

For Immediate Release

Date: May 7, 2024

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METRO's "One Ride at a Time" Earns Top Honors in International Creative Competition

Danielle Glagola, METRO communications and marketing director, recognized as "Rising Star"

Santa Cruz, CA (May 7, 2024): One Ride at a Time (ORAT), the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District's (METRO's) innovative campaign to showcase the environmental benefits of transit, encourage bus ridership and protect Santa Cruz County's extraordinary natural resources, has earned four Hermes Creative Awards, including three Platinum and one Gold Award. These annual marketing awards, sponsored by the Association of Communications and Marketing Professionals, are one of the oldest and largest creative competitions in the world.

In addition, Danielle Glagola, METRO's communications and marketing director, received the California Association for Coordinated Transportation's (CALACT's) Rising Star Award. The award recognizes a new transportation professional who has made outstanding contributions to their agency and the transportation field. Among her many accomplishments since joining METRO, Glagola is the creator of ORAT.

"One Ride at a Time has brought a wave of interest and positive attention to METRO and the environmental benefits of riding transit. Our ridership is up 22% since last year thanks in part to One Ride at a Time," said METRO Board Chair Kristen Brown. "We are thrilled to see One Ride at a Time and Danielle Glagola, who has been instrumental in bringing the campaign to life, honored in this way."

ORAT won Hermes Creative Awards in the following categories:

Best Strategic Marketing/Promotion Campaign – Platinum Award

This award recognizes the ORAT campaign as a strategic whole. Judges evaluated the collective impact of all creative elements, including bus wraps, print, digital, radio and social media advertising; exterior bus ads; car cards; transit shelter and trash can wraps; and outreach events.

Best Advertising Photography – Platinum Award

This award celebrates the work of two of ORAT's creative contributors in producing the stunning photography that is the hallmark of the campaign. Renowned nature photographer Frans Lanting's images of Monterey Bay wildlife and landscapes grace METRO's buses and are the heart of ORAT. METRO and local videographer Andrew J. O'Keefe II captured the ORAT buses against the backdrop of some of Santa Cruz County's most iconic locations.

Best Print Media Advertising – Other (Bus Wraps) – Platinum Award

Wrapped buses featuring the breathtaking nature photography of Frans Lanting are the cornerstone of ORAT. This award, which celebrates excellence in non-traditional forms of print-media advertising, recognizes the beauty and impact of the ORAT bus wraps.

[View a gallery of the award-winning photos and bus wraps](#)

Best Social Media Video (Fundraiser) – Gold Award

Recognizing the best social media video aimed at fundraising for a non-profit organization, this award was given to a video created by METRO and Andrew J. O’Keefe II. With ORAT, every ride donates to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and Bay of Life Fund. To date, the campaign has raised more than \$40,000 for these organizations.

[Watch the award-winning video.](#)

“To us, Monterey Bay is one of Earth’s crown jewels. We know of no other place in the world where land and sea connect in such an extraordinary way. This is why the opportunity to work with METRO on One Ride a Time really spoke to us,” said Frans Lanting and Chris Eckstrom, who collaborated with METRO on the campaign’s messaging. “We are so pleased it is receiving notoriety in Santa Cruz County and beyond so we can continue to protect our local biodiversity and promote conservation.”

Daniella Glagola joined METRO in July 2020 and was responsible for developing METRO’s inaugural Marketing Department. Throughout her tenure, she has been a team of one, managing all aspects of the agency’s marketing and communications efforts.

In 2023, Glagola and previous METRO CEO Michael Tree created and launched METRO’s One Ride at a Time program with Frans Lanting Studio as a primary campaign contributor. ORAT links the role public transit plays in protecting the environment with a customer rewards program that allows riders to make donations to local environmental non-profits. In its first year, the program donated more than \$42,000 and helped propel a 412% increase in METRO’s earned media, a 32% increase in Facebook followers, and a 22% increase in bus ridership.

“I’m thrilled and honored for ORAT to be recognized internationally. Our hope with this campaign was to connect the environmental benefits of riding public transit back to our community to encourage ridership,” said Danielle Glagola. “The images of local wildlife and landscapes, all sourced from the Monterey Bay and supplied by Frans Lanting are the perfect complement to the campaign.”

ORAT gives bus riders the opportunity to protect Monterey Bay’s extraordinary natural resources just by simply riding the bus. Thanks to ORAT, every ride on a METRO bus contributes to the agency’s partners in protecting the environment, the [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation](#) and the [Bay of Life Fund](#) through the [GO Santa Cruz](#) ridesharing incentive

program. To participate, riders simply need to log 25 rides to make a \$10 contribution to one of METRO's local environmental non-profit partners.

For more information on METRO visit scmetro.org or to learn more about METRO's One Ride at a Time program visit scmetro.org/onerideatatime.

About Us

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO)

Established in 1968, METRO'S mission is to provide environmentally sustainable transportation to Santa Cruz County. METRO directly operates county-wide, fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service, with connections to Santa Clara County and Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center. The agency also operates ParaCruz paratransit service. Today, METRO operates a fleet of 94 buses on 20 fixed routes and 32 paratransit vehicles.

Every ride on a METRO bus takes cars off the road, significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and supports economic opportunity and quality of life in our community. Moving into the future, METRO strives to meet the following goals:

- Increase transit ridership to 7 million trips annually within the next five years
- Transition to a zero-emissions fleet with a mix of hydrogen and electric vehicles
- Increase affordable housing at METRO-owned transit centers to 175 units in the next 10 years.

For more information, visit scmetro.org.

Frans Lanting and Christ Eckstrom

Frans Lanting and Chris Eckstrom are partners in life and work. Together, they have documented our living planet on assignment for National Geographic for more than 30 years and promote knowledge and understanding about the Earth through images and stories that inspire wonder and engagement with our living planet. Through their work, they create leverage for conservation efforts ranging from local initiatives to global campaigns.

Frans Lanting has been hailed as one of the great nature photographers of our time. His influential work appears in books, magazines, and exhibitions around the world. Lanting is an ambassador for the World Wildlife Fund and has received numerous awards for his work, including the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year's first Lifetime Achievement Award. His Royal Highness, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, inducted him as a Knight in the Royal Order of the Golden Ark for his contributions to conservation.

Chris Eckstrom is a writer, editor, and videographer. She is the author of *Forgotten Edens*, and as a staff writer, she contributed to many books published by the National Geographic Society. She earned a Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award for Best Magazine Article on Foreign

Travel for her National Geographic Traveler story “The Last Real Africa.” The editor of Lanting’s books, she has also produced stories for the National Geographic Channel.

For more information visit, bayoflife.net.