Women In Trucking Conference Generates Dialogue and Action Around Gender Diversity in Transportation

The Women In Trucking Association, Inc. (WIT) held its fourth annual Accelerate! Conference and Expo earlier this month. The Accelerate! Conference and Expo works to elevate the issue of gender diversity, develop women leaders, and explore how to leverage a diverse workforce for company success and engage and retain more females in the industry.

PLOVER, Wis. (PRWEB) November 20, 2018 -- The Women In Trucking Association, Inc. (WIT) held its fourth annual Accelerate! Conference and Expo earlier this month. More than 825 women and men from six countries registered to attend the event in Frisco, Texas Nov. 12-14, which reflects a record-breaking attendance level with more than a 300-person increase from the year before. The Accelerate! Conference & Expo works to elevate the issue of gender diversity, develop women leaders, and explore how to leverage a diverse workforce for company success and engage and retain more females in the industry.

“This is the only conference that encourages the employment of women in the industry and helps to minimize obstacles they face,” said Ellen Voie, WIT president and CEO. “The positive energy and supportive atmosphere at the conference provided the perfect environment for talking candidly about common challenges, sharing best practices and trends, and empowering us all to make a difference in our companies and the industry.”

Several key themes emerged from the three-day event:
- “A cookie-cutter approach for regulations does not effectively serve every sector of the multifaceted trucking industry,” said Cathy Gautreaux, deputy administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. “What’s good for truckload may not be good for less-than-truckload.” As a result, FMCSA officials are sifting through in excess of 5,000 online comments the agency received regarding potential changes to hours of service rules, many of which support tweaking the regulations to increase flexibility.
- Competitive compensation and offering a variety of hauling options can help retain drivers and attract new ones in a market where unemployment is at record low levels and the driver shortage continues to be a major issue, according to Lana Battts, co-president of Driver iQ and Gretchen Jackson, senior manager of driver recruiting for CFI.
- The economic environment is forcing an increase in driver pay and freight rates until demand is satisfied. Truckload driver turnover is stuck near 100 percent, capacity demand is outstripping supply, but lack of quality drivers is constraining expansion, and GDP continues a growth greater than 3 percent, according to Leah Shaver, COO of The National Transportation Institute.
- WIT reports that just under eight percent of truck drivers are women. Scarcity of female drivers is likely due to a combination of companies failing to reach them and women not recognizing trucking as a career opportunity, said Emalie Worsham, senior business systems analyst for Omnitracs.
- Listening to professional drivers through feedback tools such as surveys, check-ins, ride-alongs, town hall meetings, and online roundtables are ways to increase retention, said Jane Jazrawy, CEO of CarriersEdge.

Three finalists for the 2018 “Influential Woman in Trucking” award shared their insights on career satisfaction and productivity, including Nozuko Mayeza, Managing Director, Tulswiz Logistics and Brooke Willey, Vice President – Human Resources, CRST International. Angela Eliacostas, Founder and CEO, AGT Global Logistics was named the recipient of the 2018 “Influential Woman in Trucking” award.

The conference also provided attendees the opportunity to network with others in the industry at evening
receptions, participate in group discussions on topics of interest at roundtable luncheons, and meet with approximately 70 industry providers at the exhibition, including human resources and talent management providers, carriers, third-party logistics providers, OEMs, consultants, and technology innovators. WIT also celebrated the success and positive impact of Clare, the first truck driver doll, whose mission is to introduce young girls to careers in the trucking industry during one of the receptions.

Dates and location for the 2019 Accelerate! Conference & Expo to be announced shortly.

Photos can be downloaded from a WIT Shutterfly album: https://witaccelerate2018.shutterfly.com
Print-quality photos can be requested.

About Women In Trucking Association, Inc.
Women In Trucking Association, Inc. is a nonprofit association established to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments and minimize obstacles faced by women working in the trucking industry. Membership is not limited to women, as 17 percent of its members are men who support the mission. Women In Trucking is supported by its members and the generosity of Gold Level Partners: Michelin North America, Arrow Truck Sales, Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, Daimler Trucks North America, BMO Transportation Finance, Expediter Services, Great Dane, J.B. Hunt Transport, and Walmart. Follow WIT on Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn. For more information, visit http://www.womenintrucking.org or call 888-464-9482.
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