



Sharing stories

Amidst all the fun and excitement, it was most important to Mark that the office employees truly “get” the message. At each office, the travelers spent at least half a day with employees. Mark spoke about *The BAYADA Way* and after viewing the poignant explanatory video, the groups spoke from the heart about their work and the company’s vision. “Tears were flowing at every stop we made,” says Andrew.

In a journal kept by Ann, she wrote about the first visit to the downtown Philadelphia office: “Everyone loved the bus! . . . We listened to Mark’s presentation and watched the video—not a dry eye was in the room. Mark did a great job explaining his beliefs and how important this all is to him.” Many more tears of gratitude would be shed; poems and thank-you notes would be written.

Often employees shared their own experiences with family members or friends who led them to work in home health care. They told stories of parents, children, siblings, grandparents, and uncles and aunts who had faced or were facing health challenges and needed help. Some employees revealed that they chose to work at BAYADA to honor the memories of family members or friends who had passed away.

“Just as it was not a coincidence that I was led to BAYADA, it was not a coincidence for a number of our office employees to join BAYADA,” says Al. “And our tour stops provided the opportunity for everyone involved to ‘connect to our purpose’ by sharing those stories.”

The motor home was comfortable enough to sleep in, which meant BAYADA Bus drivers could economically park

it overnight in Walmart lots rather than pay for hotels. Ann had never imagined she’d travel this way, but it worked out fine. Karen Rizzo, MS, RN, and Division Director in Tucson, Arizona, remembers that her little daughter was fascinated by the whole idea. “So we went over to the Walmart lot before school and took a picture of her by the bus,” says Karen. “It was really cool.”

Employees also noticed the humility of the Baiadas. Here were company leaders who camped overnight with other RV owners. Mark drove the bus himself, gleefully honking the big horn whenever the opportunity arose. Westerners especially appreciated that the president would journey thousands of miles west, across lonely stretches of highway, rather than just hopping on a plane.

The tour culminated at the spring 2006 Awards Weekend in New York City. Having lived in Manhattan, David Baiada volunteered to pilot the bus along crowded 42nd Street to the Marriott Marquis Hotel. The journey had succeeded. Even jaded Manhattanites stopped to look as the bus made its climactic journey to the 2006 Awards Weekend.

ABOVE: Sounding the double horn was one of Mark’s favorite parts of driving the bus. The horn is on display at Headquarters.

BOTTOM LEFT: Smiles abounded at the Wilmington (Delaware) office.

BOTTOM RIGHT: David Baiada piloted the bus to its last official stop, the 2006 Awards Weekend in New York City.

