



PRESS RELEASE

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Alan Groedel, Provide A Ride, Cleveland, Ohio Awarded Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year 2008 by the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association (TLPA)

WASHINGTON, DC NOVEMBER 21, 2008. Alan Groedel, President & CEO, Provide A Ride, Cleveland, Ohio has been selected as the TLPA 2008 Paratransit & Contracting Operator of the Year.

Born in Scranton, PA, Groedel grew up in Cleveland, OH. "I began studying and examining various business ideas that revolved around the demographic trends of an aging population. Transportation service that focused on persons with disabilities or an aging market appeared to be an under-served market. With limited financial backing from a few friends, I started Provide A Ride. After building the business to a handful of wheelchair accessible vans, I was able to grow Provide A Ride with a bank loan backed by the SBA," Groedel said. Groedel says his father, Phil Groedel, helped to grow Provide A Ride by working with him from 1991 to 1996 and was instrumental in helping Groedel develop and refine his general business skills to build a solid foundation for the company. Groedel says, "...do more than what our customers expect...by doing so, we have been able to grow and take on work that is more complex and demanding. We have also remained focused on our internal customer — our employees. Vehicles, equipment and facilities can be purchased with money, however a team of dedicated drivers and support staff can only be obtained by staying focused on creating a positive work place where people feel that they are valued and treated fairly. We are careful not to "over promise" when working with our customers. When working to gain new contracts, we are conservative and do not bite off more than we can chew."

"Our current business is comprised mostly of contracted business which include: a Job Access/Reverse Commute contract, paratransit operations for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Managed Care Organization transportation benefit management contract providing service with both brokered operations as well as Provide A Ride operated resources (we are responsible for Statewide transportation benefit service for more that 600,000 covered Medicaid lives), Special Education transportation, Adult Day Care transportation, and County and Municipal social service transportation programs," Groedel stated.

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Provide A Ride joined TLPA in 2001. Groedel has served on the Paratransit & Contracting Steering Committee for the past 4 years and was a member of the 2008 TLPA Nominating Committee. Groedel states: "Active membership in TLPA has been vital to Provide A Ride over the years. We have been able to stay informed of important issues that affect our business. I find that I have a well-rounded knowledge of the industry in general and know things that our competitors may not. I have also been fortunate to meet and learn from many other operators. I have picked up many "pearls of wisdom" from other operators, both big and small. I also value the ability to meet with vendors and organizations that serve our industry. I have secured the services of valuable providers whom I have met through TLPA."

Groedel says, "Regulatory bodies have greatly increased their involvement in our business. Ohio now licenses all ambulettes and the state agencies have created many new regulations. We have been at the forefront and are in support of most of these changes. Changes in how the State provides Medicaid coverage has also greatly affected our industry. Large managed care organizations have brought with them transportation brokers who have national coverage. Competing with transportation brokers has been a new challenge for Provide A Ride. Our business and industry is difficult. There is much that is out of our control that affects the delivery of our service and our ability to remain financially viable. In spite of these difficulties, the Provide A Ride management team and I remain respectful of everyone we work with and for. When bad things happen, we do not look for excuses or people to blame. We look for answers and solutions."

The Taxicab, Limousine, & Paratransit Association established in 1917, is an international organization representing owners and managers of taxicab, limousine, sedan, airport shuttle, paratransit, and non-emergency medical fleets. TLPA consists of more than 1,000 member companies operating more than 100,000 passenger vehicles, which transport over 2 million passengers each day, more than 900 million passengers annually. This for-hire vehicle industry is vital to a community's commerce and mobility, aiding in the relief of traffic congestion while promoting environmental improvements. The specialized paratransit services furnish more than half of the transportation needs of the physically challenged, while other facets of the industry provide feeder services to major transit stations and airports. The elderly and economically disadvantaged rely on the industry for fast, affordable transportation.

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Please note: An electronic copy of this press release and a photograph of Alan Groedel are available from a link at TLPA's web site at www.tlpa.org.

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