

RIDEWORKS

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Best Workplaces for Commuters Launches in Connecticut *Yale University and People's Bank Named to EPA National Corporate Honor Roll*

October 30, 2003 -- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently named Yale University and People's Bank as two of Connecticut's Best Workplaces for Commuters at the launch of its regional program recognizing employers who offer employees commuter incentives such as tax-free commute benefits, transit passes, carpool and vanpool subsidies, ride matching, telecommuting and compressed work schedules. Companies must meet the Agency's stringent criteria to be recognized on this national corporate honor roll. Regional business and city representatives were on hand to participate in the program launch at People's Bank headquarters in Bridgeport, joined by representatives from the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Transportation Strategy Board, RIDEWORKS and MetroPool.

Yale University offers commuter programs designed to benefit both employees and the larger New Haven community. In addition to providing an extensive shuttle service for employees and students, the University promotes riding trains, buses and vanpools by deducting money on a pretax basis for the cost of the ride. In addition, Guaranteed Rides are offered to monthly pass holders who need a ride home in an emergency. The University also sponsors a HomeBuyer Program that offers \$25,000 to employees who purchase homes in designated areas of the city, enabling them to walk or take the shuttle to work. So far, more than 500 employees have taken advantage of the benefit.

"We're proud to be included on EPA's first Best Workplaces for Commuters list. We'll keep working to contribute to the health of our community by offering benefits to reduce stress and help the environment at the same time," said Donald Relihan, Yale University's Director of Support Services.

People's Bank offers a variety of transportation-oriented benefits, including telecommuting and subsidies for employees who use commute alternatives such as carpooling, vanpooling, bus or train. For example, those in the company's Commuter Club receive \$1 per day when two employees ride together and \$1.50 per day when three or more employees ride together.

“Employer-based mobility programs and the free employer support provided by programs sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Transportation provide a region-wide, long-term, environmentally sustainable solution to move commuters to worksites in a program that saves time, money and stress,” said James F. Byrnes, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Transportation.

“We applaud Yale University and People’s Bank for their leadership in providing innovative commuter programs that help reduce air pollution and traffic congestion,” said Ira Leighton, Deputy Regional Administrator of EPA’s New England office. “These organizations, like others in Connecticut and throughout the country, show us that it is beneficial – both for the environment and the financial bottom line – to promote commuter options so employees don’t have to drive alone to work.”

Other New Haven area companies also named to the EPA’s Best Workplaces for Commuters honor roll include Hospital of Saint Raphael, Bayer Healthcare – Pharmaceutical and Proton Energy Systems.

“Connecticut companies and institutions are taking a leadership role in bringing innovative solutions to today’s many transportation challenges,” said Oz Griebel, Chairman of the Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board. “A key in the TSB plan is to encourage employer involvement in programs that provide employees with choices in the way they commute to work. This will continue to be a strong focus moving forward as we continue to coordinate with Federal and local governments and the private sector to enhance transportation in our state, which is critical to the economic growth and prosperity of Connecticut.”

Employers are encouraged to review their current commuter mobility programs, work with Rideworks to evaluate their programs for eligibility and apply for national recognition as one of EPA’s Best Workplaces for Commuters.

RIDEWORKS (a nonprofit commuter information company that serves a 39-town region in the Greater New Haven and Greater Waterbury areas) encourages commuters to use trains, buses, carpools and vanpools to get to work. RIDEWORKS offers free help for commuters and employers to find the best transportation options that fit their needs. To find out about alternatives to driving alone including carpooling, vanpooling, mass transit and telecommuting, call RIDEWORKS at 203-777-RIDE; toll-free 1-800-ALL-RIDE or visit Rideworks’ website at **www.rideworks.com**.

For information on the Best Workplaces for Commuters, visit www.rideworks.com/rwemp.htm.

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