

2024 Candidates

Board Member Candidates

Missy Blair, Pima Community College, Tucson, Arizona.



Missy is, in no order of importance, a Class A CDL holder, higher education leader, veteran of the United States Air Force, facilitator, amateur photographer, former Motorcycle Safety Foundation RiderCoach, wife, and mom. Missy was named one of the 2019 Top Women to Watch in Transportation by Women in Trucking for her work on Pima Community College's Autonomous Vehicle Driver & Operations Specialist certificate program and for her efforts to encourage women to join the trucking industry. Missy completed her Northern Arizona University Masters in Educational Leadership (with an emphasis in Community Colleges and Higher Education) in December 2020 and has been Pima Community College's Center for Transportation and Logistics' manager/academic director since 2014. Missy seeks a position on the NAPFTDS board to help provide others with the same assistance she receives from the organization and to help further the Association's and its members' initiatives.

Tony Diaz, Amarillo College, Amarillo, Texas.

Tony is passionate about his work with Amarillo College as a Program Coordinator and has been with Amarillo College for 17 months. Prior to that, Tony worked in the Trucking Industry in administration for 15 years. There, he went from Dispatch to Assistant Operations Manager and then into safety. Tony has been part of new startups and dispatch programs. Tony started out driving a truck over 27 years ago. When Tony went into management, he focused on creating a culture where the drivers were put first; figured if the drivers were doing great, then our customers would be doing great. Tony has a Bachelors in Business Administration from West Texas A&M. Outside of work, Tony enjoys golf, skiing, hiking, and working with local partners to grow their programs and Amarillo College's.



Donna Elicke, Olive-Harvey College, Chicago, Illinois.



Donna Elicke is currently with City Colleges of Chicago - Olive-Harvey. She has been in the transportation industry for over 24 years, working with Olive-Harvey for 18 years as a CDL vocational lecturer and currently as a Training Specialist. Donna is responsible for training new onboarding CDL Instructors, writing class syllabi, and safety training for the transportation department.

As a proud alumna at Olive-Harvey, she has acquired two associate degrees and currently on a Bachelor's in SCML.

Donna has a passion for the transportation industry as she comes from a family of truck drivers and has been in and out of trucks since the age of six years old, becoming a driver myself in 2000 and now on the educational side, gives me great joy.

Donna is looking forward to working with the NAPFTDS Board to assist and serve in whatever capacity she is needed to help make our training schools, highways, and laws better for the future drivers of this industry.

David Inman, Northeast Tech, Kansas, Oklahoma.

David is a native of Vinita, Oklahoma and an Alumni of Northeast Tech. He attained a Class A CDL in 1997 and has L, P, S, T, X Endorsements. David began as an Instructor at Northeast Tech in 2015 and moved to the CDL/Truck Driver Trainer in 2020 and started our Truck Driver Training program from the ground floor using my lifetime experience is a perfect fit for me with this program.



Chris Koettters, John Wood Community College, Quincy, Illinois.



Chris Koettters is an instructor of transportation services for John Wood Community College (JWCC) in Quincy, Illinois. After being a student and spending years on the road, in 2021 he came back as an instructor of the entry level driver training program as well as managing the day-to-day operations with fellow instructor Phil Steinkamp. When not at JWCC, he is a part-time driver for Blue Creek Trucking who is under the authority of DOT Foods.

Chris and his wife Susan live just across the river in Mark Twain's hometown of Hannibal, Missouri. When he's not teaching or driving, he is host to two podcasts, Wild Quincy, where him and his co-host review historical events and things that happened in Quincy, Illinois. The second is called The Lost Boys of Hannibal about three boys that went missing in 1967 from Hannibal, Missouri and were never found. They believed they were lost in one of the caves in town but after a month of searching they were never found. The Lost Boys podcast has been the winner of two Communicator Awards and now has over 500,000 downloads.

Celeste Turner, Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo, Iowa.



Celeste has been in the trucking industry since the 80's. She started out just doing the drivers payroll and that got into dispatching, which led to Traffic Manager. The first DOT seminar that she attended, really opened my eyes, changing everything as far as paperwork. She started reading the FMCSA Compliance Manual, wanting to learn every in case of an audit. She would buy trucks, tires, even brake drums. Also dispatched 15 drivers and negotiate outside carriers to haul the product - which was loading 25 trucks at our plant, 50 trucks a day at a cold storage that we used. Her secretary, and drivers, along with Celeste were considered a separate entity for the processing plant, so she had to keep accurate books.

She has been with the college for 8 years, managing the Regional Transportation Training Center. She has written programs for CDL Class B, School Bus, Drivers Ed, Drivers Ed instructor class, Woman in Basic Automotive, Construction Equipment Operator I and II, and Hitch Haul and Steer class.

Carrier Board Member Candidates

Bill Buechel, Schneider, Green Bay, Wisconsin.



Bill's entire 31-year professional career has been in the trucking industry and with Schneider. His experience has been in operations, dispatch, utilization, customer service and driver recruiting.

Schneider has been a long-standing member of NAPFTDS. As a 4-year carrier board member of NAPFTDS, I fully understand that highly trained safe drivers are the lifeblood of our business as well as our industry. He also understands the level of expertise NAPFTDS schools bring to training tomorrow's drivers. As such, Schneider has maintained either a Silver or Gold Member status as well as supporting regional meetings. We have also put great energy into building long lasting and consistent relationships with the vast majority of member schools. This includes regular scheduled visits from our extensive field recruiting team no matter the level of demand for drivers. We know that good relationships remain consistent no matter the

economic conditions.

Bill personally wishes to continue serving on the board because he is passionate about the trucking industry and know that it all starts and ends with training new quality drivers. Bill also believes that he has a lot to contribute to the Association with his 31 years of trucking experience. In his 14 years in driver recruiting, He has personally visited well over 100 publicly funded and private school locations in almost every state of the country.

Bill's vision for NAPFTDS is to increase the number of carrier & school members involved with the Association. He greatly believes in the quality of training being done at NAPFTDS member schools and that greater collaboration between NAPFTDS schools and carriers will improve the industry. He knows that his experience and vast network of school contacts make him a unique candidate for this position.

Tom Pietrzak, Werner Enterprises, Omaha, Nebraska.

Tom has been in the industry for 25 years, all of those with Werner Enterprises. Tom began his driving career with Werner in 1998 after graduating from truck driving school. For 15 years he drove both regionally and 48 states during which time he accumulated well over one million safe miles. Tom trained new drivers and found this to be extremely rewarding. He also drove in Truck Driving Championships and represented Werner at many Truck Shows. This exposure gave him the desire to do something in the industry outside of the truck. In 2013 Tom transitioned to recruiting and became Werner's Northeast Regional Field Recruiter. About five years ago he was promoted to his current position, General Manager of Field Recruiting. As such, he is responsible for the field recruiting team throughout the country. As part of his job, Tom travels extensively and has visited truck driving schools in 43 states.



Tom's experience, involvement and exposure to the industry gives him a well-rounded perspective. He believes this would enable him in assisting NAPFTDS achieve their goals. Being able to serve on the NAPFTDS Board would be a welcomed challenge.

Betsy Waltrop, Freymiller, Inc., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Betsy has been in the trucking industry since 1998. She began her career as a payroll clerk, moved to recruiting, and in 2023 was promoted from Director to VP of Driver Resources. Betsy currently oversees Recruiting, Orientation, Student Training (finishing program), Independent Contractors, Second Chance Program, and Retention for Freymiller. Over her career, she has worked for refrigerated, flatbed, and van carriers. The majority of her career has been with Over-the-Road, irregular route carriers, but she also spent 5 years working with an LTL carrier.

Betsy has worked with carriers who have had start-up student training programs as well as carriers who depended mostly on student recruiting to fill empty seats. Betsy still takes time to visit Oklahoma Career Tech Schools like Central Vo-Tech and North East Technology Center as helping new students as they begin their transportation industry career is a passion.

Vendor Board Member Candidates

Brent Lauber, Kelly Anderson Group, Neosho, Missouri.

Brent Lauber's career trajectory is a testament to his adaptability and dedication, marked by over a decade of impactful work in the transportation industry and a distinguished 20-year tenure as a PGA Golf Professional. His professional journey reflects a remarkable transition from the greens of golf to the dynamics of transportation and technical education.

In the last eight years, Brent has been a key sales figure at the Kelly Anderson Group, focusing intensely on the technical education sector. His role transcends mere longevity; it's characterized by a deep engagement with educational programs and substantial improvements in the field. Brent's commitment is not just visible in the duration of his service but is profoundly evident in the tangible outcomes - the solid results he has achieved and the consistently positive feedback from both clients and trainees.

As a proud member of the National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools, Brent actively contributes to the Education Committee and more recently, the Membership Committee. His involvement extends to the American Trucking Association and both the Missouri and Arkansas Trucking Associations, where he is not just a member but an active volunteer, especially noted for his contributions to the Arkansas and Missouri Truck Driving Championships over the past seven years. Brent's leadership skills and forward-thinking approach are particularly highlighted by his role as a founding member of the NextGen Trucking Association. This position underscores his commitment to not only participating in the present environment of the trucking industry but also shaping its future. To summarize, Brent Lauber is a professional whose career is defined by a smooth transition between industries, a deep commitment to technical education, and an unwavering dedication to the advancement of the transportation industry. His contributions and leadership continue to influence and shape the industry, making him a valuable asset and an inspiring figure in his field.



Deborah Quackenbush, Virtual Excellence, LLC and Virage Simulation, Port Orange, Florida.



Deborah Quackenbush is a market expert in the implementation of driving simulation for training all types of drivers for close to thirty years. Throughout her extensive career, she has developed a far-reaching network of professional colleagues and has worked closely with businesses, governments, educational institutions and communities to further safety and education for all roadway users. Deborah has worked in leadership positions with major simulation and defense contractors providing expertise in implementing virtual reality concepts for education, rehabilitation and assessment for military and driving simulation products.

In November 2011, Deborah joined Virage Simulation as their business development consultant/director for the United States. Her wealth of experience in product and business development and strong passion for road safety make her a great addition to the Virage team and an ideal liaison to Virage end users in the United States. Ms. Quackenbush is an active member of the National Academy of Sciences, Transportation Research Board serving on the Operator Education and Regulation Committee and the Simulation and Measurement Committee for over 20 years and currently on the Truck and Bus Safety Committee. She has been a subject matter expert contributor on several research projects and served on several national committees charged with writing standards for performance in education, training, and assessment areas. In 2021 Ms. Quackenbush was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools (NAPFTDS), dedicated to the development of quality truck drivers for the trucking industry. Deborah Quackenbush was also a distinguished legislator from Broome County, New York being elected and serving in public office for eight years.