



## **COMTO Toronto and Region launches as first international chapter of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials**

*Diversity and inclusion transcending borders; expanding opportunities in transportation*

**Toronto, Ontario, Canada – October 1, 2020:** Today, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (“COMTO”) announced the official launch of the Toronto and Region Chapter. This chapter is COMTO’s first international chapter and the first chapter outside the United States.

The Toronto and Region Chapter marks the beginning of COMTO’s Canadian presence, welcoming members from across Canada and spanning the entire transportation industry – from chief executive officers who determine the direction of major transit systems to the mechanics and operators who ensure the safe passage of millions of riders every day. COMTO Toronto and Region will continue the critical work of COMTO, focusing on providing opportunity for development and advancement in the transportation industry for people who identify as being from an underrepresented group.

The new chapter was founded by members from the Toronto Transit Commission (“TTC”) and New Flyer Industries Canada ULC (“New Flyer”).

“I am proud to be a part of the first Canadian chapter of COMTO and even more pleased to be a part of helping to bring a vision of diversity and inclusion to Canada’s transportation sector,” said Annette Safarlie, COMTO Toronto and Region President and TTC Director of Shared Services. “We know that as an industry we have been doing a lot of things right – but at the same time we know there is a lot of room for improvement.”

The Toronto and Region Chapter celebrates its launch having already delivered support for communities in need. In August, its Community Outreach Committee organized a backpack drive to help marginalized communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Greater Toronto Area. The initial objective was to donate 150 backpacks complete with school supplies, but because of the commitment of its membership, 861 backpacks full of school supplies were donated – far surpassing the goal.

In addition, COMTO Toronto and Region will soon announce a fall online speaker series, aimed at inspiring and offering insights about how to lay a strong foundation for a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

“We are thrilled at the addition of Toronto and Region to the COMTO family. The chapter has gotten off to a great start and is falling right in step with COMTO’s mission and vision to create more opportunities for minorities in transportation and giving back to the communities we serve. Brad Mims, President and Chief Executive Officer, COMTO.

To date, COMTO has established more than 30 chapters, representing professionals in the North American transportation industry. For nearly 50 years, it has delivered leadership training, professional development, scholarship and internship funding, advocacy, partnership building, and networking opportunities.



For more on COMTO Toronto & Region, including membership fees and information, visit [comtotorontoandregion.ca](http://comtotorontoandregion.ca).

### **About COMTO**

Founded in 1971, COMTO is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing success for underrepresented individuals in the transportation industry. With over 30 chapters in the U.S. and Canada, COMTO is driven by a mission to ensure opportunities and participation in transportation for minorities, veterans, people with disabilities, and certified MWDBE (minority, women, or disadvantaged-owned) businesses through leadership training, professional development, scholarship and internship funding, advocacy, partnership building, and networking opportunities. For more information, visit [comtonational.org](http://comtonational.org).

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