



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winners Announced for the 35th National Community Transportation Roadeo

The 2026 Roadeo brought skilled public transit bus drivers to Omaha, Nebraska

[Washington, D.C., May 19, 2026] – The 35th National Community Transportation Roadeo, celebrating and testing the skills of rural and community transit bus operators, was hosted by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) on May 10 in Omaha, Nebraska. This event is the premier national venue promoting and honoring the contributions of community transit bus operators, bringing competitors from across the United States to showcase their driving expertise and commitment to safe and sensitive passenger transportation.

This year's National Roadeo featured brand-new cutaway or "body on chassis"(BOC) vehicles courtesy of Roadeo Presenting Sponsor Model 1. Drivers chose from three courses, the "body on chassis"(BOC) course, the 35' bus course, and a minivan course. All three courses were designed to test the drivers' abilities in pre-trip inspections, wheelchair securement, passenger sensitivity, and safe and accurate driving skills in a variety of challenging obstacles.

"The 2026 National Roadeo was a fantastic display of skill from across the nation, and it took a dedicated team to pull it off. We are incredibly grateful for the diligence of the CTAA staff, judges, volunteers, and the Roadeo Committee, as well as this year's presenting sponsor Model 1. We are grateful to the friends, family, and agency staff who made the trip to support and cheer on the drivers." shared Roadeo Coordinator Kelly Shawn. "Our 2026 transit agency partners, Omaha Metro and the Southwest Iowa Transit Agency, were also essential to our success. Their partnership was vital, and this event would not have been possible without them."

The National Roadeo is a safety competition including a driving obstacle course, pre-trip inspection, wheelchair securement, and a written exam. All of these aspects contribute to the drivers' overall score. The detailed 2026 National [Roadeo guide can be found here](#).

CTAA is thrilled to announce the winners of the 2026 National Community Transportation Roadeo:

Body On Chassis (BOC/Cutaway):

First Place: Johnathan Taylor, Whatcom Transportation Authority, Bellingham, WA

Second Place: Jesse Rodriguez, VIA Metropolitan Transportation Authority, San Antonio, TX

Third Place: Jeremy Fetterolf, Gladwin City County Transit, Gladwin, MI

Fourth Place: Wally Acosta, MTM Transit, Austin, TX

Fifth Place: Kimberly Pind, Shawnee Mass Transit District, Vienna, IL

35-foot Bus:

First Place: Jason Hiivala, St. Cloud Metro Bus, St. Cloud, MN

Second Place: Valerie Quill, Kitsap Transit, Bremerton, WA

Third Place: Jesus Avila Cabrera, Park City Municipal Corp, Park City, UT

Minivan:

First Place: Derek Johnson, Columbus Transit, Columbus, IN

Second Place: Jean Dalsing, Region 8 RTA, Dubuque, IA

Third Place: Mindy Manning, Florence Home, Omaha, NE

2026 Rookie of the Year Award:

Nick Meza, KCTS, Kimball, NE (Minivan)

2026 Most Spirited Driver Award:

Antwone Smith, City of Clovis, CA (BOC)

2026 Otis Reed, Jr Driver of the Year:

Johnathan Taylor, Whatcom Transportation Authority, Bellingham, WA (BOC)

These exceptional drivers have showcased outstanding skill and professionalism, embodying the spirit of community transportation. All driver rankings can be found here:

<https://ctaa.org/roadeo-2026>.

Scott Bogren, Executive Director of CTAA, emphasized the importance of this event. "Drivers are essential frontline workers, providing their passengers vital transportation to medical care, education, jobs, and other necessities. We take a lot of pride in putting on the National Roadeo each year because it gives drivers and transit systems an opportunity not just to compete, but to network and share ideas with colleagues from small cities, rural areas, and tribal lands nationwide. Every participant should take pride in their performance on the course and their daily dedication to their communities."

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About CTAA: The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) serves its 1,300 member organizations with resources, training, events, and advocacy. CTAA rural, small urban, tribal, NEMT, and specialized transportation members are dedicated to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of age, ability, geography, or income, have access to safe, affordable, and reliable transportation. <https://ctaa.org>.

For photos, interview requests, or any other questions, please reach out to Meredith@ctaa.org