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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MTA'S DEPUTY CEO TO SAVOR PRESTIGIOUS HUMANITARIAN AWARD**

MTA Deputy Chief Executive Officer John Catoe will receive a Humanitarian Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice's Santa Monica Bay Area Region this Thursday, February 28.

Catoe is one of four honorees at the NCCJ's annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner & Auction, to be held at The Olympic Collection, 11301 Olympic Blvd., West Los Angeles.

The other Humanitarian Award winners are Santa Monica College President Dr. Piedad F. Robertson and Peggy Harris of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. Hines/Lantana, a real estate development, investment and management company, will receive a Community Service Award.

NCCJ officials say the awards are given to local leaders who, through their personal and professional efforts, "are helping to build an inclusive community fueled by the energy and creativity of the mix of cultures, religions, races and backgrounds that are America."

"In the over 22 years I've been in the transportation industry, I have found a real sense of joy in spotting caring individuals with intellect and high values and moving them up into roles of responsibility and leadership," Catoe said.

"It's been my experience that sex, race, religion, ethnicity and sexual preference doesn't make a difference in an individual's ability to achieve great things," continued Catoe. "I have also found that the most successful organizations respect and promote diversity within their workforce."

MORE...

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Before joining the MTA in October, Catoe was the director of transportation for Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus. He came to Santa Monica following 18 years at the Orange County Transportation Authority.

A native of Washington, D.C., he grew up in public housing projects and attended local public schools before serving in the Army and eventually receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Redlands. He is involved in several national and state public transit associations and is a strong believer in youth programs.

The NCCJ, founded in 1927 as The National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America.

For more information regarding the dinner and auction, which begins at 6 p.m., call (310) 315-4801.

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