

**William Legare, Valley Transportation Corporation, Woonsocket, Rhode Island
Named the TLPA 2006 Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year**

William “Bill” Legare, President of Valley Transportation Corporation and its affiliated companies: Valley Cab Company, Northwest Transportation Service and Travelers Transit, Woonsocket, RI, has been selected as the TLPA 2006 Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year.

Bill was born in Woonsocket RI. His father was a ‘chopper pilot’ in the Army. Bill grew up at Ft. Benning, GA, and later Fort Campbell, KY, until the 5th grade when his father left the Army to become an ‘offshore’ helicopter pilot in Louisiana. Bill says, “So that’s where I REALLY grew up, from grade five through my first year of college.” Bill actually was raised in Cameron, LA, which was completely destroyed (except for the Cameron Parish courthouse) by Hurricane Rita in September 2005. After his first year of college, Bill moved back home to Woonsocket and in 1969 started driving a taxicab part time while going back to college.

After finishing college, with a degree in Secondary Education, Bill taught two years at Mt. St. Charles Academy in Woonsocket. Bill was still driving a taxicab part time when he left teaching and became the bookkeeper for the taxicab company. He became the School Bus Manager and in December 1979, Bill and his wife purchased the company and as he says, “27 years later we’re still here.”

Bill states, “Shortly after purchasing the 8-cab business, we joined the International Taxicab Association (ITA), the most extraordinary thing I could ever have done. In subsequent years, we became involved in paratransit services, serving northern Rhode Island. Currently, we provide many paratransit services for several different towns in south-central Massachusetts. After finally being awarded the ‘School Bus’ contract for my home city in 1999, our 8-vehicle fleet now stands at 120 vehicles - thanks to the ITA. Many perspectives of our growth are the result of what we’ve learned from the ITA, then ITLA and now TLPA.”



William “Bill” Legare, President of Valley Transportation Corporation

Bill states that his philosophy on running a transportation company is best understood by reading the company’s mission statement:

- We are a service and sales organization. Our primary goal is to satisfy our customers by providing the very best professional transportation services.
- To be involved in our own community whenever possible.
- To, whenever possible, promote from within.
- To provide all of our employees with a healthy and wholesome atmosphere where each can perform his/her clearly assigned duties. This supportive atmosphere includes not only physical surroundings but also understanding supervisory attitudes, sensible actions and clearly understood communications.
- To make sure that everyone in our organization knows what is expected of them, and that each is, in turn, properly compensated for the execution of their duties.
- To make the employees' association with us a satisfying experience by encouraging those who are loyal, capable team workers and by providing opportunities for promotion and/or advancement whenever possible.
- We recognize that our customers are the only reason for our existence as an organization and that serving them courteously and conducting our operation in a professional, ethical and legal manner is the responsibility of each employee.

Bill’s daughter, Kathy Legare-Coyne, is the General Manager of the Company and as Bill states, “she is first in line’ for any issues in our affiliated companies.” His wife, Judith, dispatched cabs very early in the morning

when they first bought the business, and dispatched until she ‘unofficially’ retired from that job five years ago. Kathy’s four brothers and sisters all worked there at one point in time.

When asked what changes he had seen in the contracting industry since he started, Bill responded, “In recent years, some transit authorities have tried to eliminate private companies from being providers of ADA and elderly & handicapped services. Thanks to the efforts of the TLPA, the SAFETEA-LU legislation signed into law in August 2005 should reverse that trend and enable cost-effective incredibly efficient private companies to be more involved. Using private transportation entities provides much more efficient and cost-effective service, especially for the needs of our senior citizens.”

Bill lists his interests as, “Wife ... family ... business – those are the top three.” We asked about his involvement in community affairs, Bill stated that Youth Ministry was an important aspect of his life. He has worked with the Confirmation students in his parish for 30 years, and he has been involved with his local Catholic Youth Organization. He is also involved in the local Chamber of Commerce, and the Woonsocket Advisory Group.

Asked for his reaction to being awarded the TLPA 2006 Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year, Bill stated, “It’s an honor to be even considered for such an award – makes me kind of feel that the past 37 years haven’t been a ‘waste of time’! I hope other members of TLPA are able to understand how much you can learn by participating in the TLPA and attending as many meetings as possible.”

In recognition of exceptional management of an outstanding community paratransit service and his extraordinary commitment and dedication to his family and community, TLPA is proud to honor William Legare as the TLPA 2006 Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year. ■