

RELEASE  
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***Ramp Up Your Awareness:***  
**Vantage Mobility International and Others**  
**Unite to Increase Disability Etiquette & Awareness**

*By the year 2030, one in five Americans, some 72 million individuals, will be 65 years or older. Experts predict as many as 18 million of these will require some kind of mobility assistance. The aging Baby Boomer population is likely to be the biggest contributor.\**

(NEW YORK) -- Vantage Mobility International, LLC (VMI), Accessible Vans & Mobility, LLC and TiLite are improving mobility for people with disabilities and knowledge of "Disability Etiquette."

In honor of National Disability Awareness Month, on **October 17, 2007**, VMI and the City Of New York and the Mayor's Office for People With Disabilities will ***Ramp Up Your Awareness*** with interactive displays throughout New York for people to experience the advanced mobility technology and comfort of the VMI Northstar Conversion installed in Honda Odyssey minivans donated by American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

"Giving people a hands-on experience with mobility technology is powerful education," said Doug Eaton, CEO of Vantage Mobility International. "A critical part of Disability Etiquette is to give people a sense of the options available to help people with disabilities continue to live very mobile lives."

The Ramp Up Your Awareness events will be displayed at Lincoln Center, City Hall Park and Central Park, near Tavern on the Green. Each location will also feature entertainment showcasing the unique abilities of several New York groups, including ballroom dance troupe DanceSport USA, rap group 4-Wheel City and the New York United Spinal Jets rugby team. Partners in ***Ramp Up Your Awareness***, United Spinal and TiLite, a leading wheelchair manufacturer will also be on hand to educate participants on Disability Etiquette and other mobility products.

The main principles of Disability Etiquette include\*\*:

- NEVER park in a disability access parking spot

- Use proper terminology when engaging and referring to a person with a disability
- Refer to the person not the disability (Example: man who is blind, woman who uses a wheelchair)
- How to offer assistance
- ALWAYS ask before assisting
- Respecting the rights of persons with disabilities
- Keep all ramps and wheelchair accessible entries clear of any blockage
- Attempt to understand facets of their daily life
- Educate yourself on new innovations in mobility assistance, understand some of the subtle nuances of accomplishing everyday tasks

“It’s important that we work to educate the public on respectfully accommodating persons requiring extra assistance. The impact of aging America can be leveraged as an opportunity if we can all work together to educate the public about products like the Honda Odyssey with our Northstar Conversion and develop an appreciation for Disability Etiquette.”  
notes Eaton.

*\*Taken from a study by University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation*

*\*\*Taken from United Spinal’s handbook on Disability Etiquette*

### **About American Honda Motor Co., Inc.**

Honda is one of the world’s leading producers of mobility products including its diverse line-up of automobiles, motorcycles and ATVs, power products, marine engines and personal watercraft. In addition, Honda is the world’s preeminent engine-maker, with annual worldwide production of more than 21 million engines. Honda began operations in North America in 1959 with the establishment of American Honda Motor Co., Inc., Honda’s first overseas subsidiary. Honda now employs more than 28,000 Americans in the design, manufacture and marketing of its products in America. Honda currently builds products in 14 manufacturing plants in North America, with three major R&D centers in the U.S. Visit [www.honda.com](http://www.honda.com)

### **About Vantage Mobility International**

Founded in 1987, VMI is a manufacturer and distributor of the most reliable, highest quality and most easily accessible transportation in the world. Their full line of products include domestic and import minivan conversions, full-size van conversions, platform lifts, scooter and wheelchair lifts and transfer seats. VMI’s mobility products enable consumers to travel with comfort, convenience and peace of mind. Visit [www.vantagemobility.com](http://www.vantagemobility.com).

### **About Accessible Vans & Mobility**

Accessible Vans & Mobility is accredited by the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA). NMEDA certifies quality mobility equipment dealers who provide vehicle modifications for people with disabilities. NMEDA dealers follow guidelines established to ensure that equipment is installed according to the highest level of industry standards. Visit [www.avmvans.com](http://www.avmvans.com)

### **About the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**

The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/mopd/home.html> (MOPD) serves as a liaison between City government and disabled individuals and organizations representing or serving New Yorkers with disabilities. MOPD works with City agencies to make sure that the particular needs of People with Disabilities are considered in the development of City policies, programs, and services.

### **About United Spinal Association**

United Spinal Association is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization formed in 1946 by paralyzed veterans. Our mission is to provide expertise, create access to resources and strengthen hope, thereby enabling people with spinal cord injuries and diseases (SCI/D) to fulfill their potential as active members of their communities. Membership is free and open to all individuals with spinal cord injuries and diseases. Visit [www.unitedspinal.org](http://www.unitedspinal.org)