



**Dump the Pump Grand Prize Winner  
Lorien Gilbert shares her story:**

Thank you for letting me share my story.

I moved to Lancaster in January of 2011 to attend graduate school at Millersville University. I packed everything I own into a few suitcases and took Amtrak to the city. When I arrived, I did not know my way around. I walked to a main street and waited at the bus stop. I was not even sure about which side of the road I should be standing on, and I called the RRTA phone number to ask for advice. The woman on the phone was so kind and patient. She explained that I needed to wait for the Number 3 bus, and that the driver's name was Lou Ann. Sure enough, minutes later the bus pulled up and the doors opened. There sat Lou-Ann, small, with a curly head of hair and a big smile on her face. I stepped up and asked how much the fare was, and she told me about the special 10-trip and monthly passes that I could buy at the station. I took a seat that first trip and began my lifelong appreciation for the Red Rose Transit.

I moved here with no car, and no friends to call up for rides. I did not know where the grocery stores were, or how to get to my college. I had looked up online some maps for walking around, and I realized that without the bus system, I would have to walk about an hour each way to and from school. When I got a job out towards the mall, I felt doubly blessed to understand the bus routes. As a student, being able to use my college ID for the number 16 to ride for free was a huge blessing. At times when I had only enough money for rent and Ramen noodles, I knew I could get to work without having to worry about how to pay for gas or cab fare.

When my friends complain about the rising gas prices, I feel bad for them. I know that they are afraid of the buses, that they are unsure of how to ride, that they feel like they have to drive their own cars everywhere. I have learned to budget my time and trips around the bus schedules, and I have never considered this a burden. I am able to climb on board and have a few moments of peace during the commute to read or listen to music, or get to know my fellow community members.

I feel like I am a part of Lancaster now, and I know that I have RRTA to thank for that. Ms. Lou-Ann especially has shown me what it means to give selflessly to the world. When passengers have concerns, she listens and offers ideas and advice. When someone has had a hard day, she's there to lend an ear. When those with special needs step up to the door, she gives them her winning smile and tells them how glad she is to see them again. And when she sees me walking past, she waves and I wave back. I have seen passengers stand up to give their seats to others.

I have seen men and women pull out their change purses to pass over a dime or two for someone short on bus fare. I have seen selfless acts of kindness among people of different ages, colors, religions, and languages. All of this on short bus rides around town. It is amazing and beautiful.

I belong here now. I know my way around. I fell in love with Lancaster because of my experiences with the Red Rose Transit. Thank you for letting me give my thanks.

Sincerely,

Lorien Gilbert