

Matthew W. Daus, Commissioner/Chair

**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 27, 2008

**TLC, NYC & COMPANY and TISHMAN SPEYER JOIN TO HAIL
NEW YORK CITY'S TOP DRIVERS IN DRIVER RECOGNITION CEREMONY**

The *New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission* (TLC), *NYC & Company*, and *Tishman Speyer* today celebrated the exemplary work of dozens of the City's most outstanding professional taxicab, for-hire vehicle and paratransit drivers. The occasion was the TLC's Sixth Annual Driver Recognition Ceremony, held at Rockefeller Center's famed **Top of the Rock Observation Deck** in Manhattan.

Drivers were recognized in such award categories as "Hero Cabbie," for exhibiting exceptional courage while serving the public; "Love Cab," tailored especially for famed "Matchmaker Cabbie" Ahmed Ibrahim; "Customer Care," for thoughtfulness and care during and beyond the ride's conclusion; "Driver of the Year," for the person who, by outstanding deed, best exemplifies the spirit of the New York City Taxi and For-Hire (FHV) industries; and lastly, "Going the Extra Mile," in recognition of cab driver Douglas Guldeniz' extraordinary journey from New York City to Sedona, Arizona to help a retiree couple who were concerned about how their cat would weather an airplane flight!

TLC Commissioner/Chairman Matthew W. Daus was joined in hosting the gala event by Mr. Tom Madden, Managing Director of Tishman Speyer, owners and operators of the world famous **Top of the Rock** and co-owners of Rockefeller Center

Among the event's special guests were Ben Bailey, Host of Discovery Channel's wildly popular **Cash Cab** television show in which taxi riders have the opportunity to win cash by correctly answering progressively more difficult general knowledge questions; and Tom Wopat, the popular veteran of stage and screen who is soon to star as Tom Hurley, the proud cabbie who must choose between the taxi medallion he's dreamed of, and a lavish wedding for his daughter, in Harvey Fierstein's acclaimed Broadway musical "**A Catered Affair**".

A proclamation by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg officially named March 27, 2008 as "Driver Recognition Day in the City of New York," encouraging taxicab and for-hire vehicle passengers to take a moment and thank their drivers for the service they provide.

"It is an incredible challenge to choose from among the tens of thousands of drivers we license, and truly arrive at the *crème de la crème*. Over one million people are served by our regulated industries each day, and stories of service above and beyond the call of duty are a natural dividend," said TLC Commissioner/Chairman Matthew W. Daus. "What is most heartening is that the majority of drivers we honor today were singled out by their passengers, who thought to take the time to write, or e-mail or call us to file an official compliment because their experience was truly special."

"We are very pleased to once again host this annual event at Top of the Rock," said Tom Madden, Managing Director of Tishman Speyer, owners and operators of the Top of the Rock Observation Deck at Rockefeller Center, and co-owners of Rockefeller Center. "These drivers are the best in the world and it is a pleasure to participate in celebrating their good deeds. It is only fitting that we recognize their contributions at one of the city's favorite attractions with a party that says thank you and we appreciate what you do."

The "Driver of the Year" award was conferred upon Mr. Charles Kabbani, a Black Car driver who is credited with potentially having saved the life of a passenger who was suffering a seizure.

Other principal honorees lauded at the event were "Hero Cabbie" Adil Aboussalham (who trapped a suspected sex offender in his cab until the Police arrived); "Love Cab" honoree Ahmed Ibrahim (the famed "Matchmaker Cabbie"); "Going the Extra Mile" honoree Mr. Douglas Guldeniz (whose amazing taxi trip to Sedona, Arizona gave a pair of retirees the peace of mind they needed); and "Customer Care" honorees Mr. Usman Arshad (who made a difference in the life of a disabled passenger) and Mr. Mark Thomas (named by NY 1 as a "New Yorker of the Week" for his rescue of a special pet's medical records).

Drivers enjoyed a spectacular catered luncheon at Top of the Rock. Honorees also received gift bags with signature New York City merchandise, tokens of esteem from several of the TLC's sister agencies, and donated gifts ranging from signed copies of *"gerry frank's where to find it, buy it, eat it in new york"* to Top of the Rock tickets, gift certificates, comedy show tickets and much more. Lastly, honorees participated in a raffle for fabulous prizes including *Jet Blue* airline tickets, collectible dolls from the *Alexander Doll Company*, a two-day sightseeing package in Washington, D.C. from *Grayline NY Sightseeing*, tickets to performances of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change; A Catered Affair; the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater* (including a dance class); *Kampfirefilms/EAT, Jazz at Lincoln Center* (including dinner for two at *Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola*); *Forbidden Broadway*, and the *Gotham Comedy Club*, dining packages at *Roy's New York* at the NY Marriott Downtown; \$250 debit cards courtesy of MoneyGram, dinner packages at the *Greenhouse Café, Uncle Jack's Steakhouse and Bice Ristorante*, tickets for a *Shearwater Sailing* experience, a cruise experience with *Classic Harbor Line*, tickets for the *NBC Experience Tour* and the *New York Aquarium*, and luxury bathrobes by *Frette*.