

Driving to Make a Difference

May 24, 2016

PLANO, TEXAS (May 24, 2016) – On a rainy day in Rockville, Md., Larry Korb parks his Toyota Camry and hurries to open the passenger door and hold an umbrella over 77-year-old Sondra Wasserman.

As a driver at the Senior Connection in nearby Silver Spring, this is the sort of trip Korb made more than 200 times the last year – volunteering his time and vehicle to pick up senior citizens and take them to doctor's appointments, shopping trips and community events. The National Volunteer Transportation Center (NVTC) supports thousands of drivers like Korb, and organizations like the Senior Connection, that enable the freedom of mobility. And now NVTC has a new supporter, Toyota.

Toyota is launching a comprehensive, multi-phased partnership with NVTC to improve accessibility and efficiency of transportation solutions for the elderly and disabled. The National Volunteer Transportation Center (NVTC), an initiative of the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), promotes and supports more than 800 volunteer driver programs in 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

“Toyota is focused on products and services that bring personal mobility to everyone, everywhere,” said Latondra Newton, Toyota Motor North America group vice president, Social Innovation. “Partnering with volunteer organizations like NVTC allows Toyota to support increased mobility and access to resources for community members in need across the nation.”

Phase one of the partnership includes a \$400,000, multi-year grant from Toyota to support NVTC/CTAA programs, including the annual STAR awards, annual CTAA conference sponsorship, in-kind resources and additional mobility initiatives, currently in development. Toyota also will donate two vehicles – a 2016 Toyota Prius and a 2016 Mobility Sienna – to volunteer driver programs. In addition, Toyota will offer a special fleet purchase program for the more than 4,000 CTAA member organizations and 145,000 individual non-emergency medical transportation providers.

“The thousands of volunteer drivers in America provide more than a ride to an appointment or activity,” said Helen Kerschner, NVTC director. “They provide a connection, to friends and family, to needed services and life enriching experiences.”

By gathering volunteer transportation program information, connecting communities, and sharing volunteer best practices and resources, NVTC unites volunteer transportation initiatives in the U.S. Moving forward, the partnership will evolve to include multiple Toyota divisions and partners supporting volunteer drivers in new ways, facilitating connections and creating new opportunities for both Toyota and NVTC.