CAT People: CAT Mobility Customer/Broadway Enthusiast Tiffany Daniel

CAT Mobility Operator David Willis picks up long-time customer Tiffany Daniel

Tiffany Daniel has been using CAT’s paratransit service to get around town since 2003, back when it was known as Teleride. Now branded CAT Mobility, the service provides reservation-based accessible transportation for residents with disabilities who may not always be able to use the fixed-route bus. Daniel, a department store sales associate who has cerebral palsy, regularly uses the service for getting back and forth to work.

“I’ve made some great friends who are drivers,” Daniel said. “We are like family.”

As a longtime customer, Daniel said she is always offering up suggestions for improving CAT services and she is looking forward to using CAT’s new online reservation service, which allows CAT Mobility customers to submit reservation requests at any time using CAT’s website. When she said she would be able to submit the requests after work without having to worry about calling when the phone reservation line is still operating.

One thing that she said people may not know about her is that she is a huge Broadway musical fan. And while she hasn’t made it to a live performance yet, she was thrilled when Disney began airing the Broadway hit Hamilton on the company’s streaming channel. Taking a trip to catch a live performance when the pandemic is over would be excellent, she said.

When asked who inspires her, Daniel said it was her mother, who raised her and her sister as a single parent.

“She inspired me to keep to keep going when things are tough,” she said. “She taught me to be independent despite my disability and not let anyone stop me.”

A year in pictures (continued from page 3)

Happy Anniversary

December 2020

Fay Butcher - Senior Dispatcher - 12 years
Monica Friend - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Cherie Greenlee - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Chyril Bare - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Emily Gardner - Dispatcher - 12 years
Sharon Martin - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Debbie Lord - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Phyllis Milam - Dispatcher - 12 years
Tawny Graves - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Chriastine Goddard - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Tracice Whitley - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Mdawanda Anderson - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Priscilla Langston - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Franciska Perkins - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Shawanda Minor - Operations Coordinator - 12 years
Shirleen Moore -geb - Dispatcher - 12 years
Marilyn Tennessee - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years
Sharon Martin - Driver Dispatcher - 12 years

Message from the CEO: Takeaways from 2020 and principles for 2021

Dear CAT Family,

As the month of December draws to a close, we culminate a month of celebrations that provide a fitting way to end a year that in many respects has been one of the most challenging in modern times. On December 10, our Jewish brothers and sisters celebrated Hanukkah also known as the festival of lights. During those celebrations the Menorah is an outward sign to the world as they “let their light shine.” Christmas is characterized by gift giving, decorations and lights. Now, we are in the midst of Kwanzaa, which started on December 26. This seven day celebration is marked by seven principles that are represented by the candles of the Kinara. No matter your faith, these celebrations have the common themes of reeducation, family, food and light. I hope that you have had time to enjoy the best and brightest this month has had to offer and remember to let your light shine here at CAT and beyond. The holidays can be hard on those who have experienced loss and tragedy during this season. I, like many others, have certainly had my share of loss in December. Our inability to gather and celebrate can intensify those feelings. Let us be mindful of this and kind to others as we go through our daily walk. You never know what your neighbor, friend, customer or colleague may be going through, and your words could make a difference.

CEO message continued on page 2

A year in pictures (continued throughout publication)
Message from the CEO (continued from page 1)

While I have only known most you for a short time, I am sure that your mindset this time last year was completely different. 2020 has been a year like no other – all because of the good, the bad and the ugly – that we have experienced. There are three (3) major takeaways from 2020:

1. Life is short. We have lost family members, friends, community giants and national treasures in greater numbers than I can ever recall. We now have even lost an endeared coworker in Melissa Edwards. This goes to show that you never know if your interaction with someone will be your last, so make it count. Say a kind word. Let folks know that you love and appreciate them.

2. We can adapt. COVID-19 has changed the way we do almost everything, including how we now do business at CAT. Our bus shields, virtual call center, how we enter our facility and more have all changed in order to keep us all as safe as possible. The months ahead are going to demand more change in order for us to continue providing service to a changing community.

3. Your health is your wealth. Since taking the helm of this agency in the midst of the pandemic, I have had a heightened sense of urgency when it comes to the safety and welfare of all 288 employees of the organization. Why? Because I saw the impact that COVID-19 had on my former home and agency in New Orleans and was committed to avoiding that here at CAT. However, having to feel the effects of this virus personally has made me even more determined to create a work environment that promotes the safety and welfare of our employees and customers.

As we move towards a new year and take advantage of new opportunities to SCORE at CAT, I challenge each of you to approach your positions within the agency based on the seven principles of Kwanzaa:

1. Ujamaa (Unity) – We have to all bond together as one team in order to be successful. Recently some anonymous letters about me and other members of the senior team have been circulated throughout Chatham County. This was an extremely divisive tool that seeks to divide our team, but let those who were a part of that effort be put on notice that these efforts will not win. Team CAT will not be defeated. Unity does not mean that we will always agree; however, it does require each of us to keep an open mind, communicate openly with one another even in disagreement and stay laser focused on moving CAT forward.

CEO message continued on page 3

Message from the CEO (continued from page 2)

2. Kujichagulia (Self determination) – This principal is not just about me or you. It’s about US as a community. It’s how we have worked together to get through this pandemic, how we respond to adversity and what we as a community within CAT are doing to take control of our future. The culture within our agency is changing – for the better. In order to make our agency the best place in Chatham County to work, we have to make it that way. So in 2021, I challenge each of you to get involved, make suggestions, apply for that new position, and get to know your co-workers. We have the power to make CAT even better. Be the change that you seek!

3. Ujima (Collective work & Responsibility) – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all hosts of heaven and earth pause to say: Here lives a great sweeper who did his job well.” In other words do YOUR job and do it well. It’s not Union verses non-union, administration verses operations, nor is it management verses staff. We are ONE CAT. It takes each one of us to make CAT operate. Take pride in that fact and take pride in your work.

Let us go into 2021 with a sense of urgency to be the best in what we do so that CAT can be the best – for the good of our community.

4. Ujima (Cooperative Economics) – In short, if we work together, we can prosper together. We are committed to investing in more training and development in 2021 to provide you with the tools that you need to be great. In return we are asking you to put your best foot forward and be invested in your success individually and our success as an agency.

5. Nia (Purpose) – CAT is a public agency which means that it is owned by and accountable to the people of the community that it serves. As employees of the agency it is important that we make the best use of the resources that we are entrusted with.

6. Kuumba (Creativity) – We are all called to do as much as we can to provide exceptional service to our community and to each other. It should be our goal to leave CAT better than we found it as a result of our service, just as it should be our collective goal to make Chatham County better for all who live, work and play here – whether they use our service directly or not – because CAT is in this community.

7. Imani (Faith) – We will never achieve our destined greatness if we do not believe that we can. CAT is blessed to have a little more than 288 talented individuals as a part of its family. There is no reason why we can’t be the best in the nation or in fact, the world.

Today, marks six months since I joined the CAT family. We have shown the world our resilience in having minimal impact to our agency through the pandemic. We are one of the few agencies that has not laid off employees thus far and have done so with minimal service disruption. I am just as excited today as I was the day I was hired back in June.

The new year brings new opportunities to succeed and to fail if we do not work together and rise to each occasion. We will still have to tighten our belts and forge ahead into the unknown; but we must do so as a team committed to the mission of offering safe and reliable public transportation. I believe in Chatham Area Transit and most importantly, I believe in each of you.

Working together,

Bacarra Sanderson Mauldin
Chief Executive Officer