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TANK Is the ‘School Bus’ for Many Students at Area Schools

At NKU, TANK’s new U-Pass already attracting frequent riders, too

(August 2007) – Buses carry nearly 3,000 students to and from Holmes Junior and Senior High Schools in Covington each week, but these aren’t the traditional yellow school buses. The students ride on buses operated by the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky – the same TANK buses that commuters ride throughout Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties. In fact, thousands of students are among the 4 million passengers who ride TANK every year.

“We respond to the community and work with school systems and others to accommodate their transportation needs as part of TANK’s public mission,” said Gina Douthat, director of communications and development for TANK.

TANK makes it easy for students at Holmes, one of the largest schools in the state. Students can catch TANK buses on various routes throughout Covington, and TANK delivers them directly to a stop at the school campus at 2500 Madison Avenue.

Last school year, TANK buses carried 2,915 Holmes students each week.

Across the Licking River in Fort Thomas, students ride TANK’s buses on field trips to downtown Cincinnati’s Aronoff Center for the Arts and Taft Theatre, Northern Kentucky University’s Corbett Theater and the Newport Aquarium at Newport on the Levee. Fort Thomas Independent Schools utilize TANK for their field trip transportation, with students riding the bus on TANK’s Routes #11 and #25 on the city’s main arteries Alexandria Pike and Ft. Thomas Avenue. A little coordination is all it takes. TANK accommodates the schools’ needs by making sure enough buses are available on those routes at the time of the field trips.

“The trip has to be on our routes,” explained Gina Douthat. “Federal regulations prohibit TANK from providing charter service or competing with commercial bus companies. TANK has a wide system of routes throughout Northern Kentucky and downtown Cincinnati, so many of the schools and the attractions for school trips are on TANK’s routes.”

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TANK is also an increasingly popular choice for Northern Kentucky University students. NKU and TANK instituted a program July 1 that allows all NKU students, faculty and staff to ride any TANK route, including the Southbank Shuttle, for free. Called the NKU U-Pass, the program is easy to use – anyone with a valid NKU All-Card need only show the card to the TANK bus driver to ride for free. In July, the first month of the new program, TANK carried 1,164 riders on the U-Pass program.

“The first month’s numbers in the middle of the summer surprised us. The U-Pass obviously is already a hit with students,” said Ms. Douthat. “We’re expecting U-Pass ridership on TANK to increase even more significantly now that NKU’s fall semester has started.”

About TANK:

The Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky is an integral part of the Northern Kentucky community, providing public transit service to Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties as well as downtown Cincinnati for more than 30 years. Close to 4 million passengers each year rely on the more than 100 TANK buses throughout the region to get them where they need to be. TANK is committed to providing safe, reliable, customer-oriented transportation for the people of our community. TANK’s commitment extends to addressing current and future needs of the community. A major component of this commitment involves keeping abreast of advanced technologies and to providing services which will improve traffic flow, protect the environment and assist in the economic development of the Northern Kentucky region.

TANK is on the web at www.tankbus.org.

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Editors: Contact us to set up photos and interviews.