**AVIS BUDGET GROUP SENIOR VP BOB BOUTA**

**HONORED WITH AMAC CATALYST AWARD**

In the early years of federal business diversity regulation in the airport industry, the efforts in many companies were merely “compliance driven,” Bob Bouta, Senior Vice President of Properties and Facilities for Avis Budget Group, Inc., recalls. As a committed member of the Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC), Bouta has worked to affirm that inclusion of minorities and women business owners and employees in the industry be recognized as “value driven.”

For that reason, and many others, Bouta was recently honored by AMAC with their Catalyst Award for Advocate of the Year.

“This award recognizes an individual within the aviation industry who has been an outstanding spokesperson, educator and advocate for diversity inclusion in the workforce or small business participation in contracting,” said Krystal Brumfield, AMAC CEO and President. “An AMAC partner for more than 16 years, Bouta has helped broaden standards and shape legislation that truly made the EEOC and ACDBE rules a win-win.”

“The evolution of understanding that diversity and inclusion creates prosperity for all involved was necessary in order to grow and strengthen the programs,” Bouta said.

Bouta is a thirty year veteran in the real estate and airport business with previous positions at National Car Rental, APCOA, Airport Logistics and The Welsh Companies.

From a small town in Minnesota with a blue-collar upbringing, Bouta said he didn’t envision this career. His family encouraged him to get a law degree in order to be sure that he’d always have work, he recalls.

He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota with a degree in Political Science and received a J.D. cum laude from William Mitchell College of Law. He is admitted to the bar in both Minnesota and New York. But, though he practiced law for a period, he knew that was not to be his passion.

His first job with National Car Rental introduced him to an airport environment, and he was hooked. “I found airports extremely exciting and always changing and growing,” he said. “There are no two airports alike. In fact, the saying in the industry is: ‘When you’ve seen one airport, you’ve just seen one airport!’”

At Avis, his responsibilities include management and administration of Avis and Budget real estate and construction projects for all airport and urban locations throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the Strategic Business & Diversity Relations group was formed at his request and continues to report to him.

“I hired Lynn Boccio as Vice President, Strategic Business & Diversity Relations and she has done a stellar job,” he noted.

He said that he is particularly proud of his Catalyst award because he considers AMAC to be the premier advocacy group in the nation for aviation industry diversity and equality. “Recognition from this organization of the work that I deem important in my life is very satisfying.”

“What started as a job obligation has become one of the most rewarding things I do,” he added.