



NFI's Charli Champagne named to Mass Transit's Top 40 Under 40 for 2022

August 23, 2022

NFI's Workforce Development Manager recognized for advancing workplace DEI programs, supporting TRC calls to action, and championing initiatives supporting historically disadvantaged groups

ST. CLOUD, Minn., Aug. 23, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- **(TSX: NFI, OTC: NFIYF, TSX: NFI.DB)** NFI Group Inc. ("NFI"), a leading independent bus and coach manufacturer and a leader in electric mass mobility solutions, today congratulates Charli Champagne for being named to [Mass Transit Magazine's Top 40 Under 40 list for 2022](#).

Charli Champagne, the Workforce Development Manager for NFI, is a diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") champion across the organization, leveraging over 10 years of experience in training and development and 13 years in manufacturing. She joins prior NFI inductees Stephanie Laubenstein, Ian Macpherson, Paul Cantin, Brydon Owen, Ben Wood, and Lindy Norris.

Joining NFI in 2017 as a Training and Development Specialist, Charli ascended to her current role where she leads NFI's DEI and workforce development initiatives, furthering efforts to increase opportunities for underserved, underrepresented, disadvantaged, and diverse candidates. Under her leadership, NFI administered its first ever data-driven organizational climate assessment (DEI) survey – the first in the Company's history which garnered a more than 55% participation rate – and based on results, she commenced development of tangible strategies to strengthen NFI's DEI efforts. Charli also introduced pronoun use in the workplace to signal greater inclusiveness, and she remains committed to enhancing the cultural safeness of NFI's workspace.

"We are tremendously proud of Charli for this well-deserved recognition. She is an important change leader not only on our team, but in our community and industry as well," said Janice Harper, Executive Vice President, People and Culture, NFI. "At NFI, we are committed to investing in and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion – and the work Charli leads is an example of our commitments in action, with results that illustrate steady progress. Her ability to pair data with strategy, to put plans into action, and to connect people with opportunity is unparalleled – and we congratulate her for earning this prestigious award from Mass Transit magazine."

One initiative Charli is most proud of is New Flyer's [Anniston Workforce Development Program](#) in Alabama. In partnership with the Transportation Diversity Council, Charli has created pathways and opportunities to underserved, underrepresented, and disadvantaged individuals to enter the manufacturing industry, regardless of their experience or backgrounds. As leader of the initiative, Charli has helped to guide 18 individuals to join New Flyer's Anniston team and provided supports to transition them into new roles and opportunities for advancement.

She also leads New Flyer's involvement in the American Public Transportation Association's ("APTA") Racial Equity Commitment Program and has spoken on DEI initiatives during industry panel presentations.

Charli's passion for inclusiveness transcends the workplace to her own community, where she leverages a decade of coaching co-ed youth football to empower young girls to join the sport and hopes to soon lead the first all-girls team in the region. As a single mom and proud member of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, Charli is also working with local Pride organizers to bring back community celebrations and provide visibility for her peers. Her commitment to visibility, representation, and support for all people has encouraged her to live openly, while proudly serving as a role model for local youth.

"It is an honour to be named alongside many exceptional leaders who are collectively advancing technology, innovation, and inclusion in transit," said Charli Champagne, Workforce Development Manager, NFI. "The opportunity to evolve our organizational culture and practices for the better is as invigorating as it is rewarding. Each day, our tangible actions are building greater inclusivity and helping individuals from every background to enter the new mobility era. It is rewarding to be part of building meaningful programs and pipelines to connect underrepresented, underserved, and disadvantaged people with new opportunities, and to see them thrive on our team and in our communities. I am excited to continue this impactful work alongside the amazing supports I have within NFI, and the communities in which we co-exist."

In Canada, calls for action through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (or "TRC") have grown louder in recent years and Charli has not shied from them. As a member of the TRC92: Employer Consortium, she works with other businesses to meet TRC Call to Action #92 by building Indigenous representation in business, completing workshops to identify and remove employment barriers for Indigenous youth, delivering training to leadership, and integrating findings to ensure NFI workplaces are inclusive to all cultures and people.

Charli is a current board member of Career Trek, a non-profit organization providing educational and career exploration opportunities for disadvantaged youth in Winnipeg and surrounding areas.

Several workplace initiatives led by Charli are reviewed in NFI's latest Environmental, Social, and Governance ("ESG") report, which can be found at nfigroup.com/ESG.

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NFI is a leader in zero-emission mobility, with electric vehicles operating (or on order) in more than 110 cities in six countries. NFI offers the widest range of zero-emission battery and fuel cell-electric buses and coaches, and its vehicles have completed over 70 million EV service miles.

Today, NFI supports growing North American cities with scalable, clean, and sustainable mobility solutions through a four-pillar approach that includes buses and coaches, technology, [infrastructure](#), and workforce development. NFI also operates the [Vehicle Innovation Center](#) ("VIC"), the first and only innovation lab of its kind dedicated to advancing bus and coach technology and providing workforce development. Since opening in late 2017, the VIC has hosted over 300 interactive events, welcoming 5,000 industry professionals for EV and infrastructure training.

About NFI

Leveraging 450 years of combined experience, NFI is leading the electrification of mass mobility around the world. With zero-emission buses and coaches, infrastructure, and technology, NFI meets today's urban demands for scalable smart mobility solutions. Together, NFI is enabling more livable cities through connected, clean, and sustainable transportation.

With 7,500 team members in nine countries, NFI is a leading global bus manufacturer of mass mobility solutions under the brands New Flyer® (heavy-duty transit buses), MCI® (motor coaches), Alexander Dennis Limited (single and double-deck buses), Plaxton (motor coaches), ARBOC® (low-floor cutaway and medium-duty buses), and NFI Parts™. NFI currently offers the widest range of sustainable drive systems available, including zero-emission electric (trolley, battery, and fuel cell), natural gas, electric hybrid, and clean diesel. In total, NFI supports its installed base of over 105,000 buses and coaches around the world. NFI's common shares trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange ("TSX") under the symbol NFI and its convertible unsecured debentures trade on the TSX under the symbol NFI.DB. News and information is available at www.nfigroup.com, www.newflyer.com, www.mcicoach.com, www.nfi.parts, www.alexander-dennis.com, www.arbocsv.com, and www.carfaircomposites.com.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/0716cf8b-4b76-4481-b242-8c8283ea945b>