

Trucking: A Community Addressing a Shortage

With the start of summer, comes the planning of barbeques, water sports and road trips to spend time with family and friends. Tying your summer fun to how those deliveries arrive to your home or business is not typically top of mind, but making those special summer days happen is due in large part to the trucking industry. In fact, most people don't know that the trucking industry, from drivers to technicians to vendors and partners, serves 80% of America's communities.

Trucking is essential to our daily lives here in [INSERT STATE]. It doesn't just keep our communities supplied, it also keeps our economy and country moving forward. But, as the economy strengthens, and demand within the industry grows, the struggle to find qualified drivers in our industry is a significant challenge. The trucking industry has been facing a driver and technician shortage, with the American Trucking Associations (ATA) reporting an industry shortage of more than 50,000 drivers. Without truck drivers on our roads, our economy and daily lives would be so disrupted, that operations would literally shut down, which is why it's critical that we address the job shortage.

The fact is there are so many diverse jobs available for truck drivers. Flatbed, refrigerated, less than truckload (LTL) or truckload, are just a few examples of the many job opportunities available. These are jobs that offer great starting salaries and benefits, and provide the training needed to jumpstart a career. Thankfully, education starts early in some states with high schools talking about truck driver training programs and the opportunities available to them after graduation. When teens are taught about trucking career options, it has benefits for both the industry, by planting the seed early to fill the job pipeline, and for the student, offering them important choices.

There are also other positions in the trucking industry that require specific technical skills. As technology evolves, it's more important than ever to have a skilled and adaptable workforce, and we need to attract younger drivers. This job requires the ability to operate heavy equipment, patience, self-discipline, a good work ethic and personal responsibility. Personal values and loyalty go a long way in trucking, and can really pay off.

I chose to drive because I love the open road and the sense of pride I have in delivering important freight to families and businesses here in [INSERT STATE]. I feel that I provide great value in making a difference in someone's life. That's true throughout the industry. From mechanics and technicians, to corporate and management positions, we all share the same sense of pride knowing how important our industry's contributions are to our community and country. Trucking is a community of hard-working professionals and we need more qualified workers who can handle the task.

Professional truck drivers have suffered from unfair stigmas, but the reality is that we're hardworking members of society – 3.5 million of us, in fact, who love our jobs and are proud of our work and commitment to moving America forward. We're committed to road safety and one of our highest priorities is the safety of all drivers on the road, because at the end of the day, we all want to get home to our families safely, too.

By helping correct the misguided image of truck drivers, and working to implement changes across the industry to recruit more well qualified drivers, including younger generations and veterans, we're working to fill the shortage and keep the industry and America strong.

So, when you are driving on the road this summer and you pass a truck, I hope you'll remember that it's more than just a massive vehicle beside you – we're working to deliver everything our community needs. Truck drivers ensure your summer celebrations are stocked with all the items you need to turn those special occasions into memories. So, who is up for the challenge of helping to deliver memories for America's families?

Name

City, State, Professional Truck Driver

Company & Member, Trucking Moves America Forward