

# A Dream in Motion

In the early 1980s, George Ragoopath came to the United States from Trinidad to pursue the American Dream and explore opportunities that he would not, otherwise, have been afforded. Being a young man in his early twenties, he sought education and wanted to build upon his passion for martial arts. Getting to the United States was the first step, but realizing his big dreams was going to require dedication, patience, and a sustainable path.

After passing a high-profile exam that would have enabled him to work as a corrections officer, he was told the position required a college degree. So, George began driving for a cab company in the well-known Philadelphia area referred to as the Main Line. Five years later, in 1999, George was driving for the company known today as Main Line Transit Services, a TransNet Partner organization.



**George Ragoopath came to the United States to pursue the American Dream. His dream changed through the years, but his positive outlook never wavered.**

"I wasn't convinced that this was what I wanted to do," said George. "My martial arts dreams were still all I could see."

Through the years, George had developed an affinity for Pat Croce, former president of the NBA's

Philadelphia 76ers. He admired Croce not only for his leadership style, but also for the positivity he brought to those around him. He was also a skilled martial artist like George.

"I ran into Pat one day and worked up the nerve to approach him," said George. "He didn't hesitate to engage in conversation and, after sharing my story and my uncertainty with my career choice, he responded by telling me to give 110 percent every day no matter what you are doing – give it a chance."

George did just that. In 2006, George was able to purchase his first home and, subsequently, assisted with the purchase of a home for his mother.

Twenty-three years later, George is still cruising the Main Line helping seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income families access essential services within the community. Numerous colleagues have inspired George along the way, and his current

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supervisor encourages George to speak candidly and offer suggestions.

While he has come to appreciate his work, what truly keeps George behind the wheel are the riders. "I enjoy being around positive people," said George, "and many of our riders show up happy and friendly in spite of having an array of reasons not to be."

From regular dialysis to painful physical therapy, to managing family members with disabilities, George repeatedly encounters individuals who rise above their challenges to greet him with a smile and pleasant conversation.

George follows suit. "I simply follow the golden rule – treating individuals the way I would want to be treated. It's not hard," said George.

And George's riders appreciate him. He remembers details about his riders, wishing someone a Happy Birthday or noticing when a rider has elected to

leave her walker at home.

"Just a passing mention of the simplest observation may make that person's day," said George. For instance, the parent of an intellectually disabled rider was concerned that she wouldn't be at home by the time her son was dropped off, but she felt comfortable knowing that George would never leave her child unsupervised. George says those are the things that have made this job so worthwhile.

Where George is today may not match the vision of a 20-year-old dreamer, but he has embraced his opportunities, provided for himself and his family, and brought so much positivity to those he transports. He has, in fact, built his American Dream.

*TransNet is always looking for new drivers and aides. To apply, visit: [suburbantransit.org/apply](http://suburbantransit.org/apply).*

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— **George Ragoopath**

*Driver, TransNet/Main Line Transit, community transportation service*



If you're 60 or over and a resident of Montgomery County, PA, TransNet can get you where you're going. Our Senior Shared Ride program is an affordable option that allows seniors to maintain their independence and stay connected to their community. Our riders use TransNet for everything from medical appointments to grocery shopping, family visits and even just a trip to the park. For more information, visit our website or call **215-542-RIDE (7433)**.



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