



City of Chicago

Business Affairs and Consumer Protection

PUBLIC VEHICLE INDUSTRY NOTICE

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WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXICAB DRIVER WINS FREE MEDALLION FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY

Cabbie Excellence Program Offers Financial Freedom, Small Business Benefits

The City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) today announced the winner of the 2016 Taxicab Driver Excellence Award to the licensed Chicago taxicab driver Adil Elsheikh in recognition of his premier customer service and dedication to riders with disabilities.

"It is chauffeurs like Adil Elsheikh who tirelessly serve the disability community and show a commitment to going above and beyond that makes this award special," said BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno. The nominations Elsheikh received painted a very clear picture of the impact of the service he provides to his customers and what exemplary service looks like."

The awards highlight the city's effort to expand access to WAV taxis and serves as an incentive for drivers to make their vehicles wheelchair accessible. Since 2011, Chicago has more than tripled the number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) and currently more than 300 taxicabs are designated as wheelchair accessible.

"The accessibility and reliability of wheelchair-accessible taxis are critical in helping individuals with disabilities participate fully in community life and enjoy all that neighborhoods across the city have to offer," said Commissioner of the MOPD Karen Tamley. "I want to thank Adil Elsheikh for the safe, reliable and timely service he provides for our residents and for his help in keeping Chicago residents on the move."

One nominee wrote, "The experience Mr. Elsheikh provided helped my parents feel better about their mobility in the city. After the positive experience with Mr. Elsheikh they immediately made plans with friends that they had previously put off because they now felt comfortable and confident to get around the city."

Another said: "Mr. Elsheikh not only did his job, he did his job eagerly and with an eye towards delivering excellent customer service. Simply put, he was outstanding."

Adil Elsheikh was born in Sudan and had been in this country and driving for 18 years, including 10 years as a WAV driver. He says winning this award is his "American dream come true."



The BACP Taxicab Driver Excellence Award launched in 2012 to reward drivers providing exemplary services to passengers with disabilities. The winner is chosen by the Taxicab Driver Excellence Committee and will receive a free taxi medallion. The taxicab medallion is currently worth \$64,000 and provides winners with the financial independence of a small business owner instead of having to lease a cab. Medallion owners are also eligible for \$15,000 towards the expense of converting a minivan into a WAV or \$20,000 towards a factory-built WAV.

The Taxicab Driver Excellence Committee was made up of four City of Chicago employees and four members of local non-profit organizations. The committee is run jointly by BACP Commissioner Escareno (Samantha Fields chaired and participated the selection committee) and Commissioner Karen Tamley of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD). Additional committee members are Deputy Commissioner Rupal Bapat of BACP, Deputy Commissioner Laurie Dittman of MOPD, Efrat Stein of The Selfhelp Home, Aziza Nassar of Access Living, Kenneth Jennings of the Rehab Institute Chicago, and Rachel Weisberg of Equip for Equality.

The award presentation took place in the Henry Chandler Gallery at Access Living.

BACP oversees the licensing of Chicago's public chauffeurs and public vehicles including taxicabs, transportation network providers, liveries, charter and sight-seeing buses, horse-drawn carriages, ambulances, water taxis and tour boats. The department oversees the purchasing of taxicab medallions, vehicle inspections and rates of fare. Learn more about BACP's Public Vehicle Operations at www.cityofchicago.org/BACP.

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- ▶ For questions, comments, or to join the City of Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection-Public Vehicle Operations (BACPPV) e-mail list to receive industry notices and other news, send an email to BACPPV@cityofchicago.org.
 - ▶ Rules and Regulations governing City of Chicago licensed public vehicles and public chauffeurs are available at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp.
 - ▶ The Municipal Code of Chicago is available at www.amlegal.com.

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