

# **National RTAP Community Rides Grant**

**PENQUIS**  
Transportation  
Services

Maine is one of the most rural states in the U.S. with unmet transit needs ranging from 75%-84% in Penobscot and Piscataquis counties. Our goal was to expand our General Public schedule to open up opportunities for transit-dependent people by increasing the number of agency vehicle operators and volunteer drivers to include increased capacity during nights and weekends.





We saw an increase in the amount of after 5PM trips we were able to perform over the year.

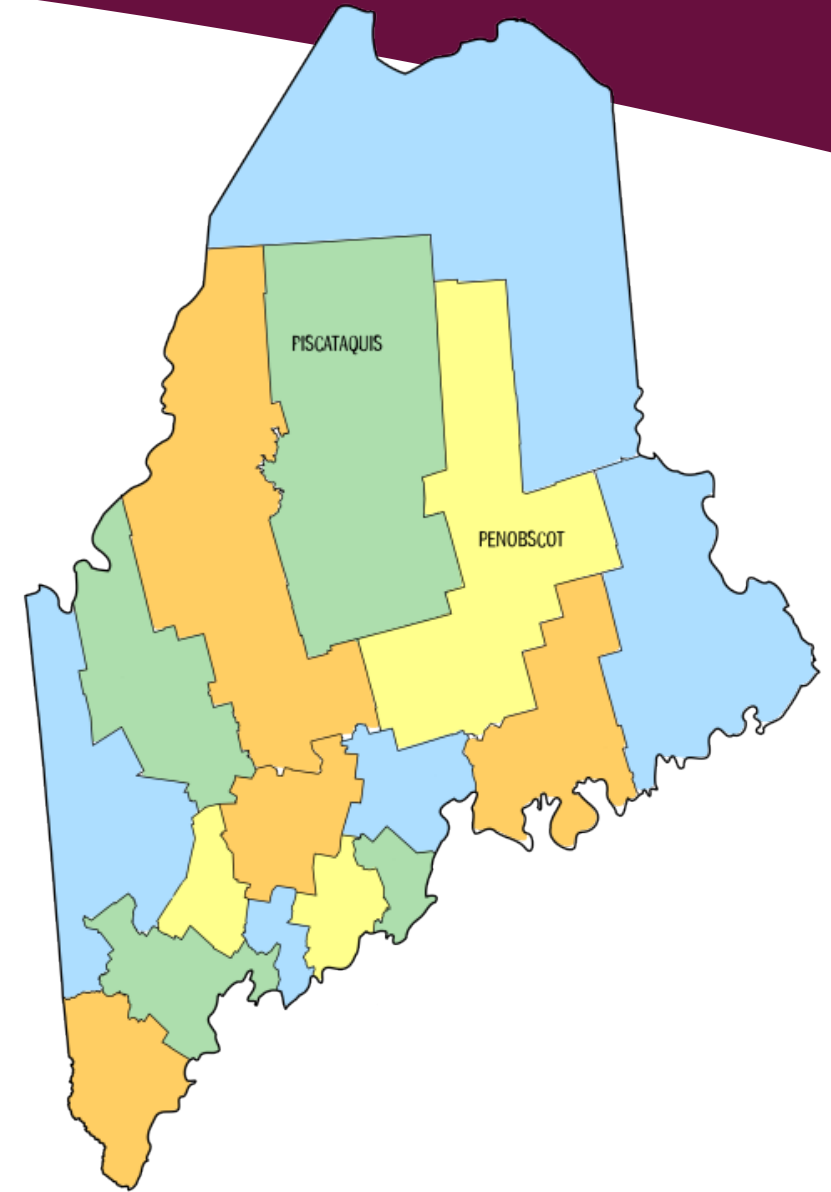


We saw a decrease in the amount of weekend trips we were able to perform over the year.

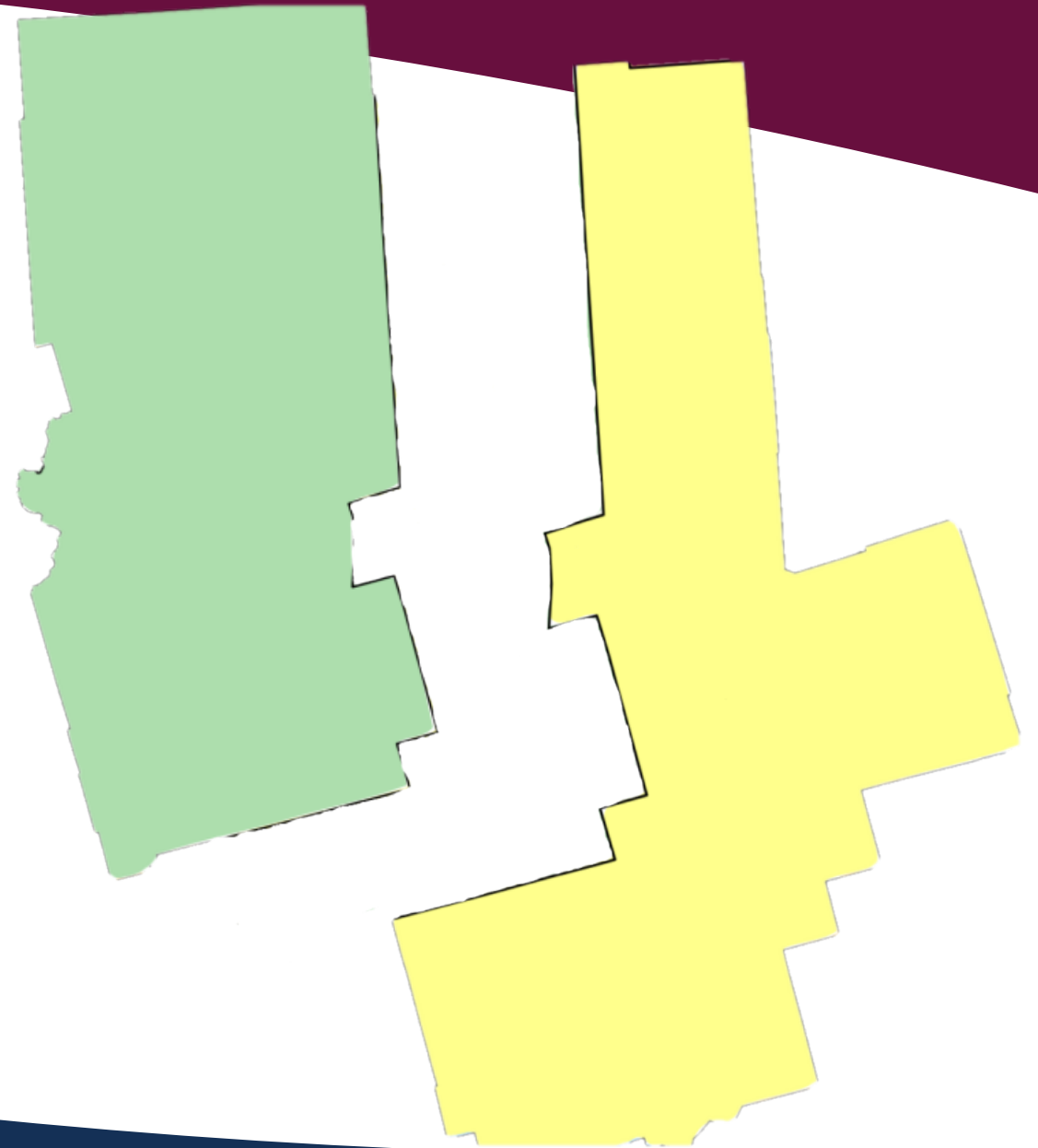


Hired more vehicle operators despite the national labor shortage, and losing 3 to retirement.

Penquis Transportation Services is a part of a larger program: Penquis Community Action Program Inc. which is located in Bangor, ME and was established in 1967 to help alleviate and eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty.



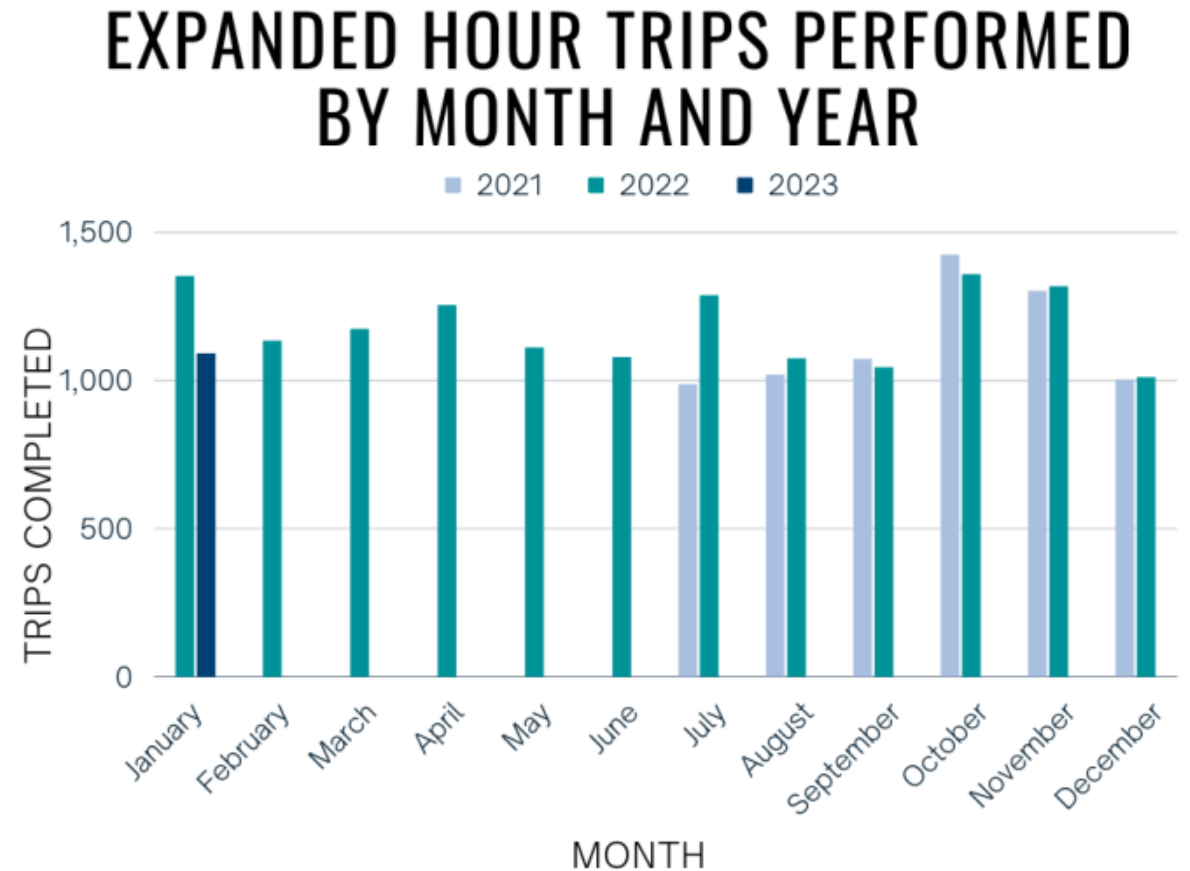
Penquis Transportation Services offers transportation throughout Penobscot and Piscataquis counties for both medical and General Public transportation. This service area spans approximately 7,400 square miles, the equivalent of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined.



# Goals

- 1) Increase number of vehicle operators and volunteer drivers.
- 2) Increase the number of days and times we offer General Public (non-medical) transportation within each town.

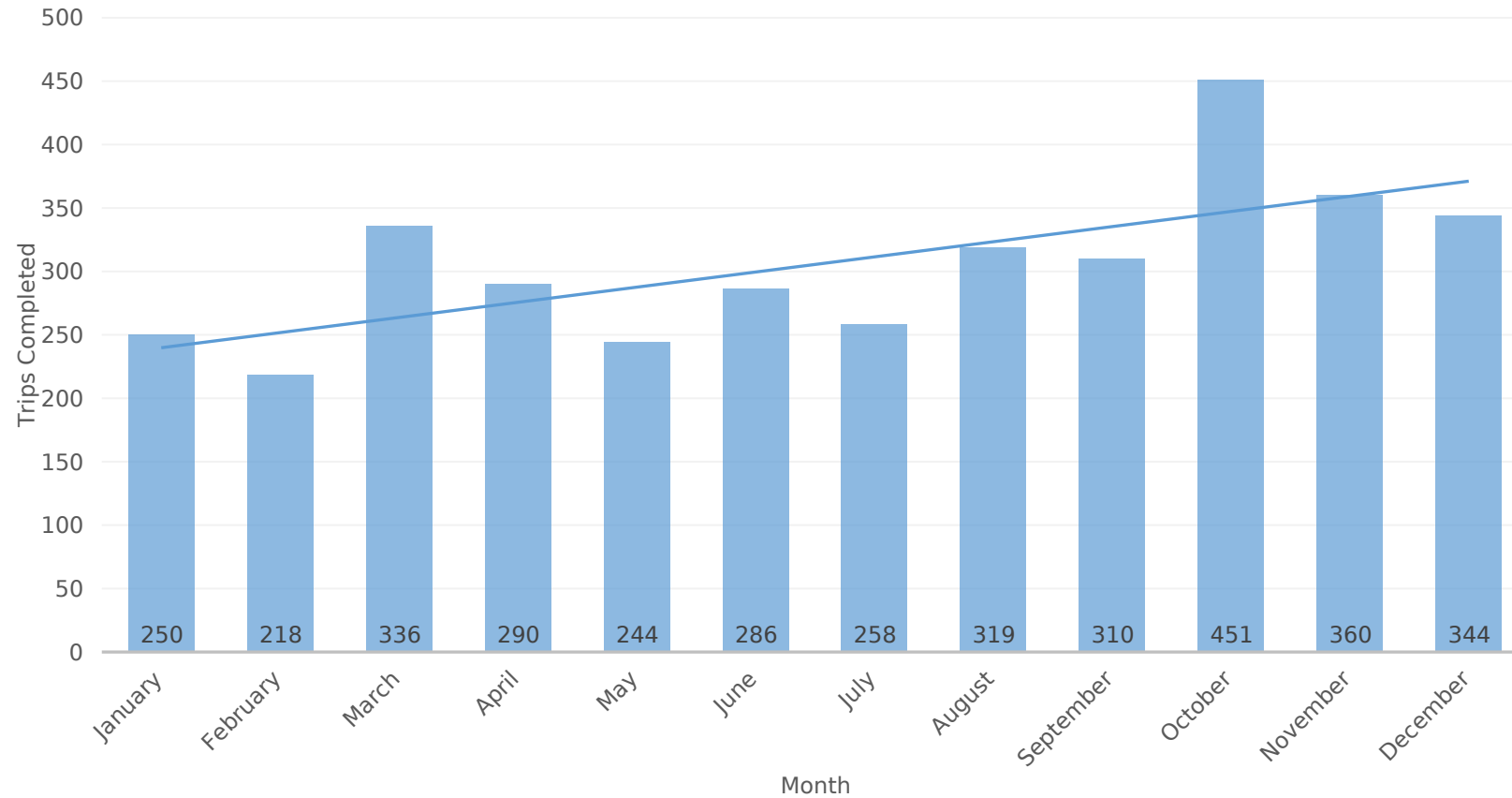
Overall we were able to provide 15,331 trips during nights and weekends over the course of the project. Which aligned with our goals of increasing availability of transportation outside of typical service hours.



## AFTER 5PM TRIPS PERFORMED BY MONTH AND YEAR



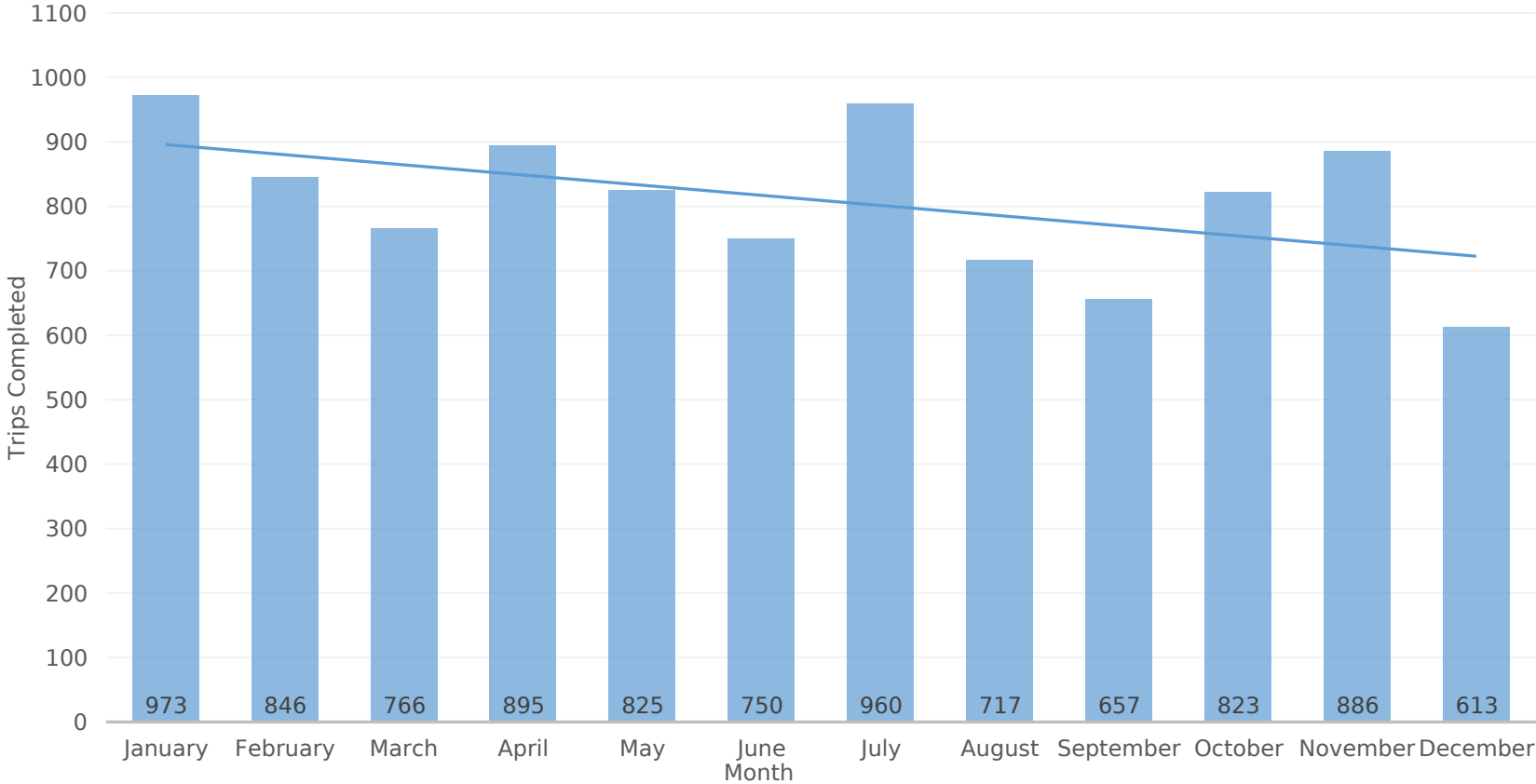
## AFTER 5PM TRIPS PERFORMED IN 2022



# WEEKEND TRIPS PERFORMED BY MONTH AND YEAR



# WEEKEND TRIPS PERFORMED IN 2022



*“I am able to feel like I participate in life!” - Rider*

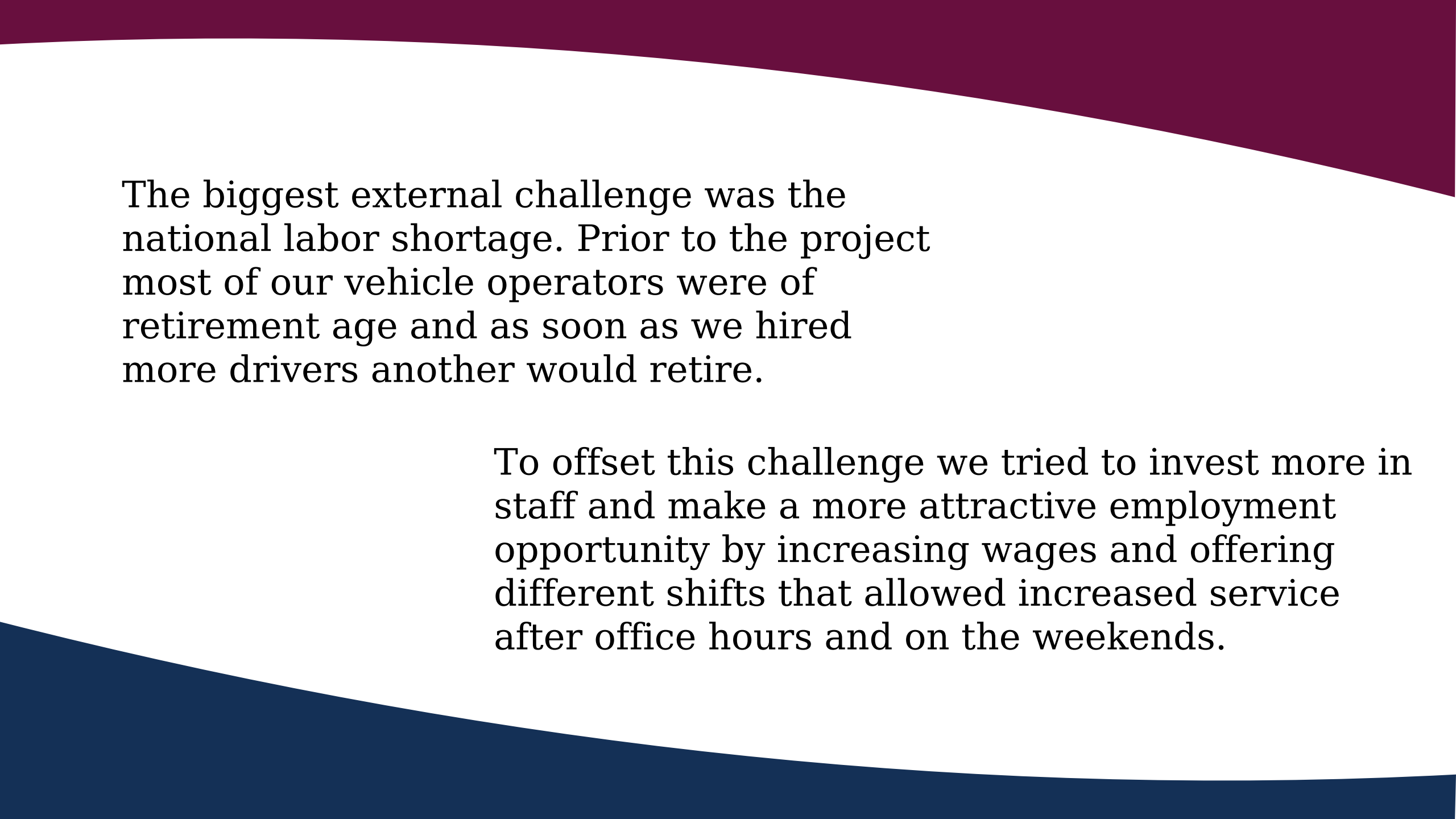
*“Thanks to this program and staff for helping me get to medical appointments. It is greatly appreciated.” - Rider*

*“Would not get out if it were not for this program”- Rider*

*“I’ve had a much better life with the availability of this program.” - Rider*

Our biggest accomplishments come from the innovative ways we've learned to dispatch trips and recruit drivers, and being able to provide more transportation to those in need across rural Maine.





The biggest external challenge was the national labor shortage. Prior to the project most of our vehicle operators were of retirement age and as soon as we hired more drivers another would retire.

To offset this challenge we tried to invest more in staff and make a more attractive employment opportunity by increasing wages and offering different shifts that allowed increased service after office hours and on the weekends.

If we had the opportunity to do something differently it would be to look at why people were not applying for the open driver positions we had first. We also would have liked to increase the wages and implemented different schedules earlier, towards the beginning of the project.

The biggest lesson learned from this project was how important it was to be open minded and take a chance at trying new approaches.