



MICHIGAN'S PREMIER MOTORCOACH CONNECTION
BETWEEN EAST LANSING, ANN ARBOR
& DETROIT METRO AIRPORT



e-news

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Travel Alert

Book Seats Now for Spring Break “Perfect Storm”

Consider this fair warning if you're planning to travel with us in early March. Michigan Flyer-AirRide seats will almost certainly be sold out for the **March 2-March 10 spring break period** for students at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan.

Usually, spring break at MSU is not scheduled for exactly the same time as at U-M, yet it's still a bit of a

stretch for us to accommodate everyone who'd like a ride to Detroit Metro Airport and back. But this year is different—a kind of “perfect storm” when most of the combined 96,400 students from the East Lansing and Ann Arbor campuses will be traveling all at once, along with many of their 42,400 faculty and staff members. So, word to the wise: Reserve your seats with us ASAP.

Spring Break Airfares

Using Skyscanner.com and Kayak.com, we spot-checked prices for the cheapest roundtrips originating at DTW on March 2 and returning on March 10. Among the search criteria we used: Roundtrips had to be non-stop in both directions, and the return flight had to arrive at DTW in time for you to catch our last Sunday run at 10:15 p.m./10:30 p.m. to Ann Arbor and East Lansing. You may well be able to find lower prices if you're flexible



- ✈ Los Angeles, Calif. (LAX) \$332 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Montreal, Can. (YUL) \$338 Delta Airlines
- ✈ San Diego, Calif. (SAN) \$397 Delta Airlines
- ✈ New Orleans, La. (MSY) \$409 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Portland, Ore. (PDX) \$455 Delta Airlines

about the dates of travel and/or willing to change planes on the way to your destination (i.e., \$291 New Orleans roundtrip). These economy fares include taxes but not necessarily baggage or other “extras”:

- ✈ Atlanta, Ga. (ATL) \$144 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Tampa, Fla. (TPA) \$201 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Austin, Texas (AUS) \$230 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Ft. Myers, Fla. (RSW) \$240 Spirit Airlines
- ✈ Minneapolis, Minn. (MSP) \$253 Delta Airlines
- ✈ Las Vegas, Nev. (LAS) \$313 Spirit Airlines

[NOTE: The two articles above assume that the federal government shutdown will be resolved and that U.S. airport operations will return to normal by March.]



Customer Service Representative Kamau Omari

Kamau Omari at Your Service

As a specialist with the U.S. Army National Guard, Kamau Omari knows the importance of working together as a team with his fellow soldiers to achieve a goal. That’s what also makes him a natural fit as one of our newest customer service representatives at Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW), helping to keep things on track so our motorcoaches stay on schedule.

A Detroit native, Kamau is closing in on his third year of a six-year contract with the National Guard. He joined out of a sense of patriotism and desire to be part of the

military. “It’s a great mission to be a public servant,” he says.

Kamau first heard about the position from his longtime friend, Aundraj Franklin, who is also a customer service rep (and was profiled in [last month's E-News](#)). The two were high school classmates and members of the Junior ROTC. They’re still involved with that program through the Detroit Public School District.

Kamau and Aundraj joined Jason Balk, who’s been with the Flyer since 2015, as staffers trained to help passengers check in, find their way to the right motorcoach, load/unload bags, and work with our drivers to ensure the best possible travel experience for you.

Besides the flexibility of the job, Kamau appreciates the faith that Michigan Flyer management has in its reps to do their jobs well with minimal supervision. At the same time, he’s impressed when Flyer VP Ody Norkin and Office Manager Diane Moore come to DTW from East Lansing to help out during peak travel periods.

“You don’t have to clock in or out,” he says. “They expect us to have the integrity to show up and do our jobs to the best of our ability, and we do.”

While Kamau had not heard of Michigan Flyer before starting the job, he was familiar with our parent company, [Indian Trails](#). “I rode their charters when I was with the Junior ROTC heading up to Alpena and the training center there,” he said. “I’ve also ridden them with the Guard, traveling to and from Camp Grayling.”

Working for the Flyer, he’s learned firsthand what an important, cost-effective service it is for people who want to leave their cars behind when going to DTW. “It’s a great service and the buses are so modern and comfortable.” Kamau also enjoys working with our drivers and passengers.

“It’s always interesting to meet people from all over,” he says. “I remember talking with a young woman from England who wouldn’t drive in Michigan because folks don’t always use their turn signals or stay within the posted speed limits.”

Kamau appreciates, too, his military training on the rare occasions when a passenger gets upset about a cancelled flight or the inability to board an earlier bus. “I do my best to assess the problem and diffuse the situation,” he says.

On the flip side, he finds it gratifying when a passenger can catch an earlier bus when his or her flight arrives earlier than expected, or when a Flyer motorcoach is available after a flight to Lansing has been cancelled.

“Naturally, they’re all smiles and relieved when they hear they can get home.”



Customer Comments

“Exceeds expectations. Kind driver, quick and easy service, charging plugs by the seats, and extremely comfortable. The directions to the bus stall were easy to follow from the ticket confirmations, and I got there in a jiffy. I am definitely taking Michigan Flyer every time I need to get to Ann Arbor from Detroit’s airport!”

—Alma S., Boulder, Colo.

Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There

East Lansing

 [Mikio Watanabe, Master of Mezzotint Printmaking](#). His engraved images display Watanabe’s sensuous, reverent, and intimate homage to the female form. Free exhibition now through Feb. 28, Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Saper Galleries, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing.

 [Made in Michigan ... A Global Experience](#). Popup dinner with five courses, five wines, tax & gratuity—\$79 per person all-inclusive. Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski returns to the State Room at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 7 to share his take on global dishes featuring Michigan products, including MSU pork and beef, and items from the Student Organic Farm and Bailey Greenhouse. [Register for this prepaid event online](#). Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, 219 S. Harrison Rd., East Lansing.

[Mid-Michigan Women’s Expo](#), featuring 250+ exhibits and seminars tailored to women and families—health, fitness, fashion, finance, food, shopping, and fun! February 8-10, Fri. & Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Downtown Lansing. Tickets are available at the door or online at



✍ www.KohlerExpo.com. (The transit buses of the Capital Area Transportation Authority can get you to and from this event in downtown Lansing.)

✍ [2019 Spartan Stampede Rodeo](#), showcasing premier athletes from the ranks of the International Professional Rodeo Association, it's at the MSU

Pavilion for Agriculture and Livestock Education, 4301 Farm Lane, Lansing. Times vary, Feb. 15-17. [Tickets \\$10-\\$20](#). Proceeds will be used by the MSU Rodeo Club to cover travel costs for MSU intercollegiate rodeo competitors.

Find more local coming events with the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar: <http://www.lansing.org/events>.

Ann Arbor

✍ [“Echo in the Valley,” by Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn](#), the banjo artists who earned a 2016 Grammy for Best Folk Album. They perform live every song from their latest album. It includes wild re-imaginings of traditional Appalachian tunes, and original songs inspired by a man who ferried Syrian refugees to safety and by Native Americans lamenting a distancing from nature. Thursday, Feb. 7, at 7:30 p.m., Hill Auditorium, 825 North University Avenue, Ann Arbor. Tickets \$20-\$60.

✍ [“Fascism: A Warning,”](#) a conversation with Madeleine Albright on the threat of fascism and how to avoid it, which is the subject of her new book. The conversation will be followed by a Q & A with the former Secretary of State. Tickets cost \$35-\$65 and include a signed copy of her best-seller. Friday, Feb. 8, at 7:30 p.m., Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor.



Kathy Mattea

✍ [Kathy Mattea](#), one of Nashville's finest song interpreters—with two Grammy awards, four CMA awards, four #1 country singles, and five gold albums—performs on Sunday, Feb. 10, at 7:30 p.m. at The Ark, 316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor. Tickets \$35.

✍ [Albert Lee](#)—the legendary British guitar player whose career has included stints with the Eric Clapton band, the Everly Brothers, Joe Cocker, Emmylou Harris, Rodney Crowell, and many more—performs live at The Ark at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 11. Tickets \$25.

✍ [U-M Men's Basketball vs. Michigan State](#), 3:45 p.m., Feb. 24, Crisler Center, 333 E. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor. While tickets priced at face value are sold out, others are available from Stub Hub at premium prices via the link above. NOTE: Michigan Flyer has added more motorcoaches to its schedule in order to accommodate East Lansing fans who plan to attend the game.

The Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar offers a multitude of other event possibilities: <https://www.visitannarbor.org/splash/events>.

Help Wanted: Ex-Military Drivers

Do you have friends or family members with military experience who are looking for civilian careers? If so,



please let them know that Michigan Flyer and its parent company, Indian Trails, proudly support former military personnel in transitioning to careers as professional motorcoach operators.

This includes Reserve or National Guard members, veterans of the Armed Forces, and those returning from active duty. We value the training, skills, experience, responsibility and discipline that military drivers bring to us.

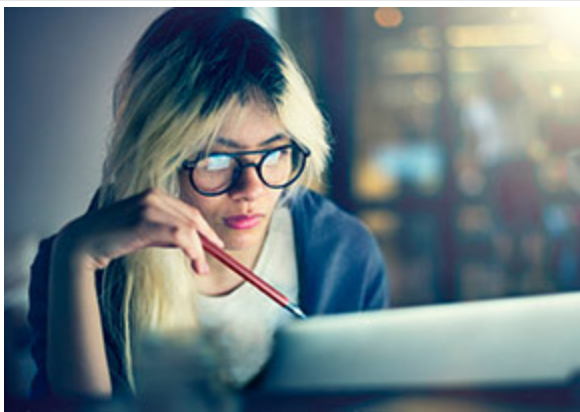
Indian Trails offers a great 4-5 week PAID training program, and operates Michigan's newest and largest

fleet of motorcoaches. Full-time drivers earn an average of \$45,000 a year. They also receive:

- ✓ Nine paid holidays
- ✓ 401K with employer contribution
- ✓ Medical, dental and other benefits
- ✓ Vacations after one year of service
- ✓ Meal allowance on multi-day trips
- ✓ Paid accommodations for multi-day trips
- ✓ Annual travel passes on Indian Trails scheduled routes
- ✓ Annual uniform allowance

What's more, it's easier, quicker, and less expensive for experienced military drivers to obtain Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs), thanks to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The FMCSA's Military Skills Test Waiver Program allows drivers with two years' experience in safely operating heavy military vehicles to obtain a CDL without taking a state driving test (skills test). The program is available in every state, and the [waiver application can be downloaded here](#).

The requirements and application for entering the Indian Trails bus driver training program can also be found online by [clicking any of these openings](#). It takes a special person to be a professional bus driver. To us and to our passengers, they're truly heroes of the road. Learn more about the job [here](#).



Tips for Smarter Travel

- ✓ [Take Advantage of Our Inexpensive Covered Parking.](#)
- ✓ [Download Our Free Smartphone App to Track Your Bus in Real Time.](#)
- ✓ [Buy an Affordable Travel Insurance Policy.](#)

Please, Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Letting others know about your Michigan Flyer-AirRide experience helps them to understand how our service

can improve their travels.



Happy Valentine's Day!

Roses are red, violets are blue, for reliable airport connections, we're always here for you! Happy upcoming Valentine's Day from all of us at Michigan Flyer-AirRide! We love serving you 365 days a year. Wishing you and your sweeties all the best and safe travels always!

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, [click here](#) to view schedules on



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