



# **Volunteer Transportation Programs Receive \$50,000 in Awards**

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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## **Contacts**

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On June 11, the National Volunteer Transportation Center, a program of the Community Transportation Association of America, announced the STAR Award winners and honorable mentions. The awards are intended to recognize outstanding volunteer transportation programs and will enable winners to continue involving volunteer drivers to promote and provide transportation services. This year, 190 volunteer transportation programs from 30 states applied for a STAR Award. The Award winners were selected by a committee of nationally recognized experts in transportation, aging, and volunteerism; and were announced at the CTAA Community Transportation EXPO in St. Paul, Minnesota.

### **2014 STAR Award Winners** **STAR Award for Excellence \$10,000**

*Duet: Partners in Health & Aging, Inc. Phoenix, AZ*

### **STAR Awards for Distinction \$7,500**

*Call A Ride, Asheville, NC*

*Island Volunteer Caregivers, Bainbridge Island, WA*

### **STAR Awards for Quality \$5,000**

*Vernon Volunteer Drivers, Viroqua, WI*

*VIP Rides, Fremont, CA*

*Great River Area Faith in Action, Becker, MN*

### **STAR Awards for Merit \$2,500**

*Hearts and Hands, Akron, NY*

*Neighbors Who Care, Inc. Sun Lakes, AZ*

*Medical Mobility, Boulder, CO*

*Verde Valley Caregivers Coalition, Sedona, AZ*

### **Honorable Mention Awards**

*Seniors Assisted Services, Twin Falls, ID*

*Palmer Senior Citizens Center (Mat-Su Seniors), Palmer, AK*

*In Service of Seniors, Pittsburgh, PA*

*Ride Connect, Mount Kisco, NY*

*At Home on the Sound, Mamaroneck, NY*

## ***Summary Results of STAR Award Applications***

These 15 STAR Award winners represent many innovative methods of organization and service delivery. Examples include the use of social media to recruit drivers, partnership across states, excellence in training, initiation of mobility management, Title III funding for rides, cost sharing by high income passengers, elimination of fees for rides, surveys of passengers and drivers, travel training, special attention focused on tough to serve rural areas, collaboration with public transportation, evening transportation services, contractual relationships with hospitals and medical groups, and the use of software for ride scheduling and data management. Applicants also faced challenges such as limited ability to report data, inconsistent data reporting, high costs per ride, and small programs that reported large budgets.

Information from the total number of applications revealed that thousands of passengers received millions of rides by a wide array of volunteer driver programs. Preliminary self-reported information from the applications shows that in 2013 the 190 volunteer driver program applicants:

- were located in **30 states**.
- operated an average of **19 years**.
- provided **1,348,512 one-way rides**.  
involved **14,821 volunteer drivers**.
- mobilized **13,315 vehicles** owned by volunteer drivers.
- **totaled 1,348,512 miles** from volunteer driving trips.
- counted **1,680,620 volunteer driver hours**.
- valued volunteer hours at **\$37,884,776**.

This is the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the annual STAR Awards program. To date, more than 700 unduplicated volunteer driver programs have been identified; and **158** STAR Awards have been conveyed to **140** organizations in **40** states. All volunteer driver programs that have applied for an award are listed on the Map of Volunteer Driver Programs in America. The map is located on the website <http://nationalvolunteertransportationcenter.org/>

The Beverly Foundation initiated the STAR Awards program in 2000. In 2013 the Beverly Foundation partnered with Ride Connection of Portland, Oregon to undertake the STAR Awards and this year, Ride Connection partnered with the newly organized National Volunteer Transportation Center of Washington, DC in organizing the STAR Awards Program and conveying the fifteen awards.

### **About the National Volunteer Transportation Center**

*The National Volunteer Transportation Center is an initiative of the Community Transportation Association of America. Its purpose is to provide assistance and support to volunteer transportation programs across America. As such, it has a philosophy of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness and encourages new and existing programs to reflect the culture and values of the community in which it they are located. On an annual basis, these programs provide millions of rides and result in enormous time and dollar contributions of volunteer drivers. The fact that volunteer driver programs generally provide rides at a low cost to the organization and its passengers, and at the same time can provide assistance needed by people with physical and cognitive limitations is why some people refer to them*

*as... "the hope of the future". For more information about volunteer driver programs please visit <http://nationalvolunteertransportationcenter.org/>*

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