SMART hires executive director

By JESSICA KUTZ  Staff Reporter

A
tter an almost yearlong search, the San Miguel Au-
thority for Regional Trans-
portation (SMART) announced the hiring of David Averill as executive director at its regular meeting on Thursday.

Averill, of Fort Collins, was the capital planning and grants compliance manager for the City of Fort Collins and Transit (the public transportation operator for the Fort Collins metro area), according to his official LinkedIn online profile.

He previously worked for the Colorado Department of Trans-
portation’s transit and rail divi-
sion as a transit infrastructure specialist (2011-12), and transit planning and infrastructure unit manager (2012-16). He has served as the North Front Range Metropolitan Organization’s senior multi-modal transporta-
tion planner (2007-11) and Fort Collins’ transportation planner (2002-07).

“I’m really looking forward to getting to know the region better and seeing what we can achieve,” Averill said in a news release.

The SMART Board of Directors has spent several months trying to fill the role, and board mem-
bers acknowledged the difficulty of finding the right candidate.

“It is not just Telluride but nationwide — there aren’t a lot of transportation professionals looking to change jobs,” board member Todd Brown said about the matter.

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Making ice

Todd Broughton, a Parks and Recreation employee, sprays down the ice at the Hanley Pavilion in Town Park on Friday. Broughton said that the ice will need to be at least an inch thick before the facility opens on Monday.

Photo by Jessica Kutz/Telluride Daily Planet

POLICY

Trying to make a difference

Local DACA recipient meets, speaks with D.C. officials

By JESSICA KUTZ  Staff Reporter

L
ast week, over 100 DACA re-
cipients from 25 states met with their congressional rep-
resentatives in Washington D.C., told their individual stories, and urged the passage of a bipartisan Dream Act.

DACA stands for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, and the Dream Act re-
fers to a piece of legislation that would grant DACA recipients permanent residence status in the United States. DACA recipient Claudia Garcia, who lives in Telluride, was invited to represent Colorado, along with four other Dreamers from Denver.


“We shared our story, and how DACA has helped us, and what we are looking at if our work permit expires,” Garcia said. “(We asked) if they could pass the Dream Act and look at it as a solution.

“We got a lot of really good feedback from a lot of (lawmak-
ers). It was really great sharing our story about why it is impor-
tant for Dreamers,” she added.

On Sept. 5, President Trump announced that he was ending DACA, and would leave the deci-
sion up to Congress to replace it. He gave Congress six months to act. If nothing is passed, DACA recipients could face deportation as early as March 5, 2018.

Garcia was sent to D.C. by the FWD.us (pronounced For-
ward) organization. The group, which was founded in the spring of 2013, is focused on immigra-
tion reform and criminal jus-
tice reform, according to Peter Garcia.

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TRANSPORTATION

Board members acknowledge difficulty in search

Board members acknowledge the difficulty in finding the right candidate.

Don’t quote me but... “Figure skating starts tomorrow! Join the fun!” — Alysha Patterson, director of the Telluride Figure Skating Club

Calendar

Sunday
• Gondola Closing: The gondola closes for the off-season at 11:59 p.m. Sunday. It will re-open for the winter season on Nov. 17.
• Telluride Horror Show: Palm Theatre, Raggie Theatre and Sheridan Opera House
• Ac: Christ Presbyterian Church, 5:30 p.m.

Monday
• Learn to Curl Clinic: 8-10:45 a.m., telluridecurling.com.
• Free Qi Gong Class: Lawson Hill, 8:15 a.m.
• Maker Monday: Telluride High School STEM Lab, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
• Ac: Christ Presbyterian Church, downstairs, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday
• Ac: Christ Presbyterian Church, 7 a.m.
• Open Skate: Telluride Town Park Rink, 10-11:45 a.m.
• Art Tuesday Session 1: Ah Haa School, 2-5 p.m.
• Cyber Clubhouse: Wilkinson Public Library, 2-15-15:15 p.m.

Weather

Snow: “Monsters are real, and ghosts are real too. They live inside us, and sometimes, they win.” — Stephen King

Forecast: Sunday is predicted to be sunny with a high of 58. Monday also will be sunny with a high of 62 and Tuesday will be mostly sunny with a high of 60.

IN ORBIT:

Sunday Focus: Business

Dental office’s expansion

Wednesday: Arts, Lifestyles & Nonprofits

Inside Today: The View, p3; News, p4; Voices, p10; Life, p12; Sports, p16; Orbit, the back page

SUNDAY
October 15, 2017
Vol. 25, No. 122
www.telluridedailyplanet.com

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First SMART director

SMART, from page 1

SMART chairman Laila Benitez later said that part of the difficulty was finding someone who fit into the character of the region.

“They were quite a few people who had that transportation background that we looked for but that just weren’t the right fit for our community,” she said. “We took that into consideration.”

Brown said he feels strongly that Avverill is a good choice for the job.

“In addition to being a supreme transportation planner with a lot of Colorado experience, he is also a big bicycle guy,” he said. “So using trails as part of the whole transportation system, which was envisioned when we put SMART together, will be something he is uniquely attuned to.”

Avverill will begin working with SMART on Nov. 27.

While the announcement of Avverill’s hiring dominated discussion, and even ended in a round of applause, there were several other updates to SMART

For one, the transportation authority has signed a lease agreement with the Town of Telluride for an office space located on the first floor of the Spruce House at the corner of Spruce Street and Pacific Avenue.

The commercial space has been empty since the completion of the housing project last fall.

There also was some discussion regarding the authority’s finances. Due to a state legislative marijuana tax rollback, the transit authority can expect to receive $180,000 from the county’s Real Estate Transfer Assessment fee, approximately $50,000 more than was anticipated by the transportation authority.

In addition to meeting with policymakers, Garcia was able to converse with DACA recipients from all over the country.

“For me, that was the most rewarding,” she said.

“It was really nice to meet all these young adults from across the United States, and be like, ‘You are in the same boat as me.’ It was really nice because we felt like family. … We all had a different story but with the same barri-

DACA meeting

DACA, from page 1

Bruce MacIntire

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from left, Maria Dorado, Marissa Molina, U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman, Maria Guerro, Claudia Garcia and Reydesel Salvidrez Rodriguez pause for a photograph on Oct. 4. (Photo by Jens A. Rata/Telluride Daily Planter)

DACA interim executive director Amy Levek takes notes on the regional transportation authority’s 2018 budget during a meeting on Thursday afternoon. (Photo by Jens A. Rata/Telluride Daily Planter)