



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Omnitrans sbX Bus Rapid Transit and CSUSB
Partner on Public Art Project**

*Student involvement provides hands on learning experience
while creating awareness of environmental benefits of public transit*

MEDIA NOTE: Media photography opportunities with students, faculty, and artists will take place on Wednesday, February 15, between 1:20 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Cal State San Bernardino RAFFMA and the tree site right next to the Omnitrans bus at the main entrance to the campus.

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. – The Omnitrans E Street Corridor sbX Bus Rapid Transit project development team, the Cal State San Bernardino Art Department and professional artists working on the campus BRT station are collaborating to give university art students an opportunity to gain invaluable experience developing their artwork portfolio.

Through this art partnership, students enrolled in the public art class taught by CSUSB professor Richard Johnston will assist the artist team of Freya Bardell and Brian Howe to develop in the artwork for the sbX station – located at the university’s entrance – that is ecological in nature and will be viewed by tens of thousands of students and university visitors for generations to come.

The students will also help create awareness about the benefits of public transit and the role it plays in helping reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. The sbX BRT line, which will run 15.7 miles from northern San Bernardino to Loma Linda, will operate on a 100 percent fleet of compressed natural gas buses, keeping in line with Omnitrans’ commitment to operating clean-running transit vehicles.

As part of the artwork, Bardell and Howe, assisted by the students, will produce images for the station’s glass panels that capture the essence of the natural surroundings of the university, while evoking a sense of environmentalism through the use of blue colors, photography of trees and other artistic methods.

“Being able to provide students at CSUSB with hands-on learning experiences is a critical component of their educational and professional growth,” said Sant Khalsa, CSUSB Art Department chair and a member of the Omnitrans sbX Station Art Review Committee. “Creating a public/private partnership with the university to promote public art is a model that can be applied by educational institutions across the country to enhance the student’s overall university experience.”

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CSUSB Station Art

The artist team of Freya Bardell and Brian Howe, principals at Los Angeles-based Greenmeme, was selected from a nationwide pool of candidates by a committee of local stakeholders who served as part of the Station Art Review Committee on behalf of Omnitrans. They are tasked with working with the CSUSB Art Department and the contractor for the project, a joint venture between Griffith Co. and Comet Electric, to integrate the artwork into the sbX station at the university.

“As part of the addition of a new bus station for the sbX BRT system, a tree is being removed from the university campus,” said Bardell, an ecological designer and artist. “The removal of this tree is our conceptual focus of the project. Engaging the tree through a series of actions and placed in a variety of venues, the tree is given a second life and third life.”

Each week, the art team and students will complete a different step in the project’s conceptualization, refinement, fabrication and documentation. The project will be collaborative in focus, but may be unique in personal representational methods.

An archive of the process will developed – celebrating the many different perspectives on the event of a tree being cut, pruned, painted blue and photographed for public art. Blue images of the tree will be transposed onto the glass panels of the sbX station by a fabricator. Once the glass panels are installed, the images of the tree will blend into the sky on a clear blue day. On overcast days, the same blue images of the tree will come to the visual forefront as the panel and white background frame them.

Additionally, cross sections of the removed tree will be transformed to art by students and displayed at the university’s RAFFMA (Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art) from Feb. 16 through March 29, 2012. For more information about the exhibit, please call the museum at (909) 537-7373.

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About Omnitrans sbX - The sbX BRT Project is the first-of-its kind express service to be constructed in the Inland Empire. It is the beginning of an intermodal public transit system in the San Bernardino Valley that will help reduce vehicle congestion while providing the public an environmentally friendly alternative that is sophisticated, cost effective and time efficient.

The 15.7-mile corridor spans between northern San Bernardino and Loma Linda. It will include 16 art-inspired stations at key university, government, business, entertainment and medical centers, as well as four park-and-ride facilities. For more information about the Omnitrans sbX project, call the project helpline at (855) sbX-NEWS / 727-6397 or visit www.omnitrans-sbx.com.

About Cal State San Bernardino – Cal State San Bernardino is a vital public comprehensive university serving the San Bernardino and Riverside counties of Southern California. Founded in 1965, the university offers more than 70 traditional baccalaureate and master’s degree programs and education credential and certificate programs, as well as one of the first doctorate programs in the California State University system. Every program that is eligible has earned national accreditation.

CSUSB serves more than 20,000 students each year and graduates about 4,000 students annually. The campus reflects the dynamic diversity of the region and has the most diverse student population of any university in the Inland Empire. The university has an annual statewide economic impact of more than half a billion dollars, along with more than \$32 million in yearly statewide tax revenue.

For more information about the university, contact the Cal State San Bernardino Office of Public Affairs at (909) 537-5007 and visit news.csusb.edu.