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**Vehicles for Change and Exclusive Motor Cars Provide Safe, Reliable
Transportation to Those in Need**



[from left to right:] Baltimore County Councilman, Julian R. Jones, Jr., James Makia, president of Exclusive Motor Cars, Kia Banks, car recipient, Shawnta Royster, Martin Schwartz, president of Vehicles for Change Jim Rzepkowski, assistant secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation and Reverend Alvin C. Hathaway of United Baptist Church

HALETHORPE, Md. (December 20, 2018) — Just in time for the holidays, Vehicles for Change and Exclusive Motor Cars awarded safe, reliable vehicles to local residents in need during an awards ceremony Friday, December 14, 2018 at Exclusive Motor Cars' location in Randallstown, Md.

A Baltimore-based nonprofit, Vehicles for Change empowers families and individuals with financial challenges to achieve economic and personal independence through car ownership and technical training. The organization recently partnered with Exclusive Motor Cars, who committed to donating vehicles and hiring automotive technicians trained by Vehicles for Change.

The Exclusive Motor Cars waiting room on Liberty Road filled with tears as Shawnta Royster, age 32, and Kia Banks, age 47, both Baltimore residents, saw vehicles they would soon receive the keys to pulled up alongside the building adorned with big white bows.

“I can’t believe this. I’m so excited,” exclaimed Royster as she saw her silver 2003 Toyota Camry for the first time.

Royster was in desperate need of safe, reliable transportation to get her to-and-from work and also to transport her four-year-old daughter, Merci, to daycare and doctors’ appointments. She is currently employed by Heritage Mile One in Catonsville, which is 45 minutes away from her home — a distance that makes it difficult for her to arrive on time each day when relying on public transportation, and too expensive when using ride sharing apps.

The keys to her vehicle were presented by Jim Rzepkowski, assistant secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, who acknowledged transportation as one of the main barriers to success.

“Living such a far distance from work and my daughter’s school, I honestly struggle with being on time,” says Royster, who aspires to go back to school in 2019. “Having reliable transportation will make things easier for me and my family and allow me to take my daughter new places. I believe in the Vehicles for Change mission and I am so appreciative!”



Shawnta Royster in the front seat of her newly awarded 2003 Toyota Camry

James Makia, president of Exclusive Motor Cars presented Kia Banks the keys to her 2005 Jeep Grand Cherokee at the ceremony.

“If we don’t give back to help lift up others in life, we’ve never truly succeeded,” said Makia, who immigrated to the United States 17 years ago from Nigeria. “It feels good to be able to help those experiencing challenges,” he said. “If we’re not giving back, we’re not moving forward!”



Kia Banks climbs into the driver's seat of her 2005 Jeep Grand Cherokee for the first time

Similar to Royster, Banks needed reliable transportation to get to-and-from work, to the grocery store and to keep appointments. She is currently employed by MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, where she works as a Peer Recovery Coordinator, helping those struggling with addiction but seeking recovery. "It's a great honor to receive a vehicle from Vehicles for Change," said Banks. "It's a great blessing for me and my family."



At the ceremony, Julian R. Jones, Jr. Baltimore County Councilman, Fourth District (left), presented Martin Schwartz, Vehicles for Change's president (right), a citation for the organization's work in the community: more than 6,200 cars donated and 20,000 lives changed since 1999.

"We're extremely grateful for the support of our community and partners like Exclusive Motor Cars," says Martin Schwartz, president of Vehicles for Change. "Through shared momentum and collaboration, we can continue to make a difference and drive change for those in need!"

Cold weather means families are in dire need of reliable, safe and warm transportation. To make a monetary donation, donate a vehicle or for more information about the nonprofit, visit www.vehiclesforchange.org or call 410-242-9674.

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About Vehicles for Change:

Vehicles for Change accepts and repairs donated cars and awards them to pre-qualified families for as little as \$950, enabling low-income families to become self-sufficient. A nonprofit organization, VFC receives 99 percent of its car donations from the public. Since 1999, VFC has awarded more than 6,000 cars to low-income families, changing the lives of more than 21,000 people. Eligible families are referred to VFC through partnering social service type agencies. VFC car donors gain a substantial tax advantage that's not available with most other charities. For additional information about Vehicles for Change, or to donate a vehicle, visit www.vehiclesforchange.org or call 855-820-7990.