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NEWS RELEASE

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ITNAmerica Launches America's Volunteer Driver Center

Maine-based nonprofit launches national public information campaign to recruit 150,000 volunteer drivers to help older adults remain mobile, independent, and connected.

Westbrook, Maine — ITNAmerica today announced the launch of America's Volunteer Driver Center, a national public information campaign to recruit 150,000 volunteer drivers to help older adults and people with mobility challenges remain independent and connected in their communities.

Every day, older adults across the country need rides to medical appointments, grocery stores, pharmacies, and community activities. At the same time, many people who would gladly volunteer remain unaware that local nonprofit transportation programs need drivers. America's Volunteer Driver Center, known as AVDC, was created to bridge that gap.

AVDC directs prospective volunteer drivers to [a national website](#) where they can sign up and connect with local nonprofit transportation providers in their communities. The public campaign officially launches June 16—the 30th anniversary of ITNAmerica providing its first ride in Portland, Maine.

"Volunteer drivers make independence possible," said Katherine Freund, Founder and President of ITNAmerica. "They help older neighbors get to medical appointments, pick up prescriptions, buy groceries, stay connected, and continue living in the communities they know and love. America's Volunteer Driver Center gives people in Maine and across the country a simple way to help."

The idea for AVDC grew from a simple insight: if Americans will volunteer to give blood, they will volunteer to give someone's mother a ride to the supermarket. ITNAmerica developed AVDC to change the way Americans think about and support community mobility for older adults and people with mobility challenges.

ITNAmerica has spent the past three years planning the campaign with support from congressionally directed spending secured by U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King. During the planning phase, ITNAmerica also received technical support from the Federal Transit Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“As the oldest state in the nation by median age, Maine has a serious need for transportation services that help seniors maintain their independence. I saw my own mother struggle with transportation when she stopped driving, and I know many older Maine people are in a similar position, especially in rural communities,” **said Senator Susan Collins.** *“ITNAmerica is the nation’s leading model for community-based, sustainable senior transportation, and has provided more than one million rides to older and visually impaired individuals. I was proud to help secure funding for America’s Volunteer Driver Center, which will expand access to vital transportation services so that even more Mainers can safely visit their doctors, families, and friends.”*

“For many older Maine people, access to safe, reliable transportation is essential to maintaining their independence, staying connected to their communities, and getting to doctor’s visits, grocery stores, and meetings and appointments that matter to them,” **said Senator King.** *“I’m proud to support federal funding for the development of America’s Volunteer Driver Center, which builds on ITNAmerica’s remarkable work helping connect volunteer drivers with older Americans who want to lead active, fulfilling lives affordably.”*

In an effort to bring all important voices to the table, ITNAmerica has built a national coalition of leaders from business, government at all levels, and philanthropy to guide and support the campaign.

AVDC’s goal is bold and practical: to make volunteer driving a widely recognized form of service by connecting people who want to help with the thousands of nonprofit transportation providers that need volunteer drivers. ITNAmerica envisions AVDC becoming to volunteer driving what the Red Cross is to blood donation — a trusted national entry point for people who want to serve.

“For 30 years, ITNAmerica has worked to help older adults remain mobile, independent, and connected,” Freund said. “America’s Volunteer Driver Center builds on that work by inviting the public to take part in a national solution.”

ITNAmerica began in greater Portland in 1995 as the Independent Transportation Network, now ITNPortland. From that local beginning, ITNAmerica created the first and only national nonprofit transportation network for older adults and people with mobility challenges. Today, the network includes 220 nonprofit transportation providers reaching from Hawaii to Wyoming and Maine to Florida.

To date, ITNAmerica has supported more than 1.75 million rides for older adults across the country. More than a decade before Uber delivered its first ride and before ride-hailing became a household concept, ITNAmerica was building a national model that used volunteer drivers, private vehicles, and community-based support to help older adults remain safely in their homes and communities as they limit and eventually stop driving.

About ITNAmerica

ITNAmerica is the first and only national nonprofit transportation network for older adults and people with mobility challenges. Founded in Maine in 1995, ITNAmerica supports community-based nonprofit transportation providers through technology, training, education, public policy, and social research. ITNAmerica’s programs help older adults remain independent, connected, and able to live fully in their

communities.

About America's Volunteer Driver Center

America's Volunteer Driver Center is ITNAmerica's newest program and the national center of the public information campaign for volunteer driver recruitment. Developed by ITNAmerica with support from the Federal Transit Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, AVDC aims to recruit 150,000 volunteer drivers to support nonprofit transportation providers across the country.

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