

## CMRTA Receives Top Honors at Annual Department of Transportation Event

*Regional Transit System Honored with Five Awards, including South Carolina's Best Para-transit System and Para-transit Driver of the Year*

**Columbia, S.C.** – The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) was recently honored with the most awards of any transit agency in South Carolina at the Transportation Association of South Carolina's (TASC) and SCDOT's Annual Training Event.

In total, the CMRTA received five awards, including Best Para-transit System in South Carolina. The CMRTA's Dial-a-Ride-Transit (DART) service was recognized for having the lowest safety incident rate of all para-transit service providers in the United States.

DART driver Brant "BC" Nichols was honored as the state's Para-transit Driver of the Year for his outstanding service and professionalism. "I love what I do and the clients I work with, and never imagined that I would receive an award for just doing my job," said Nichols.

Mitzi Javers, executive director of the CMRTA, said, "It is truly an honor to be recognized as being among the best transit systems in the state. We are committed to moving people throughout the Midlands safely and efficiently and are so proud to be recognized for having the top para-transit safety record in the country."

Two CMRTA fixed route bus operators, Philip Patterson and Curnie Hargrove, and DART driver Gloria Parker were also recognized at the annual event. Patterson and Hargrove won first place in the 35' and 40' bus categories of the State Rodeo, a skills course which requires participants to drive through a serpentine, stop at a bus stop, reverse both with right and left hand, back up within 6 inches of a cone, maneuver through tennis balls, accelerate to 20 mph and navigate a descending clearance tunnel only to have to make a judgment stop mere inches from another cone. Both Patterson and Hargrove will compete in the International Rodeo in May.

Parker won second place in the para-transit category of the State Rodeo.

"We are fortunate to have a staff that is dedicated to serving the people of the Midlands and works hard to provide the very best transit service to all those who visit or reside here," said, Joyce Dickerson, chairwoman of the CMRTA board of directors. "We are pleased that so many of our operators were recognized this year and congratulate everyone on a job well done."

### **About the CMRTA:**

Established in October 2002, the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) is committed to providing safe, dependable and accessible public transit service to the heart of the Midlands. For more information about the CMRTA, visit [www.goCMRTA.com](http://www.goCMRTA.com).

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