

Finalists Announced for 2024 Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence Award

The five finalists for the 9th annual "Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence" award have been announced

CHILLICOTHE, OH, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Finalists for the 9th annual "[Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence](#)" award were recently announced by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes program, [Kenworth](#) Truck Company and [Fastport](#). This

prestigious award honors military veterans who have made an outstanding transition into the commercial trucking industry. Through a comprehensive nomination process, careful review by a selection committee, and a final public vote, the program will recognize and reward America's top rookie military veteran drivers.

“

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Kevin Haygood

Ten semi-finalists were honored last week in Ohio, where they embarked on stops at the National Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus and the Kenworth Chillicothe truck manufacturing plant. Highlights of the trip included a live appearance on Road Dog Trucking Radio's Dave Nemo Show with Jimmy Mac and an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of Kenworth's truck-building facility.

Finalists for 2024 are summarized below in alphabetical order by last name:



HIRING OUR
HEROES

 

The Finalists for the 2024 Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence Award

Douglas Couch, U.S. Navy (E-5), Roehl Transport, Inc., Roehl Transport Training
Douglas Couch served in the United States Navy from 2012-2016, onboard the USS Nimitz CVN 68. Douglas worked as a Culinary Specialist 2nd Class. In this role, he oversaw 50 sailors, feeding more than 5,000 Sailors and Marines while being forward deployed. Since transitioning into the trucking industry, Douglas has driven more than 150,000 miles and has shown a true and relentless dedication to safety.

Brian Ferguson, U.S. Army and U.S. Army National Guard (E-7), Melton Truck Lines, Troops Into Transportation

After serving in the Army for three years, Brian Ferguson joined the Texas National Guard and served more than ten years. Brian reenlisted in the Army and served 17 years until he retired with a combined 31 years of service. Brian deployed seven times overseas and domestically. Of those deployments, three were combat deployments. Brian pursued a truck driving career because he enjoys traveling and the hard work of flatbed driving.

Shawn Haley, U.S. Marine Corps (E-4), Veriha Trucking LLC, Truck Driving Institute

Shawn Haley served in the Marine Corps from 1987 to 1991. During this time, he served as security for President Ronald Reagan, First Lady Nancy Reagan, President George H. W. Bush, and First Lady Barbara Bush. Shawn became an entrepreneur who ran a successful business for 20 years. After that time, he pursued a new challenge, becoming a regional truck driver at Veriha where he enjoys seeing our great country.

Billy Taylor, U.S. Coast Guard (E-7), Werner Enterprises, Roadmaster Drivers School

Born in Honolulu, Hawaii, Billy lived in many locations across the United States during his parents' U.S. Navy careers. He joined the U.S. Coast Guard in 2000, and served in various assignments including Port Security and Harbor Defense, Search and Rescue, Coast Guard Cutter deployments for drug interdiction/maritime defense, and served as a recruiter. He retired with 20 years of service in 2020 as a Chief Petty Officer, Machinery Technician. Billy now drives for Werner Enterprises on the Anheuser-Busch account in Columbus, Ohio.

Cory Troxell, U.S. Army (E-7), Stevens Transport, Phoenix Truck Driving Institute

Cory Troxell was born into service with his grandfather, father, and uncle serving with distinguished careers in the Army. Motivated by a strong sense of family pride, service, and patriotism following the events of 9/11, Cory enlisted into the Army in 2004. In 2009, Cory was severely wounded in an enemy IED attack, eventually earning him the Purple Heart. He continued to serve until his retirement in 2024. Drawing similarities to his decision to join the Army, he followed a trucking driving career path already cut by his family.

This year's Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence Award grand prize is a Kenworth T680, equipped with a 76-inch sleeper and the PACCAR Powertrain featuring the PACCAR MX-13 engine rated at 455 horsepower, PACCAR TX-12 automated transmission and PACCAR DX-40 tandem rear axles.

The Kenworth T680 features a Diamond VIT interior in slate gray with madrona accents and includes the latest in driver amenities. Both the driver and passenger seats are GT703 leather seats that are fully heated and cooled. The 76-inch sleeper includes space for a microwave and TV, a factory-installed fridge, and a rotating work table. The T680 also includes the latest in driver assistance systems, including Kenworth's Digital Mirrors, Bendix Fusion Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC) Stop and Auto Go, and Lane Keeping Assist with Torque Assisted Steering.

While the winner will drive away in this state-of-the-art truck, the program will award a \$10,000 prize for the runner-up and \$5,000 for each remaining finalist.

“Kenworth is proud to participate in this program that celebrates the accomplishments of military veterans transitioning into professional truck driving careers for the ninth consecutive year,” said Kevin Haygood, Kenworth assistant general manager for sales and marketing. “It was an honor to attend the Transition Trucking: Driving for Excellence Award event, and we look forward to awarding the Kenworth T680 truck to the winner in December.”

Eric Eversole, Vice President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and President of Hiring Our Heroes, remarked, “These finalists exemplify how skills developed in the military seamlessly transfer to successful careers in trucking. Their dedication and resilience continue to play a critical role in keeping America’s supply chain strong.”

Brad Bentley, President of Fastport, added, “Our semi-finalists represent the best of what a Veteran-Ready trucking industry looks like. These individuals have successfully transitioned from military service to driving careers, and their stories inspire others to follow suit. They truly embody the potential of the next generation of trucking professionals.”

The Transition Trucking contest continues to serve as a beacon for veteran drivers, showcasing the incredible opportunities available within the trucking industry. Public voting for the award will be held from November 1 through Veterans Day, November 11. The final winner will be revealed on December 13 during a special event at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

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