

# Megabus to bring low fares to Buffalo



A new bus service will cater to college students' empty pockets by providing low-cost, intercity bus travel to and from the Buffalo area for as low as \$1.

Megabus, created by Coach USA, will begin service in Buffalo on May 30, offering round trips to Toronto and New York City.

Fares may increase based on the number of bookings and the number of days left before the departure date, according to Bryony Chamberlain, director of operations for Coach USA.

"Every trip will always be guaranteed to have \$1 seats on it," Chamberlain said. "Even if the \$1 is not available there are still good tickets out there far below what people would normally pay, and if customers look at different travel days they will see different fares."

The bus pick-up for daily routes is located at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport on the east side of the arrivals terminal.

During the first week of service, from May 30 to June 5, fares booked to depart from Buffalo will be only 50 cents (which covers the booking fee), according to a press release.

Currently, Megabus riders can only go from Buffalo to Toronto or NYC. The two cities are, however, the main hubs for the bus service and can connect patrons to a variety of other cities. New York City connections include Boston, Philadelphia and Washington.

If the Megabus service is successful in Buffalo, more destinations could be added.

"This is the beginning," Chamberlain said. "If things go well we will always look at more."

In order to start the new service out of Buffalo, Megabus bought a brand new fleet of coaches. Megabus claims their buses are in top condition.

"The coaches are what you would expect from long-distance coaches, with reclining seats, restrooms, etc. We are adding extras, like free Wi-Fi," Chamberlain said.

Megabus has gained popularity among college students in other cities.

"We tend to find that college students like our concept of cheap, fast and quality [service]. About 30 percent of our customers are students," Chamberlain said.

While the cheaper prices attract many student riders that need to travel on a shoestring budget, they also make students skeptical of the quality and legitimacy of the service.

"It sounds utopic. I doubt the comfort and safety, [and] the ride might take forever. I would search it and talk to people before I used it myself," said Banu Ozel, a graduate student studying English.

Sam Helfer, a sophomore exercise science major, said he thinks Megabus' low prices might be too good to be true, but he would still give the service a try.

Other students, like Michelle Konadu, a sophomore health and human services major, have decided to stick to their normal method of travel rather than trying the unbelievably cheap service.

"For a dollar it has to be a scam because of gas prices," Michelle Konadu, sophomore health and human services major. "If I buy [a ticket] two weeks in advance, it's \$45 to New York City on a Greyhound, and it ensures rest stops and my safety."

Other transportation services like Greyhound have also started to offer lower fares. Greyhound's e-fares for as low as \$13 on their most popular routes, according to their Web site. The routes are similar to those of Megabus.

**Additional reporting by Joann Pan, News Editor.**