



TAXICAB, LIMOUSINE &
PARATRANSIT ASSOCIATION

Representing taxicab, limousine, sedan, airport shuttle, paratransit, Medicaid & non-emergency medical fleets worldwide.

PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release

For further information, please contact:
Al LaGasse, TLPA Executive Vice President, (301) 946-5701
Mary Smarelli, Transit Express Inc., (414) 223-4030

James R. Anderson, Paratransit Driver, Transit Express, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin Is TLPA 2004 Paratransit & Contracting Driver of the Year

U.S. veteran and driver of persons with disabilities says,
“The sense that I’m helping people is very rewarding to me.”

KENSINGTON, MD — James R. Anderson, paratransit driver for Transit Express, Inc., of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has been named the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association’s 2004 Paratransit & Contracting Driver of the Year. He was presented with this award on Friday, November 5, at the General Session at TLPA’s 86th Annual Convention & Trade Show in Orlando, Florida. For winning this award, Mr. Anderson received an expenses-paid trip to Orlando, a plaque and a check for \$300.

With over 150,000 member company drivers from which to choose, TLPA’s Awards Committee selected Mr. Anderson to receive this prestigious annual award for his professionalism and dedication to his passengers, his company and his country.

James Anderson was born in Almagordo, N.M., in 1945. His father was in the the U.S. Army and stationed at the White Sands Missile Range, and James followed his father’s lead in serving his country by spending five years on active duty in the Army and 25 years in the Reserves and National Guard. As a member of the National Guard, James has traveled all over the world in support of U.S. interests. Most recently, he traveled to Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 1983, James was employed as a truck driver, but was laid off because of the recession the country was then experiencing. After a friend told him that Meda Care Vans (now Transit Express, Inc.) was hiring drivers, he applied and got a job with the company. “After a while, I realized that I worked well with people who have disabilities,” he says. “I was able to understand them, and really care about their needs. The sense that I’m helping people is very rewarding to me.”

James has occasionally trained other drivers and has received bonuses for safe driving from Transit Express. He enjoys being a paratransit driver, and particularly likes working for Transit Express. “After having worked for Transit Express for over 20 years, I have some freedom in regard to work assignments and schedules,” he says. “I

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work with and for some very supportive and understanding people. Without the flexibility in my schedule, I would not have been able to pursue my military career. I also enjoy driving!”

Since beginning as a paratransit driver in 1983, James has seen the industry go through many changes. He cites changes for the better as more consistent quality of service and a greater awareness of disabilities. “The signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act brought about many vehicle improvements,” he says. “Better ramps, lifts, securement ramps, raised roofs. All in all, a safer mode of transportation.”

James believes that the qualities a good paratransit driver should possess are “having a warm, friendly outward attitude, being helpful and professional, along with always being aware of the safety of the passenger.”

While James has had many interesting experiences as a paratransit driver, one in particular was life altering. “One of the most interesting experiences I had was when I drove a charter group — in a blizzard — to the state capitol for a disability rights rally,” he says. “Due to the long ride, I got to know one of the coordinators of the event. Two of my regular passengers also knew her, so they ‘played matchmaker’ with us, and shortly after, Sandy and I started dating and the rest is history.” Sandy and James are now married.

“My family and I were thrilled to hear I was picked as the TLPA Driver of the Year,” James says. His wife Sandy says, “James deserves this recognition because he is a very dependable, kind person who really cares about his passengers and the quality of services they receive.”

“We were delighted to learn that Jim was selected as Driver of the Year and feel very fortunate to have known and worked with Jim for the past 22 years,” says Mary Smarelli, president of Transit Express. “He certainly sets the standards for safety, customer service, compassion and commitment. His commitment to service is exemplified each day as he provides aid and assistance to his riders. Like so many quiet heroes, Jim has never asked for nor sought any special recognition; has not expected nor asked for anything in return for his efforts except the satisfaction and joy of helping others. We are honored to have him represent Transit Express *and* the passenger transportation industry.”

James Anderson has two daughters: Emma, age 10, and Kristen, age 34. He and his family live in Bay View, Wisconsin, a small town on the south side of Milwaukee. In his spare time, James enjoys cycling, camping, traveling and taking nature hikes with his family. He also enjoys history and the military.

The Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association is the industry association representing taxicab, limousine, sedan, airport shuttle, paratransit, Medicaid, and nonemergency medical fleets worldwide. In existence since 1917, the association makes its headquarters in Kensington, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. TLPA has over 1,000 corporate members that operate over 100,000 passenger vehicles and transport over 2 million passengers each day. TLPA’s Annual Operator of the Year Awards recognize excellence and exemplary practices among its membership.

Trade Press: Please note we have this press release in several formats, as well as a high-resolution photo of Mr. Anderson, available for download on our web site at www.tlpa.org.

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