

## Georgia Tech Students Win Toyota and Net Impact's National Competition with App Concept for People Who Use Wheelchairs

*Next Generation Mobility Challenge Inspired Millennials to Solve Mobility Issues*

*Winning students will have Summer Internships through Net Impact in Partnership with Toyota to Develop their Idea*

Plano, TX (May 22, 2017) – Earlier this year, a team of students at Georgia Tech realized that there was a critical gap in transportation services for people who use wheelchairs – and they wondered if the solution could be in the palm of their hands.

Today, the students' concept for an app-based service to address this issue, "Para Pickup," has been named the winner of the Next Generation Mobility Challenge. The Challenge is a national competition from the Toyota Mobility Foundation and Net Impact to inspire millennials to use design thinking to solve mobility issues. Nearly 600 students participated at 15 events across the country.

The winning team pitched an app-based, para-transit taxi service that gives people who use wheelchairs a safe, affordable and flexible way to get around. This concept would supplement current public para-transit transportation services, which are affordable, but can be inflexible and slow. You can view a video of their concept at [this link](#) and a demo at [this link](#).

"We know that in Atlanta alone, people with disabilities take over 2,200 rides on public transportation [a day]. We talked to people with special needs in the community and learned that they have limited ability to travel independently or make spontaneous plans. There is a real need for flexible, affordable alternatives, especially for those who can't afford a wheelchair accessible vehicle. We developed Para Pickup to help wheelchair users go wherever they want, whenever they want," said Sally Xia, a member of the winning team.

"At Toyota, we are invested in creating better ways for people to move around, with a focus on helping communities with limited mobility to do more," said Kristen Tabar, Vice President, Technical Strategy and Planning Office, Toyota Motor North America, Research and Development. "The Para Pickup team spotted a problem that needs solving and came up with a smart, well thought-out plan to open up more opportunities for people who use wheelchairs. Congratulations to the team on their big win and please keep up the good work!"

"Net Impact's goal is to give young people the tools to take on social challenges through creative thinking and entrepreneurship," said Liz Maw, CEO of Net Impact. "Para Pickup took a thoughtful approach to understanding community needs and building a service that addressed them. We're very proud of the team and look forward to seeing the progress they make!"

The multidisciplinary team of students included Sally Xia (Masters in Digital Media), Riley Keen (Masters in Industrial Design), Pranav Nair (Masters in Industrial and Product Design), and Kris Weng (Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering). The students have accepted summer internships through Net Impact in partnership with Toyota at the company's North American

headquarters in Plano, TX. They will support the Social Innovation team and continue to develop “Para Pick-up” for the Toyota Mobility Foundation, which works to address mobility challenges around the world. The winners may then be considered for funding to bring their idea to life from the Toyota Mobility Foundation.

The Para Pickup team was chosen as winner by judges at Toyota and Net Impact based on six different categories: clarity of goals and objectives, clarity of project design, impact to society, feasibility, creativity and the team’s potential to implement the project. Additionally, the public weighed in on the winner through online voting, where Para Pickup also took first place.

### **About the Next Generation Mobility Challenge**

Launched in 2015, the Next Generation Mobility Challenge is a competition from Toyota, the Toyota Mobility Foundation and Net Impact to inspire millennials to develop solutions for critical mobility needs in local communities and around the world. Held at fifteen university campuses across the country, the challenge invites multi-disciplinary teams of students to participate in design sprints to develop solutions for mobility issues related to social equity and inclusion. Local transportation and technology experts from Toyota and universities provided feedback and real-world perspective to the students’ concepts. In 2016, nearly 600 students participated.

Toyota is executing the challenge through Toyota Motor North America and the Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF), which was created by Toyota in 2014 to help more people go more places – safely, easily and sustainably – so they can live better lives no matter where they are.

### **About Toyota**

Toyota (NYSE:TM), creator of the Prius and the Mirai fuel cell vehicle, is committed to advancing mobility through our Toyota and Lexus brands. Over the past 60 years, we’ve produced more than 30 million cars and trucks in North America, where we operate 14 manufacturing plants (10 in the U.S.) and directly employ more than 44,000 people (more than 34,000 in the U.S.). Our 1,800 North American dealerships (nearly 1,500 in the U.S.) sold almost 2.6 million cars and trucks (2.45 million in the U.S.) in 2016 – and about 85 percent of all Toyota vehicles sold over the past 15 years are still on the road today.

Toyota partners with community, civic, academic, and governmental organizations to address our society’s most pressing mobility challenges. We share company resources and extensive know-how to support non-profits to help expand their ability to assist more people move more places. For more information about Toyota, visit [www.toyotanewsroom.com](http://www.toyotanewsroom.com).

### **About Toyota Mobility Foundation**

The Toyota Mobility Foundation was established in August 2014 to support the development of a more mobile society. The Foundation aims to support strong mobility systems while eliminating disparities in mobility. It utilizes Toyota’s expertise in technology, safety, and the environment, working in partnership with universities, governments, non-profit organizations, research institutions and other organizations to address mobility issues around the world. Programs include resolving urban transportation problems, expanding the utilization of personal mobility, and developing solutions for next generation mobility.

### **About Net Impact**

Net Impact is a global community of students and professionals who aspire to be effective drivers of social and environmental change. Our programs—delivered from our headquarters in Oakland, CA, as well as globally through our 275+ chapters—connect our members to the skills, experiences and people that will allow them to have the greatest impact. With over 100,000 members, Net Impact takes on social challenges, protects the environment, invents new products and orients business toward the greater good. In short, we help our members turn their passions into a lifetime of world-changing action. Visit [www.netimpact.org](http://www.netimpact.org).

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