

UTCC VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

"WE DON'T JUST SING FOR OUR MISERY, WE STAND UP AND FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE"

UTCC'S LEASE OVERCHARGE CAMPAIGN GAINING GROUND

More and more victories piling up at 400 W. Superior

BY PETER ENGER

ERIC P. MARTIN, ONE OF THE DRIVERS WHO filed overcharge complaints against Chicago Carriage Cab Company, received a decision in his favor on April 10th, in the amount of \$1,275. Several more drivers have received notices of judgments in their favor, and cabdrivers are bringing new cases in to the UTCC offices on a regular basis. Out of the original twelve drivers who joined our campaign last May of 2012, at least seven have received judgments in their favor, and the companies were fined. In the last month, the United Taxidriver Community Council has submitted several more cases to the Dept. of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection and more and more drivers are coming forward.

Since the new Standard Lease Form was issued last July, and the lease caps were increased and structured into a 3-tier system, the UTCC has found that the cab companies have found new and creative ways to continue to overcharge drivers. The City authorities seem once again to be helpless and uninterested in protecting the drivers from the companies who cheat us. Even the fines imposed on Dispatch and Carriage were only \$1000 or \$500—a slap on the wrist, and an insult to the drivers, who very often pay very much more for their own fines at 400 W. Superior. If a company is only fined \$1000 for cheating a driver out of \$2000 or \$5000, what will keep them from doing it again—and again—and again?

Another serious flaw in the system is the fact that the City's Consumer Protection Department not only seems unable and unwilling to **protect** the cabdriver-consumer, they have no enforcement mechanism to force the companies to actually **PAY** the drivers when the companies lose their cases! Talk about adding insult to injury!

To sum up, the UTCC believes that **YES** it is worth it to file the complaints against the companies—the more the better! Let's file **HUNDREDS** of complaints against the companies who cheat us! Over time, the weight of the evidence against the companies may force reform in the rules and enforcement by the City. Secondly, every win is evidence that we can take to civil court in a class action suit against the companies, with much more chance of winning and getting settlements for the drivers which will be easier to collect.

Every driver—**save your leases** and bring them to the UTCC office for analysis and filing of complaints. Especially leases before last July could be **GOLDEN** for the drivers! We are looking especially for leases from Carriage, Dispatch and Khaled's garage, as they were and are the worst violators of the lease caps.

And lastly, we would like to encourage the



Cab driver Eric Martin has received confirmation that he will be getting back the money that he is owed from Chicago Carriage Cab Co.

folks at the Dept. of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection to request to sit down with the UTCC to discuss how to reform some of the protections for drivers in the taxi industry here in Chicago. We are the ones who do the work, and we have excellent ideas on reforms that will keep drivers driving, and protected from unscrupulous companies. ■

SANCTION(S):

Restitution to aggrieved
3rd party \$1,275.51

\$1275.51 restitution payable
to Eric Martin (94984)

ADMIN COSTS: \$0

JUDGMENT TOTAL:

\$500 plus \$1,275.51 Restitution

BALANCE DUE: \$1,775.51

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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, COMMUNITY ALLY

COMMON SENSE CORNER

RAHM EMMANUEL
MAYOR,
CITY OF CHICAGO,

DEAR MR. MAYOR,

Chicago cab drivers have not had a fare increase for eight years. A "gas surcharge" of one dollar was transferred to the meter, but that has not even covered the increased cost of gas. We now rank 22nd among big American cities in the cost of a taxi ride. Meanwhile the income of Chicago cab drivers has fallen below the minimum wage.

This is not good for the taxi industry here. We are losing experienced drivers. Cab companies are not able to lease out all their cabs. A reasonable raise on the meter will help make the service more professional, help the companies lease their cabs and provide the public with more service.

The new cab ordinance increased the amount of money most drivers have to pay to lease their cabs, and restricted drivers to 12 hour days. It also eliminated their long standing right to petition for a fare increase. When they were finally given a hearing last July 31st, they presented strong evidence that a fare increase was long overdue. At that time you said that you would consider it next year. Well Mister Mayor, it's next year.

As you know, the great majority of cab drivers are foreign born. The United Taxidrivrs Community Council takes pride in the fact that drivers come from the four corners of the earth, that we are a United Nations of workers. The great majority of cab drivers here are hard working immigrants who pay axes, vote in elections and are trying to live the American Dream. On July 7, 2011 you opened the Office of New Americans, saying "Chicago's vitality is built on the strength of immigrant populations."

We ask that you consider Chicago's 14,000 cab drivers as New Americans, and grant them a fare increase so that they may raise their families with some dignity in this, one of the most international cities in the world.

SINCERELY,

FAYEZ KHOZINDAR,

UTCC

**UNITED TAXIDRIVERS
 COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

OUR VISION

To organize and unify all licensed chauffeurs in the Chicago area, so we can collectively overcome oppression and achieve economic and social justice.

WRITERS

Fayez Khozindar
 Peter Enger
 Liz Nerat

CONTRIBUTORS

Gregory McGee
 Ted Budzynski
 Alai Ibraev
 Mohammed Abdi

EDITORS

Chris Chandler
 Peter Ali Enger
 Liz Nerat

DESIGN

Rachel K. Dooley

UTCC STEERING COMMITTEE

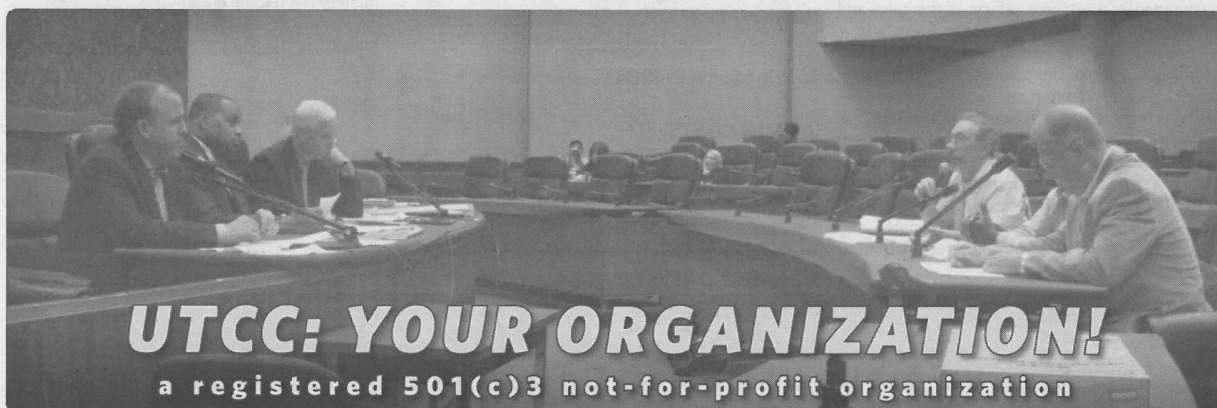
Fayez Khozindar	Eijaz Khan
Chris Chandler	Keith Williams
Finn Ebelechukwu	Marlon Pescun
Bill Burns	Minh Nguyen
Diane Santucci	Peter Ali Enger
Ehsan Ghoreishi	Clark Falcon
Rocky Mmomo	

***We welcome your contributions
 feedback and letters!***

UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
 2040 N Milwaukee Ave, 2nd Floor
 Chicago, IL 60647

E-MAIL: info@goutcc.org

PHONE: (773) 342-UTCC



UTCC: YOUR ORGANIZATION!

a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization

Austin Taxi Drivers Affiliation with National Taxi Workers Alliance: Synergy with AFLCIOs Texas Strategy Full Throttle Ahead

BY BIJU MATHEW

ON TUESDAY APRIL 30TH THE TAXI Drivers Association of Austin Tx will officially be sworn in as the third affiliate of the National Taxi Workers Alliance (NTWA). The ceremony will take place at the xxx airport staging area (holding lot) from 1 30 to 3 30 PM. In attendance will be Kathy Tovo, City Council Member, Bhairavi Desai, President, NTWA and Becky Moeller, President of State Federation of AFLCIO. Austin is the first new affiliate of the National since the chartering of the new union in October 2011 with New York and Philadelphia as the founding affiliates. "Austin has been building a relationship with the National with the National for over a year now..." said Dave Passmore, President of the Taxi drivers Association of Austin. "We already worked on one campaign in close collaboration with NTWA last year and we are all set now to launch the Taxi Drivers Job Security and Safety Net campaign along with the affiliation."

The NTWA is working with driver associations in two other Texas Cities - Houston and Dallas - and plans to expand its sphere of activity to San Antonio. NTWA is working closely with the AFL-

CIOs Texas Strategy that seeks to fundamentally re-align Texas politics. In 2012 Texas turned a demographic corner becoming a people of color majority state - a moment that would be strategically important to increase union density in this right to work state.

Ronald Blount, Vice President of NTWA, recalled his first visit to Austin just about a year ago. "TDAA had at that time just become an NTWA Organizing Committee at that time. And now, less than a year later they already have achieved the goal of 10% dues paying membership." The National manages its relationships with all of the different cities through a three part structure. All cities that have over 10% of the active workforce signed up as dues payers (and meet some other criteria such diversity within the Board) become affiliates. All cities with active driver associations where the leadership has resolved to seek affiliation and is working closely with the National is structured as an Organizing Committee. All other cities with associations where the NTWA is investing in helping with a specific campaign is designated as an Organizing Drive. Austin then is a trail blazer that will not just set Texas on fire but the whole nation! ■

A BRIEF MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As many of you know, UTCC has had an ongoing membership drive for the past several months. Now there is even more incentive to kick the drive into a higher gear. Recently members of UTCC have met with organizers from NYTWA (New York Taxi Worker Alliance) when they were in town this past March 22-25 in hopes of soon becoming affiliated with the National Taxi Worker's Alliance union. In Chicago we need to have 1,200 drivers (roughly 10% of our total driver population) become members of UTCC to join with the national union. UTCC members have also been meeting with organizers from CFL (Chicago Federation of Labor) to devise an organizing strategy.

—LIZ NERAT

NY Taxi Worker Union organizers attend UTCC General Meeting March 25



He whom we love and lose
 Is no longer where he was before.
 He is now
 Wherever we are.
 - St. John Chrysostom

A CELEBRATION OF HIS LIFE

Michael McConnell



LIKE A RIVER

for Michael

Who could keep up with you...
 leaping, fist pumping at Weston Priory
 when we delivered the Ixoot family
 to the Monks' sanctuary; refusing

the muchachos' donkey when you and Maura
 (who would have ridden a wild pig)
 trudged 12 hours up to Arcatao in 1987;
 that stubborn, brave heart.

Your call Michael was to be a steady current
 something your mother whispered, opened.
 Deep, because I, others fought it, wanted you
 to fight. We wanted you both ways.

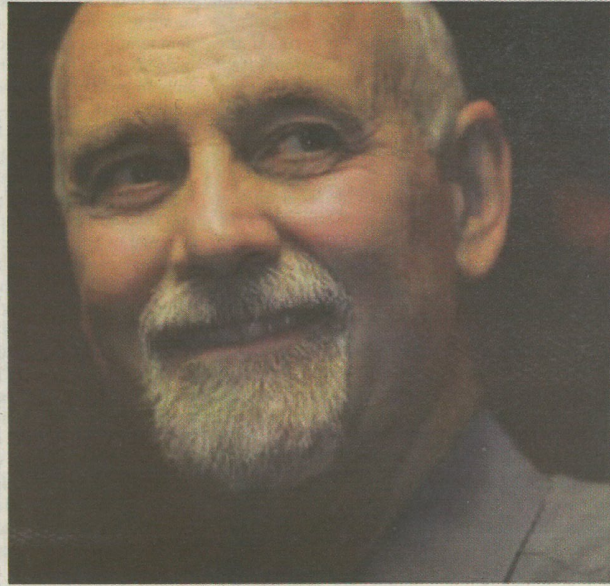
Deep because it protected you, us.
 Deep as a river that moves around rocks,
 carries others, moves forever beyond itself,
 empties itself into great expanse.

When our accolades are flung
 like garlands of white roses,
 each flower, cut for brief beauty,
 will name you: brilliant, devoted,

imaginative, intrepid, visionary.
 What changed us, though, is what flowed
 through your life and brought us along,
 reminding us why we fight for justice

and each other... it was your kindness.

-Renny Golden



"I keep doing what I'm doing
 because if I stopped working
 for social justice, or peace it
 would be like stopping
 breathing..."

1946-2013

The incredible Michael McConnell

BY FAYEZ KHOZINDAR

I have known Michael for a short time

But I felt that I have knew him for long, long time

Because he was close to the heart, honest, loving, human

He was good father, a good friend, a good adviser, a good comrade, and a good brother.

It was normal for me to seek his help, because he urged us to do that and

Because he wanted to be involved,

*So it was normal for me to seek his help, knowing how much renewable energy he may
 supply us with when we meet him, speak with him or even write to him.*

Michael in his war against injustice used the ultimate weapon of all: love.

*Even before I was employed by the AFSC, and when Gaza was blockaded and when I
 saw my people over there where subject to booming during the war, I went to see Mi-
 chael. Because I knew his heart was full of love for humanity and love for all.*

*When Michael was away because of his illness, I remember what I wrote to him once,
 I said, "because you love all of us you are coming back to us."*

*Today Michael is not coming back to us but his legacy will live amongst our work, when
 we have more success for our projects and when we have more victories for the people
 for whom we are advocating.*

*It is then we will realize that Michael is not passing away; we will realize that Michael's
 legacy and his spirit will live with us forever.*

"Pacifism counters the myth that violence is the most powerful force. Pacifism must never be confused with passivity."

— MICHAEL MCCONNELL

From Chicago to Central America to Palestine, Michael McConnell dedicated his life to the fight for social justice, peace, and community empowerment.

Michael was a key leader in the Central American sanctuary movement in the 1980s, an ordained United Church of Christ minister, director of American Friends Service Committee Great Lakes region, an author of several books, co-founder of Grassroots Collaborative, a

brilliant strategist, and loving husband, father and friend. Michael died April 7, 2013 at the age of 66, after a long battle with prostate cancer.

Michael created the multi-sensory exhibit *Eyes Wide Open: The Human Cost of War in Iraq*. *Eyes Wide Open* perfectly captured the creative force that Michael brought to all of his work. First displayed in Chicago's Federal Plaza in January 2004, the exhibit featured more than 504 pairs of combat boots and a 24-foot 'wall' of names and incidents of Iraqi civilian deaths. The exhibit toured in cities across the country bringing awareness of the human cost of the war to millions of people.

He infused organizing against war and militarism with sharp analysis, and knew better than anyone how to bring home the cost of war. Michael worked with activist groups like Iraq Veterans Against the War to protest against the NATO Summit. Michael believed that "pacifism counters the myth that violence is

the most powerful force. Pacifism is a form of combat calling for strategies and tactics."

Michael also cared passionately about low wage workers and low income communities. He was a key advisor to taxi cab drivers in Chicago organizing for higher wages. And he was a founding member of Grassroots Collaborative, a community-labor coalition known for its work on the Big Box Living Wage Ordinance, and currently organizing against school closings. In 2010, discouraged by the lack of attention Springfield was paying to the budget crisis, Michael came up with the idea to do a hunger strike in the Capitol, an action that sparked a successful campaign for more revenue, averting massive doomsday cuts to human services.

Before joining AFSC, Michael was the coordinator of the Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America, coordinated organizing of the U.S. Sanctuary Movement and was co-founder of Chrysalis Learning Community, an alternative high school. He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ (UCC) and served as associate minister of Wellington Ave United Church of Christ. Michael co-authored *Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad* (1985), *Dangerous Memories: Invasion and Resistance Since 1492* (1992), and a multicultural people's history of the United States, titled *Lost Voices*.

Michael was the personal angel to thousands. He was a protector, a wild cheerleader, a life-affirmer, and a humble giant. We carry on his work, his light, and his fierce love.

Michael is survived by his wife Maricela Garcia, a longtime immigrants rights leader, his children Sarah, Daniella, and Camilo John, and his granddaughter Sadie.

The Books I Carried

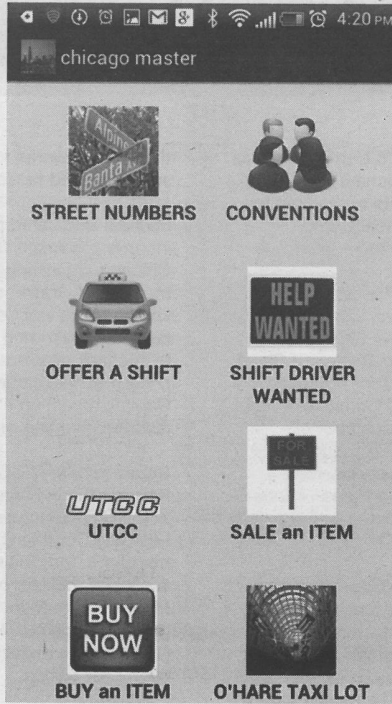
<i>I brought your books to the table</i>	<i>This chapter is hard to finish</i>
<i>The well worn covers</i>	<i>Trying to set to memory</i>
<i>Repeated reading of nonviolent strategies</i>	<i>Every wise word you shared</i>
<i>The artists' way and Renny's poetry</i>	<i>Strategy you proposed</i>
<i>Your bedside bibles</i>	<i>Or shoulder you offered</i>
<i>So many books you read</i>	<i>I brought your books to the table</i>
<i>And encouraged us to learn</i>	<i>With heart heavy and full</i>
<i>History was your passion</i>	<i>Grateful for your presence</i>
<i>Making sense of the past!</i>	<i>The gifts you have left</i>
<i>Giving us lessons for the present</i>	<i>The legacy we will continue</i>
<i>I cried bringing you your books</i>	<i>Jennifer Bing</i>
<i>For all the pages of my life</i>	<i>April 14, 2013</i>
<i>You will not help me write</i>	
<i>The stories I can't share</i>	
<i>With your gentle presence</i>	

New Apps for Taxidivers

These apps have many features and we are working very hard to improve and add more useful apps for taxidivers:

- 1. STREET NUMBERS** (this feature is helping look for the street Numbers easy in your fingertips just one tap to get the street number without pulling over the car and search from a book which is old fashioned)
- 2. CONVENTIONS** (upcoming conventions: the whole year's conventions at your fingertips)
- 3. OFFER A SHIFT** (this is for when you have a car and you want drive 12 hrs and you need to get another driver. It's simple, just fill the form and submit your information will be displayed on the "help wanted" section where the other drivers can contact you. In the "help wanted" section you can also get the drivers offering to lease a shift on the cars they have.)
- 4. UTCC** (be in touch with the UTCC's latest new, membership information, upcoming campaigns and much, much more)
- 5. SELL AN ITEM** (this feature will let you sale your items such as phones, cameras, laptops, etc.)
- 6. BUY AN ITEM** (this feature displays the seller's product and their information)
- 7. O'HARE INFORMATION** (this feature is still in the works, but when done will allow drivers to see detailed information regarding O'Hare traffic and movement)
- 8. WBEZ 91.5**(listen the news without disturbing your customer on your phone)

—ABDIHAKIM JAMA



BACP What's wrong with this picture?



An unlicensed taxicab not inspected by City



A licensed and inspected taxicab

A licensed Chicago taxicab # is 4 digits or less and matches license plate digits. See one that doesn't match? Call 311.



For questions, comments, or to join the BACP mailing list to receive industry notices and other department news, send an email to BACPPV@cityofchicago.org. Rules and Regulations governing City of Chicago licensed public vehicles and public chauffeurs are available at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp. The Municipal Code of Chicago is available at www.amlegal.com.

Public Vehicle Operations Division • 2350 W. Ogden, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60608
BACPPV@cityofchicago.org // 312-746-4300 // www.cityofchicago.org/bacp

DRIVER'S BILL OF RIGHTS

- 1) There is a NEW Uniform Taxicab Lease Agreement Form
- 2) There are FOUR Taxicab Lease Term Options:
 - 1 12-hour daily
 - 2 12-hour weekly
 - 3 24-hour daily
 - 4 24-hour weekly
- 3) Know the "Tier Number" of the vehicle you are leasing:

Tier, based on Vehicle's Miles per Gallon (mpg) according to Federal guidelines. See "Approved Vehicle List" at www.cityofchicago.org/bacpv for specific examples.	12 Hour Daily Maximum Lease Rate	12 Hour Weekly Maximum Lease Rate	24 Hour Daily Maximum Lease Rate	24 Hour Weekly Maximum Lease Rate
1. Most fuel efficient	\$74 per 12 hour shift	\$518 total for seven consecutive 12 hour shifts	\$101 per 24 hour shift	\$707 total for seven consecutive 24 hour shifts
2. Moderately fuel efficient	\$69 per 12 hour shift	\$483 total for seven consecutive 12 hour shifts	\$93 per 24 hour shift	\$651 total for seven consecutive 24 hour shifts
3. Least fuel efficient	\$59 per 12 hour shift	\$413 total for seven consecutive 12 hour shifts	\$85 per 24 hour shift	\$595 total for seven consecutive 24 hour shifts

- 4) You have the **RIGHT** to a written receipt itemizing all expenses required to lease a cab.
- 5) You have the **RIGHT** to get paid for Credit Card transactions within ONE business day.
- 6) Email BACPPV@cityofchicago.org to sign up for information on the taxicab industry, conventions, and other events in Chicago.

TELL US IF ANY OF YOUR RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED

Department of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection - Public Vehicle Operations Division
 2350 W. Ogden, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60608
BACPPV@cityofchicago.org • 312-746-4300 • www.cityofchicago.org/bacpv



ACTION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WILL BE HELD AT UTCC OFFICE EVERY MONDAY AT 2 PM. LET'S COME TOGETHER TO MAKE PLANS, AND DEVELOP UNITY, COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION AMONG ALL CHICAGO CABDRIVERS!

MONDAYS - 2PM @ 2040 N. MILWAUKEE AVE.
UTCCCHICAGO@GMAIL.COM • (773) 342-8822

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: @UTCCCHICAGO

400 W SUPERIOR

My name is Chris Chandler, I was a cab driver for nine years. I'm with the UTCC. One of my experiences at 400 W Superior, I was driving at about 4:30 am, from Evanston returning some people back from Evanston on a week day, no traffic whatsoever and as I approached the flashing red light on Sheridan, I slowed down and then continued. The whole town was asleep but this university policeman stopped my cab and he gave me a ticket. I told him, I said 'That is ridiculous. Nobody stops one hundred percent at 4 am, there's nobody awake in the whole suburb.' But he was pleased with himself to give me a ticket.

When I went to 400 W Superior on that ticket my arguments with the representative from the Department of State? Affairs were of no avail. He just wanted the full price or something; one hundred and twenty dollars so I appealed. I went before the judge, or what looks like a judge but is really an Administrative Hearing Officer and I told him the story. 'I slowed down, I certainly wasn't endangering anybody.' And he simply said, 'Did you come to a full stop?' and I said, 'No.' So I was guilty and paid the full fine.

To my mind, I've had one other experience, to my mind 400 W Superior is a terrible introduction to the American Justice System, especially for all these people who come from another country and this is their first encounter with American law. It's a sad commentary on how the city is just trying to collect money from cab drivers."

GET INVOLVED IN THE STRUGGLE!

Join the fight for rights, respect and human dignity!

Call UTCC Today!

773-342-8822

WE'RE SIGNING UP LICENSED CHICAGO TAXI DRIVERS NOW!

EARN MORE WITH HAILO

THE ULTIMATE TOOL FOR TAXI DRIVERS. MADE BY US, FOR US.

NOW WITH DAILY PAYMENTS!

FARES TODAY MONEY TOMORROW!

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER!

- Accept & pickup nearby jobs
- Process paperless credit card transactions
- Increase the number of jobs each day
- Get paid by direct deposit for every job - EVERY BUSINESS DAY!
- Decrease your downtime

App is free - all you need is a smartphone

Weekly Contests - win up to \$250

Refer a friend - get \$20!



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HAILO CONTACT US AT:

Call/Text: Rashid @ (312) 894-9122, Faris @ (773) 680-6467 or Email @ (773) 610-8697

Email: chicago.drivers@hailocab.com / www.hailocab.com/chicago/drivers

1031 North Orleans, Chicago IL 60610

UTGCC



2040 N. MILWAUKEE, CHICAGO IL 60647
 PHONE: (773) 342-UTCC (8922)
 E-MAIL: INFO@GOUTCC.ORG
WWW.GOUTCC.ORG

UNITED TAXI DRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CHAUFFEUR LICENSE HOLDERS General Membership Application

Applicant Information

First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Lease Driver: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Chauffeur No: Driver's License No:
Current Address:	State:	ZIP Code:
City:	e-mail:	Home/Other Phone:
Cell Phone:	Statistical Information (Optional)	
U.S. Citizen: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date of Birth:	Native Language:
Registered to Vote: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Birthplace:	
Are you a medallion owner? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, what is the medallion number?	
How long have you driven a cab? _____ Years		
Do you have experience in any activities for human rights, or any activist history such as mentioned in our mission statement? If yes, please give a brief description of your experience:		

Emergency Contact

Emergency Contact (relative or friend):

Phone Number:

Summary of Mission Statement and code of conduct

UTGCC is a not-for-profit organization. Its mission is to increase the prestige of the taxi driving profession through community service, education, and awareness, and to work towards the economic progress and improved social welfare of taxi drivers, their families, and their communities by providing assistance in enforcing their rights, including civil, political, social, economic, legal, and human rights.

- UTGCC members will reflect the highest possible customer service standards without prejudice.
- UTCC members will stand united behind its mission and promote membership for mutual benefit.
- UTCC members will adhere to all laws of the nation and its democratic principles.

Signature

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand UTGCC's Mission and Code of Conduct, and agree to uphold the principles and values of equality, justice, unity and honesty for the UTGCC's mission.
 I authorize the verification of the information provided on this form and I hereby declare the foregoing information to be true. I have received a copy of this application: Yes No

Signature of applicant:

Date:

Yearly membership fee \$120.00

I would like to enclose a tax deductible contribution of \$ _____ to the Taxi Drivers Legal Fund Account

Payment Type: check credit card money order cash
 Received by: _____ Amount Received: \$ _____ Verified by: _____ Receipt Number: _____



American Friends Service Committee, Community Ally