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**Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency's Julia Castillo Named  
2019 Community  
Transportation Manager of the Year**

Palm Springs, Calif. – May 22, 2019. Julia Castillo, General Manager of the Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) in Urbandale, Iowa was named today the 2019 Community Transportation Manager of the Year by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) at its annual EXPO – held this year in Palm Springs, Calif. – in recognition for her skills in developing relationships – not only with her employees, but also with partners and leaders in her community.

The award, presented annually at the Association's national EXPO, recognizes excellence by managers of community transportation systems in serving the needs of people in their communities. Randy Zobrist, Midwest Regional Director of the Association's Board of Directors and Executive Director at River Bend Transit in Davenport, Iowa noted how Castillo has transformed a system that previously was operated by seven individual contractors to one fully operated in-house. This is across a seven-county region stretching over 4,100 square miles, with more than 90 employees providing more than 300,000 annual trips with a fleet of more than 80 vehicles.



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“She has streamlined service design, focused on mobility management, invested in new technology and cultivated buy-in for a new strategic direction for the organization. Her outstanding work in rural transit was noticed by the U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where she offered testimony last summer about innovative mobility concepts, like her agency’s on-demand trip scheduling App, representing all rural transit agencies. She serves as an active member of her state transit association and is currently on the National RTAP Review Board.” said Zobrist in presenting the award.

“Public Transit has taken me on a journey, I didn’t know I wanted to go. It is full of change and uncertainty, however, it is the one place I know that has people who are ready and willing to provide their knowledge and expertise, so you never feel like you are on the road alone,” said Castillo. “I love being in an industry that has such an impact on people’s lives, and knowing that our agency is making such a difference for so many, is what keeps me coming to work every day. I have only been in public transit for 9 years, so I am surprised to even be nominated. However, I greatly appreciate and am thrilled and honored to have been selected by CTAA.”

*The Community Transportation Association, established in 1989, is a national non-profit, membership association committed to removing barriers to isolation and improving mobility for all people. The Association provides informational resources, technical assistance, training and certification, and many additional resources to*

*communities, transportation providers, and other groups to increase mobility and improve the quality of community and public transportation.*

*The Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency provides public transit service available to all citizens and visitors of Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Story and Warren Counties in central Iowa, enhancing quality of life, enabling access to employment and education, and promoting independent lifestyles for central Iowa residents.*