

Paratransit Services' *RiverCities LIFT* Management and Staff Honored on WSDOT “Wall of Fame”

Wenatchee, Washington – September 18-21, 2016. Paratransit Services General Manager Betsy DeSpain and her staff in Longview, Washington, were named to the 2016 Wall of Fame at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) 40th Annual Public Transportation Conference held September 18-21 at the Wenatchee Convention Center.

Ms. DeSpain has been General Manager for Paratransit Services' *RiverCities LIFT* operation since 2005. *RiverCities LIFT* is the ADA public transit complement to *RiverCities Transit*, the fixed route system (operated by the City of Longview) serving the cities of Longview and Kelso.

In receiving Wall of Fame honors, Ms. DeSpain was acknowledged for her emphasis on the “values of safety and positive, supportive professionalism,” as demonstrated by her outstanding efforts to keep her buses running last winter during weather conditions so harsh that Governor Inslee declared a State of Emergency. During heavy rains, flooding, landslides, and road closures, Ms. DeSpain was the first to arrive and the last to depart the transit command center, playing a pivotal role in minimizing disruptions to the ADA transportation system that provides a vital service for people with special needs.

In addition to Ms. DeSpain's individual award, her *RiverCities LIFT* staff was honored as well for their work during those severe winter conditions. As stated on their award plaque, they “rose to the challenge of keeping *RiverCities LIFT* running as smoothly as possible. They knew their work provides an important community connection for seniors and people with disabilities, and they did not want to allow the weather to break that link.”

Paratransit Services, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) company based in Bremerton, Washington, has provided accessible public transportation in the Longview/Kelso area under contract with the City of Longview since 1997.



Paratransit Services General Manager for RiverCities LIFT, Betsy DeSpain (left, holding awards); RiverCities Transit Manager Amy Asher