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For Immediate Release

Contact: Helen Kerschner (505) 222-0620

(Washington, DC) - Today, the Community Transportation Association of America announced the start-up of a National Volunteer Transportation Center. The founders of the new Center are: Community Transportation Association of Washington, DC; the Beverly Foundation of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Ride Connection of Portland, Oregon; CIMA Volunteers Insurance of Woodbridge, Virginia; and AlterNetWays of San Francisco, California .

The new Center was created in response to the outpouring of interest in volunteerism related to the delivery of transportation services to many population groups, especially older adults. Its founders have extensive experience in studying, supporting, and delivering volunteer transportation and are aware of the positive experience of those who volunteer to provide services as well as the many benefits accorded to those who receive the services.

The purpose of the Center is to promote and support the concept and practice of volunteer transportation, which includes volunteer driver programs, shared vehicle utilization, and ride sharing initiatives. The Center will undertake program activities in five topic areas:

- *Information gathering related to volunteer transportation programs and activities.*
- *Identification and promotion of promising practices.*
- *Collection and development of informational and technical resources.*
- *Planning and delivery of on-line educational programs.*
- *Communication with volunteer and volunteer transportation initiatives across America.*

It is expected that at the end of the second year of operation, in addition to the initial organization and implementation of each of the topic areas above, a status report on Volunteer Transportation in America will be completed and available for distribution

The time is right for CTAA to organize a National Volunteer Transportation Center. The time is right because passengers, family members, and communities are faced with the need for transportation services that are efficient, effective, and economical. The time is right because there is a need to enhance and expand methods that facilitate single and multiple passenger rides. The time is right because each of the founders has experience in discovering methods for encouraging passenger satisfaction, fostering meaningful community support, and identifying ways to ensure effective outcomes of transportation service delivery. The time is right because the founders are aware of the unmet specialized transportation needs of population groups across the country. The time is right because volunteer transportation, when organized appropriately, offers providers and customers alike transportation options that are both an economical and environmentally friendly .

"CTAA is excited to announce this important new project," said CTAA Executive Director Dale J. Marsico, CCTM, "We're confident that with these outstanding partners we can reach the new center's objectives."

The new National Volunteer Transportation Center will have offices in Washington, DC and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Start up and initial implementation activities will be directed by Dr. Helen Kerschner, previously the President and CEO of the Beverly Foundation.

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