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## **USF, Enterprise Rent-A-Car to Launch WeCar Car-Sharing Program** *Car Service to Boost Campus Sustainability Efforts with Hybrid Vehicles*

**TAMPA, Fla. (July 23, 2009)** – The University of South Florida and WeCar, car-sharing by Enterprise Rent-A-Car, are taking a new approach toward reducing pollution and traffic congestion, making USF one of just a handful of campuses nationwide to join the WeCar program, officials announced today.

WeCar allows drivers to rent cars – three Toyota Prius hybrids and one Ford Escape hybrid – for a few hours at a time, allowing those who want to use public transportation to get to work on the USF campus or students who want to forgo a car an option for the occasional errand or as backup transportation. WeCar’s first on-campus program was launched last year at Washington University in St. Louis.

The WeCar vehicles will be parked in designated spots in two locations on campus, allowing USF students, employees and others who are at least 18 years old and who have preregistered as WeCar members to access them quickly and easily when they need them.

“Car-sharing is an innovative development that allows people to make use of alternative forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, or using public transportation and still be able to access an auto for short term needs,” Ed Mierzejewski, director of USF’s Center for Urban Transportation. “You only pay for the amount of time you need the car. You aren’t paying for a car sitting in your driveway or parking space for 23 hours per day, when you only need it for an hour.”

The WeCar service is a new step for the USF community is meeting goals set in the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of the campus to zero.

“We are excited to be part of this program at USF, offering an all-hybrid car-sharing program to students, faculty and staff,” said Ryan Johnson assistant vice president for WeCar. “WeCar provides a convenient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly hourly car rental option designed to provide an innovative solution to parking and transportation challenges at the university.”

WeCar also will serve as a research project for USF's Center for Urban Transportation Research which will spend the next 18 months studying the program's impact on transit behavior. The study is being conducted in conjunction with grants from the United States Department of Transportation and the State of Florida Department of Transportation and will determine whether WeCar helps reduce car trips to campus.

USF students, staff and faculty are offered free or reduced fair rides on HARTline buses while those who carpool or take the bus to work also can use USF's Emergency Ride Home, which offers free taxi rides to commuters when an urgent matter arises and they need quick transportation.

"The research project aspects of the project will examine changes in travel behavior through variable pricing mechanisms," said Phil Winters, Transportation Demand Management program manager at CUTR. "Our hypothesis is that participants in the car-sharing program will modify their travel behavior based on a dynamic pricing structure and increase use of transit, USF's BullRunner shuttle, carpooling, biking and walking,"

### **About USF**

*The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of 39 community-engaged four-year public universities as designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF was awarded more than \$360 million in research contracts and grants in FY 2007/2008. The University offers 219 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. The University has a \$1.8 billion annual budget, an annual economic impact of \$3.2 billion, and serves more than 46,000 students on institutions/campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.*

### **About WeCar**

*Founded in 1957 and headquartered in St. Louis, Enterprise Rent-A-Car is an internationally recognized brand with the largest fleet of passenger vehicles in the world today, more than 700,000 cars and trucks. Enterprise operates a network of 7,000 neighborhood and airport locations throughout the United States, Canada, the U.K., Ireland, and Germany. In 2008, Enterprise launched its WeCar car-sharing program, a natural extension of its vast network of local branch offices, which are located within 15 miles of 90 percent of the U.S. population. WeCar car-sharing, composed primarily of hybrids, offers a customized and sustainable transportation option to corporate, university and government customers nationwide. For more information visit [www.WeCar.com](http://www.WeCar.com) and [www.keystogreen.com](http://www.keystogreen.com).*

