's story in the motorcoach and tour industry began 30 years ago, but Capitol Tours will celebrate its 40th anniversary in August 2021. Her husband, Buddy Young, started the company in 1981 when Mary was working as a registered nurse at a local hospital. In 1990 Buddy, who was also a fighter pilot for the South Carolina Air National Guard, was called to active duty in Operation Desert Storm. Mary stepped in to keep the family business going and it was the beginning of a whole new career. Over the years, the Youngs have been involved in paddlewheel boats, an ambulance service and charter buses, but now work daily in their charter and tour business.

Located in West Columbia, South Carolina, Capitol Tours currently operates eight motorcoaches and serves customers of all types from students to seniors and churches to military units. Capitol specializes in providing group charters, custom tours and student travel throughout the southeast. "We've worked hard to focus on our customers and pride ourselves on reliability and world-class service." Mary says, "The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly had a significant impact on our business, but being nimble with our team of 'can do' employees has helped us adapt and survive."

Capitol truly is a family business with Mary, Buddy and their son, Matt, working daily to grow a better business. Matt grew up in the business and spent nearly a decade after college outside the business as a CPA in both public and corporate accounting. Rejoining the company in 2018, he has brought new perspective and moved the company forward with technology enhancements both in the office and on the motorcoaches. With a renewed emphasis on the customer experience, they experienced double digit growth in both 2018 and 2019. "We are looking forward to getting back to business after the pandemic subsides and getting our customers back on the road," Mary says.



In addition to her work at Capitol, Mary is involved in the industry at the state level with the Motorcoach Association of South Carolina, as well as the national level with the American Bus Association (ABA). She attends the annual ABA Marketplace and served on ABA's Top 100 Event selection committee. Mary was recognized as the first Women In Buses – Woman of the Year award in 2014, which recognizes an individual or company who has directly impacted the advancement and promotion of women within and among the motorcoach, tourism and hospitality industry.

Mary is one of the original members of Women In Buses and remembers when during its first year it was simply a social event to bring together women in the industry. It did not take long to establish formal meetings at Marketplace and then hold quarterly conference calls. Mary is excited to watch Women in Buses grow and to see so many others in the industry get involved.

Buddy and Mary met in high school and will celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary this fall. Mary says, "If someone had told us all those years ago that we would be in the bus business, we wouldn't have believed them! But, we are grateful to be a part of this industry."



Kay Foreman
Foreman Charters
Owner and CEO
kayf@foremanbus.com



I would like to start out with a short history of Foreman, a fifth-generation company in the motorcoach business. Foreman has a long family-oriented history of serving South Dakota and surrounding areas. Foreman Sales and Service is based out of Miller, SD, and dates back to 1969. Initially specializing in selling and contracting yellow school bus services, has now grown into having 13 school bus contracts across the state of South Dakota. A couple of our larger school districts required Charter buses for their activities, thus Foreman Charters got its start.

Our mission is to provide comfort and safety along with true Midwest hospitality.

I started with Foreman Sales and Service as a bookkeeper in 1981, when I met my husband Doyle Foreman, and have since been involved with the day-to-day operations.

Along with the day-to-day operations, I also take care of all the license and titling of the equipment. Scheduling of buses and drivers for the different activities each week. Monthly invoicing and payroll. The one part of the

Charter business I really enjoy, is talking to the people. They are always so excited to be taking a trip with us or helping a group plan their trip. I cannot forget, there is always a bus to wash, and that is a Family effort!

Doyle and I have 3 children, Travis our oldest, started working for us in 2000. He and his wife Kassandra have blessed us with our 4 beautiful grandchildren, Teagan, Kyler, Kendree, and Kelsa. Teagan has started helping Grandma and Grandpa out during the summer the last 2 years. Cody, our "middle child," received his business degree and started working for us full time in 2019. Our youngest, Kayla, is an accountant and a dance instructor and is always willing to help us out.

When Doyle and I are not working, we enjoy following the grandkids for all their activities. We are so blessed.

The transportation industry has been our life. Doyle and I take pride in our business and want to thank our customers for their continued support.

I am very honored to represent South Dakota Women in Buses. Thank you



Lashawn Lundstrom

Hemphill Brothers Coach Company

Driver

Lashawn777@aol.com



- Fleet Size - 110 Entertainer Motorcoaches,
2 Passenger Coaches, 1 Day Coach

Hemphill Brothers Coach Company is an entertainer motorcoach company that primarily provides custom tour buses to entertainers when they tour North America. The company also operates maintenance and custom conversions shops, as well as a Sales department. They are located just outside of Nashville, Tennessee. Hemphill Brothers was founded by brothers Trent and Joey Hemphill in 1980. It has been rolling strong and has been driven to be the best ever since.

Hemphill Brothers has long been considered one of the best custom coach providers for musicians, entertainers, sports figures, and politicians.

For over 20 years, Lashawn Lundstrom has driven coaches for Hemphill Brothers.

She began driving at an early age. Her family were gospel singers and owned their own private coaches (1948 Flexible Clipper, GMC 4104, GMC 4106, MCI 7, MCI 8, MCI 102C3) which they used year-round while performing throughout North America for approximately 300 + days a year.

As a little girl, she would sit on her dad's lap while he was driving and he would let her help steer the bus as they wound their way down the road, which is what first initiated her love for all things buses. She spent her entire life living on buses and her heart still beats a little faster when she goes to take a bus on tour. It is in her blood!

In her twenties, while performing as a keyboardist in various touring acts, she was approached to fill in as a co-driver on a tour which had leased one of Hemphill Brothers' coaches. Trent and Joey knew her and her family and was aware that she had a CDL as well as being familiar with handling a tour bus.

Later, this experience led Lashawn to give up on her performance career and opt for a more stable income, working full time driving for Hemphill Brothers. This path has led to her now working full time at the company for 23 years, doing mainly arena and stadium tours for pop, rock, Christian, R&B and country music.

Lashawn says, "There aren't a lot of women driving in the entertainment bus industry, but the numbers are growing and with so many women in management and in higher levels of power, it is a nice change from back when I first started. We have come a long way! Another advantage is that a lot of the female artists enjoy a female driver, especially when they have their families on board. It seems to make them more at ease."



Trent Hemphill added, "Lashawn is a trailblazer in the motorcoach industry. Not only is she a leader among her peers, but one of our top drivers. I can remember Michael, Janet and the entire Jackson family were performing a run of shows at Madison Square Garden in New York, and we received a call immediately following 9-11 to pick up the Jackson family and safely take them back home to California. We called Lashawn to immediately leave with other drivers to head up to New York. And even in such an uncertain and scary environment, she quickly left to make the trip happen. She has always been a driver we could count on and trust, and she makes each journey a pleasant experience. Hemphill Brothers is proud of her and all of her accomplishments."

Lashawn was nominated in 2018 for Coach Driver of the Year at the annual prestigious Tour Link Awards and has been nominated by her peers for various additional awards. In 2018, for her 20 years of service to Hemphill Brothers, Lashawn was awarded a Rolex watch by Trent and Joey Hemphill. She currently resides in Tennessee with her husband, Liam.



Ana M. Sarmiento

...OK TOURS!!!

CEO

service@oktours.com



- Fleet Size - 19 Motorcoaches
- \$150,000/month operating cost (which includes bus payments, insurance, plates/permits, utilities, and payroll for over 40 employees/motorcoach operators)

OK TOURS Charter Bus Service and Tours is located in San Antonio, Texas – home of the Alamo and Riverwalk – located right in the heart of South Texas! OK TOURS just celebrated its 27th year in business in October 2020. Although this year's celebration looked a lot different than years past, being able to celebrate with our essential employees (many of whom are family as well – a perk of being a family owned and operated company) was still very special.

OK TOURS has served not only the communities in Central and South Texas but others across the country for many years. We specialize in providing high quality motor coach transportation as well a group tours to destinations across the U.S. We accommodate transportation for our country's military, non-profits, church groups, corporate groups, youth organizations, as well as schools and universities of all sizes.

Ana is the mother, matriarch, and current CEO of OK Tours. She and her husband, Manuel, founded the business in 1993 in San Antonio, Texas. Starting from humble beginnings meant working hard, fast, and completely focused on serving their customers. Ana is a fierce, confident leader who inspires passionate action from her employees. She may seem tough on the outside, but she's known for her heart of gold. As the story goes, one day a beautiful, young San Antonio family decided to start a business. Manuel brought up the idea to his wife, Ana. She agreed and the rest was history. Even though they had a young son named Marcos, a mortgage to pay, and knowing business was risky, they decided to chase



their dreams anyway. Manuel and Ana were young and enthusiastic about starting their dream business in their hometown. OK Tours has always been a San Antonio, homegrown business at heart. We travel with the same student-athletes we cheer on every Friday night. We adventure with our neighbors, business colleagues, and friends. San Antonio's kindness and culture are at the heart of everything we stand for.

Part of the mission for Ana and Manuel, like many parents, was to leave a legacy for their son. Little did they know, nearly twenty years later, the small boy who used to play underneath her desk would play an essential role in leading OK Tours into the future as their current Chief Operating Officer. When you're building a family business the most important thing you can do is instill family values into your business. "We tried everything we could to be welcoming, kind, and loyal to our customers, hoping our children would see our example and follow suit."

Due to COVID-19, our company has faced many obstacles and challenges to continue to provide the safe and reliable transportation that our community deserves. It has been a tough year for the entire motorcoach industry – but we will continue to fight for our industry as well as for the many small business like our own!

TEXAS



Jenie Copyak

Le Bus

Human Resources and

Office Manager

Jenie@lebus.com



A Better Way To Travel

In the summer of 1986, Dennis and Leanne Copyak moved their family to Salt Lake City, Utah and opened a new division of the trusted Jackson Rock Springs Stages, incorporated in Wyoming. The name did not fit well in Utah, so they decided to call the company Le Bus and made it the DBA for both companies in Utah & Wyoming. They started a small operation in Salt Lake with 1 bus, broom, mop, and toolbox. Dennis was the first Salt Lake Le Bus driver. They along with their Son Bryan Copyak, Daughter in Law Jenie Copyak and daughter Tiffani Martin helped to grow the Salt Lake business to 80 vehicles available for charter in our Utah division.

The Utah facility grew its business supplying buses for National Parks as well as convention shuttles, conference shuttles, schools, colleges, professional sports teams, church groups and military movements. They operate a daily casino tour to Wendover Nevada along with a mountain bike van shuttle. The Utah division grew to be one of the largest bus carriers in the region, currently operate vans, city transit buses, motorcoaches, and double decker.

In 1998, Jenie Copyak married into the bus business when she married Bryan. She entered the business and was a fast learner, developing her skills and helping wherever she was needed. Bryan, at that time was working in the shop as a mechanic. Jenie joined Dennis & Leanne in the office and was able to learn the ropes from her in-laws. She started out as Leanne's assistant in Accounting and HR.

Jenie worked for Le Bus from 1998 to 2002. During this time, she worked in the office and found herself and husband working during the day and sometimes cleaning busses late at night. In the summer of 1998, they traveled to Yellowstone National Park several times to assist National Park Tours operated by Le Bus. One night in the wee hours, Jenie and Bryan installed a windshield into a Prevost Motor Coach in the middle of the night while our guests were resting. We have always been proud to operate Clean, Safe & Dependable transportation with no

interruptions. She played a big role in helping us operate the media shuttle for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Shortly after the Olympics, she took a break from Le Bus to raise their two children, Chandler & Hayley.

In 2008, she rejoined the Le Bus team as the Accounting, HR, & Office Manager. She knows and understand the business well and has implemented many innovative changes that have made the company more profitable and efficient. Le Bus was one of the first motor coach companies to develop a paperless accounting process for driver's paperwork, payroll, fuel receipts, expenses, and maintenance. She helped implement a paperless system to help our drivers have a simple way to report information so that they can focus on driving, safety and customer service. She developed a better accounts receivable system to eliminate outstanding balances. After implementing the new collection practices, we have been able to eliminate collection fees. She implemented paperless- direct deposit pay checks and a driver per diem debit card. Many of her efforts have helped preserve our environment and eliminated unnecessary work and expenses.

In 2017, she took on more responsibilities when we had the need for additional help in sales. She managed several of our large accounts and developed new business relationships of her own. Her customers come back to us because she takes great care of them with her full attention and treats them like they are her only customer. She has developed many great relationships with customers.

Women play big roles in the company and contribute significantly to our success. Leanne and Jenie together have formed a relationship that many people deem impossible to work with family, a way of our life in this company. They lead by example with their integrity, honesty, and virtue. Our Business is a third generational company, and thanks to contributions of Women, we are proud to be one of the elite transportation companies in the country.



Josie Prive

Lamoille Valley Transportation, Inc.

Vice President

josie@lvt.org



- Fleet Size - 21 Motorcoaches and 27 School Buses

Lamoille Valley Transportation is located in the mountains of northern Vermont. While serving the small town communities with school bus transportation, it's surprising to find 21 beautiful motorcoaches tucked away in the trees behind the office on Route 15 in Morrisville.

That is what is happening now due to the pandemic although prior bustling business included transportation for college athletics and clubs, fall foliage tours, military movements, weddings, casino trips, various other pre-arranged tours across the U.S. and in Canada, and a thriving National Park Tour business based out of South Dakota in the summertime.

Josie's parents, Norman and Noreen Prive established the business in 1986 by purchasing a small fleet of school buses, maintaining the vehicles, driving bus routes, and attending to all functions of the business themselves. In 1988, they expanded their business and purchased their first over-the-road motorcoaches to provide transportation for local tour companies and military movements.

The company is still family owned and operated by two generations of the Prive family. In 1993, son Joel joined the company after completing an Associate degree in Electrical Engineering from the Vermont Technical College, bringing his knowledge and mechanic skills from many years of growing up in the garage, and becoming a driver. In 2011, daughter Josie joined the family business bringing her business and financial skills, and of course becoming a driver. Josie honestly never imagined she would be driving a 45 foot motorcoach, even though she grew up around the business.

At the end of 2018, Noreen retired from the company with Joel and Josie taking on ownership of the company along with their father Norman. Joel now holds the position of President, overseeing marketing efforts and fleet maintenance. Josie is the current Vice President of the company, overseeing much of the financial aspects of the company, human resource tasks, and dispatching.

Other members of the team include Amy who has been with the company for 7 years and wears the hat of



School Bus Coordinator where she oversees the school bus drivers, drives a regular route, and occasionally operates a motorcoach. Tracey has been working at the company for a year although arrived with 16 years of experience working for a transportation company in Colorado. She oversees driver qualifications and is the Safety Coordinator. Ed Prive, a cousin, has been with the company since 2004, as a Vehicle Detailer. Zach Prive, Joel's son, has now been with the company for 2 years and is the Fleet Coordinator. And, of our current 39 qualified drivers, 15 of them are women!

It was and still is hard to believe what happened in March 2020, when the country and all operations of Lamoille Valley Transportation were completely shut down. From being a bustling \$5 million business to \$0 in one day was devastating. Let alone the emotions of it all. Financial challenges. Employee layoffs. Understanding PPP. Understanding the ever-changing environment of COVID. Unemployment. Pandemic family leave. All was overwhelming.

With the re-opening of the schools in the fall of 2020, it was exciting to see some movement of the fleet. Slowly a few military movements were added. Some high school and college athletic trips are coming to fruition.

Now a year later, the motorcoach industry is literally at a standstill, which leaves us asking - what does the future hold? Hopefully soon, with the Covid vaccination roll out, the wheels will start turning again and the 24 hour a day, 365 days a year excitement of operating a transportation business will return!



Beth Forsht
LW Transportation Charter Services
Owner
beth@lw-transportation.com



LW Transportation is a full-service charter bus company serving customers for more than 25 years in DC Metro Area and points beyond. Originally founded in Fredericksburg, Virginia by Larry Williams, this business has grown into a strong partnership with Ray Hendrickson and Beth Forsht.

In 2005, Larry and Ray decided it was time to bring on other family members to continue the legacy they had created. Beth Forsht, Ray's daughter was brought on board to manage bookings and sales for the business. Beth had many

years of experience managing logistics and sales in the automotive industry, a successful balloon business and many events in the Washington DC Metro Area. In addition, her father's involvement in the motorcoach industry was a major part of her life which proved to be a huge help when she came on board.

Starting with three buses in 2005, Larry, Ray and Beth were able to grow the business to a fleet of twenty in 2020 with the help of hard-working employees. A strong operations group created this company and business



development supported its expansion. Beth joined the Virginia Motor Coach Association and continues to serve on the board of directors actively trying to promote the motor coach industry with the other VMA Members. Over the past fifteen years, Beth has been able to expand their client list year over year while completing over 3000 trips per year. The success of LW Transportation started with strong relationships and that continues today.

Although the Coronavirus Pandemic has caused LW Transportation to adjust to the new normal, they continue to search

for ways to support their employees and serve their community. Beth has taken the past year to diversify the business model and create a driving school. Current employees are being cross-trained as certified instructors and enrollment has exceeded one hundred and fifty students.

While LW Transportation is very grateful for the income earned through Military moves, the business is looking forward to the day they can say "I'm sorry we are sold out!"



Gladys T. Gillis
The Starline Collection
Owner and CEO
gladys@discoverstarline.com



A seasoned and motivated leader, Gladys Gillis has built a multi-million dollar passenger transportation enterprise, The Starline Collection, across Washington State. The Starline Collection started in 1998 with the creation of Starline Transportation. That little start up had 3 wheelchair equipped minibuses and a motorcoach, a fleet that has grown to over 100 vehicles in 22 years. In 2013 Starline purchased Wheatland Express which is 5 hours east of its Seattle location in Pullman and Spokane, Washington. To fill in the middle of the State, Starline purchased A&A Motorcoach in 2016 giving them locations in Yakima, Tri-Cities and Wenatchee. Gladys was engaged in expanding the Starline Collection even further when Covid stopped the industry in its tracks in March 2020.

Gladys was recognized by the Puget Sound Business Journal as a 'Women of Influence' in 2016. Her civic involvement includes being on the Central Washington University Board of Regents, a Board member of the Greater Seattle Business Association and the first female Chairman of the United Motorcoach Association in Washington, D.C. Gladys was honored to be selected by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation in 2016 to represent the motorcoach industry on the National Advisory Council on Tourism and Transportation Infrastructure in Washington, D.C. She has been a frequent speaker at various conferences and industry forums. She has been recognized as setting the standard in running a



green company sensitive to the environment with highly trained professional drivers. She enjoys helping business owners take control of their financials to grow their businesses. When not engaged in business activities she can be found boating in the San Juan Islands or playing golf in the sunshine.

Starline 2019 by the numbers:

- Gross Revenue = \$15M
- Payroll = \$3.6M
- Fuel = \$1.2M
- Payroll Tax = \$434,000
- 401K & Health Insurance & L&I = \$239,000
- Excise Tax = \$140,000
- Fuel Tax = \$62,000
- Vehicle Licensing & Prorate = \$103,000



Kim Tummolo
Schrock / Varsity Travel
Co-Owner
Kim@travelvarsity.com



- Fleet Size - 13 motorcoaches

Schrock Travel began in 1937 as a family owned and operated business in Virginia and Pennsylvania. The Schrock's retired in May 2018 and sold the company to Matt Knott and Tyler Tummolo. When the Schrock's approached Matt and Tyler about selling the company, they were excited to take on a company with such a great legacy. Tyler met his wife, Kim, at the LEGOLAND theme park in Carlsbad, CA in 2012. They moved to Florida and New York together before settling in West Virginia.

Our sister company River Riders in Harpers Ferry, WV (an outfitter on the Potomac and Shenandoah River), that Matt owns, and Tyler operates. Matt and Tyler have both spent many years operating adventure activities for River Riders but also began branching off to use River Riders to offer transportation services. This expansion then led them to Schrock which offers Motorcoach transportation. Since the business was purchased in May, that was the start of the busy season for River Riders so Kim stepped in to help operate the business. Kim's background is in event planning, it was a little bit of a stretch, but she quickly learned how to apply her background of scheduling, managing and execution of events into busing. You have to be able to plan, coordinate, problem solve and adjust quickly in the motorcoach industry and with Kim's background it all fell into place. We grew



the company from 8 motorcoaches to 13 in two years and grew the driving team from 10 to 30. We changed the name to Varsity Travel in 2019. We brought in new marketing with Facebook, Instagram and updated our clientele to more schools and venues in the area. Kim and Tyler had their first child in May 2019. One year after purchasing Schrock Travel. Kim took maternity leave and then came back and helped in the office a couple of days a week. Their daughter, Sloane, joined them in the office. She took naps in the back office, helped mom plan day trips and watched her dad work on buses. COVID has thrown a huge wrench in the industry, but we have been holding on fighting through all of the punches.

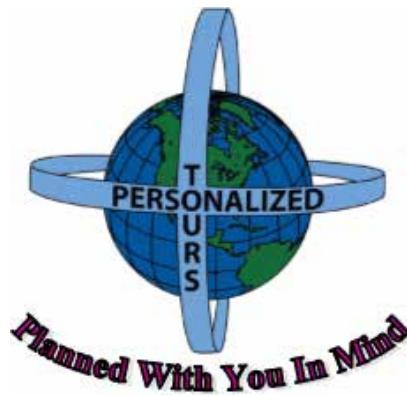


Tracy A. Schueller

Personalized Tours & Coaches, Inc.

President and CEO

• tracy@gopersonalized.com



- Fleet Size - 7 motorcoaches

Personalized Tours & Coaches is located in Waldo Wisconsin, 40 miles north of Milwaukee. In April we will celebrate 34 years in the tour planning business and 22 years in the transportation industry. We are a family business that specializes in custom planned and escorted tours to both the public and pre-formed groups.

After 12 years of building up our tour business we bought our first motorcoach in 1999. Today we transport a large number of student travelers and university athletic groups as well as provide transportation for other tour operators.

Tracy grew up in the industry with both her mother and father driving school bus routes when she was young. She would ride along with her mother on late night shuttles so her mother wouldn't have to drive back alone. This was the beginning of Tracy's love of the road. As her parents moved on to motorcoaches they would take their young family on the road with them, planting the seed of travel. Tracy graduated from Concordia University with a degree in Sales and Marketing and was ready to start looking for a career.

Her mother, Gloria, started Personalized Tours in 1987 and asked Tracy to help with a few office tasks and to escort a one day tour. Feeling nervous about taking care of 47 seniors, Tracy agreed, the day passed quickly and she fell in love with the family business.

For the first few years Tracy's mother, Gloria, ran the office, set up the tours and did all the clerical work while Tracy and her father John, (who drove for a local bus company), ran the tours. After 10 years of chartering motorcoaches they decided to purchase their first Prevost H3-45 in 1999. A year later they purchased their second coach.

For the first twenty-five years Tracy escorted 95% of all the tours both domestic and international, and has traveled to all but one continent with her groups. Her

mother retired in 2013 and Tracy decided she had to spend more time managing the office and allow others to help direct tours on the road. Realizing her first love was being out with her travelers, she hired some office staff and created a wonderful team that has been with her for years.

Tracy's father is still one of their full time drivers and they have grown the coach side of the company during COVID, purchasing another local company and adding to equipment and staff.

The best part of her job is that she never experiences the same day twice. Whether in the office planning or on the road touring, things are exciting and always new. Tracy's motto is "It's Not the Destination But the Journey." With being the only tour director for 25 years she has run 13 trips to Branson in one year. To keep it exciting and fun, the journey has become the best planning she does.

In her opinion, the way to survive in this industry even prior to the pandemic is to surround yourself with great people and partner with the best in the industry. So Tracy brought on her husband Jerry as Operations Manager and responsible for all accounting transactions for the tour and coach company. He does these duties after putting in full days at his "real" job and even taking vacation from that job to attend conventions with Tracy. She believes her staff is the best in the industry as well as those she chooses to trust and partner with, like Kris Hoff of Happy Times Tours & Experiences. The two companies aren't competitors but friends helping each other fill their tours and bounce ideas off each other.

Other great partners are the two largest organizations Tracy belongs to: ABA and UMA. The contacts, support, and information these industry organizations provide are so helpful.

Thanks to our loyal customer base we will survive this pandemic and come back even stronger, providing tours and charters "planned with you in mind."



Leanne Copyak

Rock Springs Jackson Bus Lines,

DBA Le Bus

Owner & Secretary Treasurer

sales@lebus.com



A Better Way To Travel

Leanne Zanetti Copyak, is the Secretary Treasurer of Rock Springs Jackson Bus Lines. The Wyoming division of Le Bus owns and operates over 40 vehicles from 3 terminals in Wyoming.

Leanne was born into a transportation family in Rock Springs, Wyoming, the daughter of Mike and Marge Zanetti. Her parents started Vet's Taxi in 1949 as a transportation company that consisted of a couple of taxi's and evolved into school, contract carrier and charter bus operations. Her older brother and only sibling, Jim Zanetti and herself grew up helping their parents with some of the company duties. Jim drove and handled maintenance with his father as Leanne would sweep out and help clean buses at an early age.

Jackson Rock Springs Stages grew to about 12 vehicles and included contracts helping 20th century Fox with transportation in the Jackson, Wyoming area filming series television, namely "The Monroe's". A few charters, employee contracts and school transportation became the mainstay in the 1970's. Leanne helped with office and accounting duties through most of that period. She married Dennis Copyak in 1973 and had two children, Bryan and Tiffani.

In the fall of 1979 Mike and Marge Zanetti were exploring possibilities to retire and sell their business. Leanne and her brother Jim along with their spouses Dennis and Jo, began to draft a plan to purchase the company and operate it starting January 1, 1980. Leanne and Jo worked office duties and Jim and Dennis ran operations and maintenance. The foursome grew the company in the early 1980's expanding to 25 buses. A large construction contract started in 1982 and the company expanded purchasing more equipment. The construction job ended early in 1986 and Leanne and her company found themselves looking for opportunity. The answer came when they found some work operating into National Parks in the summer of 1986 out of Salt Lake City, Utah. This quickly evolved into the need to establish an operation in Salt Lake City.

Leanne and her family moved to Salt Lake City in the summer of 1986. The company operated charter buses under the name of Jackson Rock Springs Stages. She helped to decide that it would better to call the company



Le Bus and made it the DBA of both corporations. The company was involved in transportation for the 2002 winter games in Salt Lake City. They incorporated the skills of all of the third generation family members that included son Bryan and his wife Jenie and their daughter Tiffani Martin.

Leanne's sharp skills in accounting and general business operations has been vital in building Le Bus into the company that was founded by her parents. It is now being operated with the help of several third-generation family members. Leanne is very compassionate about continuing to work daily doing the same job. Leanne and her brother Jim have daily contact at the start of each day. Jim continues as the President and handles the operations with family members in the Wyoming division. Her husband Dennis handles Vice President roles. Jim's sons Joe and Jim and son in law Jim Love have developed the Wyoming division into a very vital portion of the company business. Both the Wyoming and Utah divisions work together in developing all aspects of the company operation.

She is dedicated to the principles set by her parents to offer clean, dependable and safe transportation. The company logged over 4 million miles in 2019 and operates 130 vehicles. She is optimistically looking to the challenges in the days ahead to continue making Le Bus "A Better Way to Travel".

WE SUPPORT WOMEN IN BUSES!





Ryhan Cornell
ABC Companies
Account Manager
rrcornell@abc-companies.com

Ryhan grew up in the bus industry and worked in various departments at ABC during her tenure, but has been with the sales department for the last 12 years. Ryhan's favorite part of her role at ABC is building long lasting relationships and friendships with her customers and industry peers. She is passionate about the motorcoach industry and ensures that she provides her customers with the best equipment and services to meet their needs.

Ryhan has served on several industry boards and is currently on the Board of North Carolina Motorcoach Association, Virginia Motorcoach Association and Tennessee Motorcoach Association.

Ryhan is the mother of two boys, Lawson and Marshall, who keep her very busy. In her free time she enjoys fishing, working out, trying out new local restaurants and spending time with family.

ABC Companies is a leading provider to the transportation industry with diverse product and service offerings that cover a full spectrum of operational needs including new and pre-owned full-size highway coach equipment along with transit specialty vehicles including battery electric vehicles. ABC supports customers with a comprehensive after sale service network for service and repairs, collision services, extensive OEM and quality aftermarket parts needs for transit, motorcoach and heavy-duty equipment from ten strategically placed locations throughout the U.S. and Canada. Additionally, private and municipal financing and leasing options are available through the company's financial services group – one of the largest financial service providers within the industry. For more information, contact ABC Companies at 800-222-2875 or visit the company web site at www.abc-companies.com.





Bergen Upholstery, Inc.

Nancy Pokotilow Citti
Bergen Upholstery
President
nancy@bergenseat.com

Bergen Upholstery recently celebrated its 74th year in the transportation refurbishing business. Founded in 1946, this New Jersey-based company was the first to supply replacement seat covers and seat parts to the motor coach industry. Bergen is recognized as the leader in the North American motor coach and rail car replacement seating market.

The company was founded by Joseph Pokotilow, who learned the upholstery trade from his father, Benjamin. Family lore describes Benjamin, who was born in Russia, as the harness maker and carriage upholsterer to Tsar Nicholas II, before he immigrated to the US. Joseph's entrepreneurial spirit and smart executive decisions allowed the company to grow from modest beginnings in a storefront to a staff of 20 and a 13,000 square foot facility.

Nancy Pokotilow Citti, Joseph's daughter, joined Bergen in 1984 as a sales associate. Working alongside her father allowed for a seamless transition to lead

the company, and in 1995, upon Joseph's retirement, she became President. Throughout the years, she has strived every day to continue Bergen's tradition of excellence in quality, reliability, and superior customer service.

Ms. Citti has seen much change in the industry since she started, and Bergen has changed with it. Along with manufacturing seat covers and supplying seat parts, they refurbish the entire interior of the motor coach, at their facility or on-site at the customer's location. Bergen refurbishes driver seats, creates headrest covers with customer logos or marketing ads, and shampoos interiors. Responding to last year's COVID-19 crisis Bergen developed PPE as barriers and sneeze shields for drivers and passengers. Ms. Citti believes that flexibility in a changing market is the way for her company to succeed.



Sandie Marquis
Budget Truck and Auto
Graphics Sales Manager
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Like everyone, my journey in life has seen some highs and lows but the one constant that has been with me is my love to help others. For the past 16 years I've been in the vehicle graphics industry concentrating on motorcoaches while branching out to work with trucking companies and other small businesses with their printed graphic needs. On a daily basis I'm driven to assist my many friends in the motorcoach industry to tell the story of their company in pictures and words on their motorcoaches.

While many of you know that I'm originally from Canada, many are surprised to learn that I spent a number of years living in the US. After being born in St. Martin, Quebec Canada I moved to Connecticut at the ripe old age of 10 months. My father was working off and on in the US and after I was born my parents decided the US was where my father had the most opportunities. For the next twelve years Granby, CT was home but being from the true north was never lost on me or my family. Over the years I've lived, studied and worked in both countries, loving every minute I'm there but missing the other country when I'm not present.

During my moves and travels I've been fortunate to have the support of family and friends which include my wonderful daughter Shannon. Without her love and encouragement over the years I likely would've had to leave or possibly never enter the motorcoach graphics business. Her love and support were once again on display when in the past year I decided I needed another change of scenery as the snow was beginning to pile up. This time I decided to move farther south in the US and settled on Georgia where the snow is mostly nonexistent.

This move in physical location also brought a change in my work place. The company I spent the last 7 years with was sold to the original graphics company I started with in the motorcoach industry. I was fortunate to have made many friends over the past 16 years and one of those friends, Mark Polzin of Budget Truck and Auto, was interested in growing his company's graphics business. Over its 48 years in business, Budget Truck and Auto has mostly concentrated on paint and collision work. Its graphic department has been limited to mostly local coach operators and businesses but had been exploring a more national/international presence in the motorcoach industry.

After many months of conversations and learning what drives me in my work, it was apparent I meshed with how Mark operates his business. This made the decision to work with him simple. This next journey in my life from living in the southern US to the new graphics career at Budget Truck and Auto is one that I'm excited to take on and share with my family and friends.

I like to cook, visit wineries, read, bike riding, kayaking, hanging out at the beach, and watching football and hockey. Of course, any of these that I can do with Zoey, my Boston terrier, is a bonus.

I'm proud to be a member of not only Women in Buses but most of the international, national and state associations within our industry and look forward to continuing these relationships. I'm excited for the new challenges ahead and always looking for ways to continue providing assistance to the motorcoach industry that has provided me so much both personally and professionally.



Bronwyn Wilson
International Motorcoach Group (IMG)
President
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In response to consolidation within the motorcoach industry, a group of independent, family-owned companies in 1998, came together to create IMG. A primary focus was on marketing IMG as a collective and promoting the values of working with an IMG company to customers both in North America and beyond. IMG operators share a continuing commitment to excellence, in safety, training, maintenance and customer service, supplemented by the sharing of best practices and procedures. Innovative, progressive and having the goal of “setting the standards”, IMG has built significant customer relationships with various market sectors particularly escorted tours, student travel and collegiate/professional sports teams. Today the invitation only network is 54 member companies strong, and will grow selectively into the future.

Joining IMG in 2012, Bronwyn Wilson came into the role of President, IMG, as the organization re-focused on sales and marketing. Having an extensive career with a major international tour operator, Bronwyn Wilson brought to the IMG network a unique knowledge and

experience to build on the solid foundations that IMG had already established. “My career started as a trainee manager, contracting hotels and building product for the largest escorted touring company in Australia, who at that time only offered tours in the South Pacific. In the early 90’s, I came to Los Angeles to start a North American escorted tours division, for Australians and folks from the UK. Originally the agreement was to stay in the US for 2 years but that kept extending as the touring program grew. It was such a wonderful experience to establish a first class touring product – contracting hotels, motorcoaches, cruises and marketing them worldwide.”

“IMG, was an opportunity to realign with another first class, well regarded organization. Since 2012 we have consolidated the reputation and messaging of IMG to where contractors and partners look for the certainty that an IMG member brings to their transportation requirements. We have focused on working more collaboratively, building stronger relationships and ensuring we remain relevant – to not only our customers



Pat Ziska

Motor Coach Industries (MCI)

Vice President Private Sector Sales

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Little did Patricia Ziska know at age 19 when she began her career in the bus business working for the highest achievers in the motor coach sales-side of the industry, she herself would fill similar shoes.

Though her journey is uniquely her own, Ziska learned how listening to customers' concerns, gaining their trust, following through and doing what you say you will, makes all the difference in getting ahead.

Today, as Vice President of Private Sector Coach Sales for Motor Coach Industries, (MCI), a position she has held since 2012 in a 40 plus-year career with the manufacturer, Ziska demonstrates those same leadership qualities to the executive sales team she manages in the U.S. and Canada. And today, she works to elevate and inspire other women in the industry.

MCI is the largest manufacturer of intercity coaches in North America, building the iconic MCI J4500, the industry's best-selling model for 15 consecutive years. That kind of market leadership position speaks volumes about both the quality of the product, the responsive team behind it and Ziska's hard work.

When faced with business challenges, Ziska finds that the practice of keeping an open mind, finding creative solutions and flexibility are aptitudes that also elevate a career. "Rigidity doesn't work," she says. "You have to bring a unique response to every customer's situation and remain flexible for successful outcomes."

With Ziska's product knowledge and manufacturing perspective, her contributions representing MCI on industry associations have proven valuable to new generations of male and female motor coach leaders. As a member of the American Bus Association's Women in Buses Council (WIB), Ziska has brought more women into the industry with MCI's sponsorship. She helps promote WIB's events and activities, while her networking efforts have helped build its national membership.

"When I started, women in the business were usually working side by side with their husbands as operators. Not so today," she said. "It's been rewarding to see success stories of more women running multi-generational coach businesses and we're seeing more women-owned startups, and women at the helm in commuter shuttle operations and tourism."

Four decades of experience—and counting

Ziska's path in the bus business began in 1976 when she landed a job as administrative assistant in the new coach

department with Hausman Bus Sales, a renowned dealer of all types of used buses. Hausman had just been named the U.S. sales distributor of MCI coaches.

While finishing her college degree at night, Ziska officially joined MCI when MCI acquired Hausman in 1989. By 1992 she was named MCI's Director of Customer Relations, responsible for trade shows, marketing and advertising. In 1996, she was named Vice President of Central Region Sales, leading new and pre-owned coach sales activities for the busy Chicago, IL and Dallas, TX-based regions. In 2012, she was promoted to the role of Vice President of MCI Private Sector Sales, which she leads today.

Among other milestones, Ziska helped build the Motorcoach Marketing Council and launched the earliest motorcoach green marketing environmental campaigns.

Ziska recently celebrated her 40th wedding anniversary and has four adult children — three sons and one daughter — and four grandchildren. She looks forward to continuing her MCI career at this critical time for the industry —putting her experience to work, grooming talent at MCI and engaging with customers on measures that protect and improve their business as the industry rolls to a bright future.

Advancements in accessibility, driver assistance safety systems, battery-electric environmental solutions and autonomous bus applications destined to redefine the public's relationship with automobiles are on the rise. As a subsidiary of NFI Group, one of the world's largest independent global bus manufacturers, MCI is ahead of the curve in most of these areas thanks to sister company New Flyer's investment in bringing these progressive concepts to market.

Ziska says changes in public policy, tourism, commuter culture and technologies shaping products and businesses is a given in the bus industry, and post-pandemic, group transport will have to adapt to yet another new reality. "Receptivity to these new changes and finding the advantages in the unexpected is what sets leaders apart," said Ziska.

In addition to the J4500, MCI builds the all-new 35-foot J3500 model, and the workhorse D-Series including the ADA-accessible MCI D45 CRT LE Commuter Coach, and the battery-electric, zero-emission D45 CRTE LE. MCI also provides maintenance, repair, 24-hour roadside assistance, parts, and technician training through the industry's only Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) accredited MCI Academy. Learn more at mcicoach.com.



Michelle Wiltgen
National Interstate Insurance Company
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National Interstate Insurance Company, founded in 1989 and headquartered in Richfield, OH is a member of the Great American Insurance Group and offers insurance products and services specifically focused on the transportation industry. As a leading specialty property and casualty insurance holding company, National Interstate offers more than 30 different insurance products, including traditional insurance and innovative alternative risk transfer (ART) programs for commercial companies and insurance for specialty vehicle owners including passenger transportation, moving and storage and truck transportation.

Michelle Wiltgen is Assistant Vice President & National Marketing Manager for National Interstate Insurance Company's Passenger Transportation Division. She joined the company in 1991 when the company was less than two years old. With 37 years of insurance experience, 30 of them with National Interstate, she is the company's longest tenured employee and has been a part of National Interstate's success of becoming an industry leader as it grew from 23 to over 700 employees. This may not have been the business she thought she'd be involved in for her entire career but she can't imagine not being part of the motorcoach industry. She resides in Estero, Florida with her husband Dann Wiltgen who retired from Prevost.

Growing up in a small town outside of Cleveland, Ohio, in a family of four older brothers, didn't offer many opportunities or female role models for me to look up to with respect to a career. It was the late Seventies and the prevailing attitude was that women would get married and have children just like their mothers had done. There were no family discussions of college visits or talk of what college I would attend. I realized at a very early age that if I wanted a career I would need to get an advanced education and I would be the one paying for that. During my senior year of high school I was hired by a local insurance company called Progressive Insurance. I worked there during the day and attended classes at Cleveland State University at night. That was my schedule and routine for the next four plus years until I

graduated in 1989 earning a BA in Management & Labor Relations – Human Resource Management. Armed with a degree in Human Resource Management I naturally thought HR would be the field I would go into but with five years of insurance experience remaining in the insurance field made the most sense and I believed would provide me with the most rewarding opportunities.

Not long after graduating from college I received a call from a former Progressive colleague and friend who had recently left Progressive to become an executive of a newly formed insurance company called National Interstate. He wanted me to interview at this "start-up" company as a Marketing Representative. When I asked what they insured he replied "buses". I remember thinking how odd that was but decided to find out more and attended the interview. I left a company with thousands of employees to work for a company with only 23 employees and never looked back. Today, I can't imagine not being part of the National Interstate family and the bus industry.

As one of the first female officers of National Interstate I always felt it was important to lead by example. I wanted other women to see that it is possible to be successful, regardless of your title or family background, in a male dominated business. Though hard work, dedication and commitment you can be rewarded with success. Along with being the face of National Interstate to the bus industry, I try to be a resource to other women in the industry. Whether you are a National Interstate customer or not, I will always take your call and try to answer questions or direct you to someone who can.

Joining Women in Buses was an easy decision. The organization, formed by the ABA, is a progressive organization focused on promoting and recognizing the efforts of women in the industry. It gives women the opportunity to network, learn, mentor and be recognized for their strength, dedication and expertise. I hope my involvement speaks to women who may not feel comfortable to come forward and that this will encourage them to be a part of something great.



PREVOST®

Janet L. Cathey
Prevost
Regional Sales Manager Southeast
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I began my career in the bus industry in 1989 when I joined Metrotrans Corporation who manufactured cutaway shuttle buses for our industry. I was hired in a dual role as Governmental Sales Manager and Operations Manager. We successfully grew the company from a small privately held company with gross sales of 4 million annually to a publicly held company with gross sales exceeding 40 million annually. I was a key member of the IPO team with a very successful public offering. I took on the role of National Account Sales Manager in the mid-90's and established key accounts with Dollar Rent A Car, Thrifty Rent a Car, Parking Company of America and several other large national accounts for parking and hotel shuttles.

In January of 2000, Daimler Buses of North America acquired the assets of Metrotrans and I joined the team at Daimler. From 2000 through 2012, I held several sales positions with a key focus on national accounts for Sprinter shuttle buses and then onto National Account Sales Manager for the Setra brand in North America.

In 2012, MCI acquired the distribution rights for the Setra product for North America and I was asked to join the MCI team when Daimler dissolved operations in June 2012. I accepted the position of the Southeast

Regional Sales Manager for the preowned coach division and had great success in building long lasting relationships within the southeast region. I was asked to join the Prevost sales team in June of 2020. Prevost has a key focus on helping move this industry forward and has established a key focus on a combined crew approach with key contacts for Parts, aftermarket support and sales.

Over the last 30 plus years in this industry I have prided myself with the relationships I have with my customers and making sure I am available to them anytime they need help.

Prevost is a leading manufacturer of premium intercity touring coaches and the world leader in the production of conversion coaches for high-end motorhome and specialty conversion. As part of the Volvo Group, it has access to the financial strength, research capability, and manufacturing expertise of the group. The Volvo Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of heavy-duty diesel engines. Prevost has its main manufacturing facilities in Sainte-Claire, Quebec, Canada and has the largest Parts and Service network with 17 service centers and over 160 service providers located in the United States and Canada. www.prevostcar.com

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