Mountain Line would like to nominate Steve “Manny” Minez for the 2016 Orval Meyer Award for Transit Excellence in recognition of his distinguished career as a transit professional, going above and beyond the call of duty throughout his 28-years with Mountain Line.

Manny began working for Missoula Urban Transportation District (MUTD) in February 1989, starting out as a bus operator. After two years as an operator, Manny was promoted to operations supervisor, a position that he held until his retirement this April. Manny helped start the Montana Bus Roadeo competition, a now annual event for transit agencies across the state. He was the first certified transit supervisor in Montana and the first certified person in the country, a graduate of the first-ever national transit supervisor certification program. Manny was the lead trainer for all but two of Mountain Line’s current operators and was instrumental in designing Mountain Line’s extensive operator training program. He is the third longest serving employee of the District, bested only by two operators, who started driving in 1978. These are also the only two operators Manny did not directly train in his time with Mountain Line.

Nearly every operator at Mountain Line, and many in other agencies, rely on Manny’s experience and expertise as an operator and transit professional. When current and past employees are considered, Manny has trained over 100 bus operators over the course of his career. He was recognized as the District’s Employee of the Year on multiple occasions, most recently in 2016, in recognition of his commitment, positive energy, and enthusiasm for public transit

In addition to his work in transit, Manny served for 28 years as a volunteer fire fighter will continue to do so into retirement. Above all, Manny’s commitment to transit in Montana and Mountain Line is undeniable. He regularly goes above and beyond for our passengers. If we have a problem, no matter how big or small, Manny is first on the scene to lend a hand and get things moving again. Many of our customers and community members know him on a first-name basis. Manny has great respect and credibility as a transit professional, not only here at Mountain Line, but all across the state. For the past 20 plus years, he’s been the face of public transit here in Missoula. We will miss him greatly at MUTD and we hope you will award his lifetime of service to the industry and the state of Montana.

Submitted by: Corey Aldridge, General Manager, MUTD

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