



PRESS RELEASE

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Caron Wootten, Colonial Transportation, LLC, Jackson, Michigan Awarded Small Fleet—Taxicab Operator of the Year 2008 by the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association (TLPA)

WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 21, 2008. Caron Wootten, Operations Manager, Colonial Transportation, LLC, Jackson, Michigan, has been chosen as the TLPA 2008 Small Fleet Taxicab Operator of the Year. In a letter nominating Caron Wootten for this award, Steven Duke, Transportation Planner for the Region 2 Planning Commission in Jackson, Michigan wrote, “Ms. Wootten has closely adhered to the TLPA customer service mission and goals by providing quality, safe, and professional service to all Jackson County residents. In short, Ms. Wootten and Colonial Transportation are committed to providing a dedicated, quality and efficient taxicab service to the Greater Jackson community.”

She was born in Canada, to parents that had immigrated there from Austria and the Netherlands. Their ultimate ambition was to become U.S. citizens. They moved to Dearborn, Michigan and realized the American dream, purchasing their first motel, becoming US citizens in the late 1960’s. In the family business, Wootten learned that hard work and customer service were the qualities that made their small motel a success. As the family business grew, they purchased a full service, 70-unit property, moving the family to Jackson to what became the Colonial Inn.” There, Wootten became the Food and Beverage manager for the Inn. During that time her father and she worked to establish the area’s Convention and Visitors Bureau. For several years Wootten sat on the board as Secretary. This early experience, corroborating with local peers taught Wootten the value of professional associations.

In 1986, one large contract for Colonial Inn was a major trucking company that needed to have their drivers transported to the hotel. At the time, the only taxi company in the area refused to work with them. “To save the contract, my husband David and I started Colonial Cab with one car. It wasn’t long before our business grew, and for the past 23 years we have operated 5 to 6 vehicles on the road 24 hours a day,” Wootten states proudly. Wootten believes that commitment to quality and excellence raised the level of quality and professionalism of the for-hire industry in her community. “Customers

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have put their trust in us, and with authentic team efforts our drivers have extraordinarily promoted goodwill and great service. Technology too has changed remarkably, enabling our company to have information at the click of a mouse, directions and addresses in an instant, as well as electronic billing and payments. Being a small company, gives Colonial Transportation an advantage of knowing our customers personally. We provide service to customers with a genuine servant's heart", Wooten believes.

As a member of the Local Transportation Advisory Council, Wooten has met with many individuals and charities that opened her eyes to the real need for low cost transportation of the senior and disabled community. Wooten believes it may soon become a critical situation as more of the population moves from HMO/Medicaid with a transportation benefit to Medicare, which does not have a transportation benefit.

Colonial Transportation has been a TLPA member since the early 1990's. The value and benefits that come from hearing the experiences of Wooten's peers, as well as the many resources made available through TLPA are why she remains a member year after year. Wooten says, "I can honestly say that I have utilized almost every study, analysis, fact book or paper that has been made available through the association. I consider TLPA's website one stop shopping whenever a state or local issue needs to be addressed. One of the things I'd like to concentrate on over the next year is bringing together more of the small fleet operators within TLPA."

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 Caron Wooten are available from a link at TLPA's web site at www.tlpa.org.

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