

Excelerator

Issue 22

November 2019



Inside this Newsletter:

SUPER TECHS MAKE US PROUD

Our SuperTech Challenge Winners competed at the national level

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHTS

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Get to know Fleetmaster



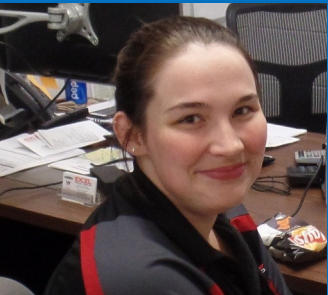
Jenna McGary in Charlotte



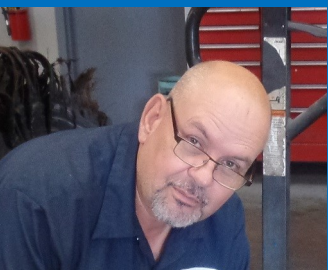
Isaac Hughes in Chesapeake



Mark Teague in Statesville



Ashley Burgandine in Weyers Cave



Jim Gibbs in Roanoke

On the Cover: Chris Rollins and
Jeff Kilby in Statesville

Why They Come Back

I recently read an article from the editors of Inc.com on “What Keeps Customers Coming Back”. It reminded me of what we are doing well, and where we can still improve. Here are a few of my take-aways:

1. **Stay in Touch.** It seems like we talk about customer communication constantly, but it is important to keep our customers fully informed about what is going on with their vehicle or what the status of their back-ordered part is. We need to master all of that, for every customer, and improve our communication at the next level, which is the post-transactional effort to remain at the fore front of our customer’s mind. Our sales professionals, advertisements, email blasts, and digital media are all part of this critical effort.
2. **Keep the experience fresh and relevant.** We frequently have new promotions, new inventory, and customer events where we endeavor to make the customers’ experience with us consistent and reliable, while also being engaging and fresh. Don’t hesitate to share with customers what is new around the dealership and what is new with our trucks and trailers.
3. **Surprise them.** I have said before that we don’t want customers to just be satisfied with their experience. We want them to be ECSTATIC. Where possible, we should find ways to exceed the customers’ expectations. This is in-line with our Elite Support efforts and is part of the reason why we invest so much in our facilities, our training, and our processes. We want our customers to be ELATED with the way they are treated when they visit our locations.
4. **Listen.** We use a wide range of tools to survey our customers. One of the most important things we can do is respond to their questions or concerns and show them that we are really listening. Responding personally to surveys, taking feedback to heart, and making reasonable changes to show our customers that we listen, we care, and we want to get better, is critical.
5. **Show your appreciation.** You may speak with dozens of customers every day, and while writing each one a thank you card for every transaction might be impractical, we can certainly go the extra mile for the many repeat customers with whom we have built relationships. Whether it is a letter, email, or a conversation in which we say a genuine “Thank you for being our customer, we really enjoy serving you,” it means a lot to our customers.

Let’s make sure that our customers are THRILLED to be doing business with Excel, that we communicate well and often with them, and that we tell them we appreciate their business.

Be Safe, Russ

Spotter Policy

The number of accidents involving specialty vehicles: bucket trucks, firetrucks, cement trucks, garbage trucks and RV trucks, is on the rise. It is difficult to back up safely without guidance from a “spotter”. Since it is a major safety concern, a **firm** “Spotter Required” policy has been implemented requiring all technicians to have a spotter when backing up a specialty vehicle. Reducing the risk by having an extra pair of eyes assisting the technician/driver while backing up should prevent future accidents. We are safest when we work together as a team!



Avoidable Accidents and Injuries

Injuries

In 2019, there has been a total of **19 avoidable injuries**. Three occurred in October alone - a Body Shop Tech was cut using a hand sander (7 stitches), a Diesel Tech tripped and fell while working on a truck (mild concussion), and a Trailer Tech hit a driveline which propelled a metal shaving into his shoulder.

The common message from these technicians was “always be prepared for the unexpected” and “watch your step.” Please reduce your distractions, take your time, and don’t take short cuts.

Accidents

Excel also experienced a high number of liability insurance claims in 2019. The same message for injuries can be applied to accidents. Remove distractions, take your time and don’t take short cuts.

I found an accident that took place in Columbia involving a customer particularly interesting and wanted to share it with you. A customer, whose truck was parked in front of the E/A bay, decided to start his truck **while he was not seated in the truck**. Unbeknownst to our customer, his 1997 Freightliner was in gear and took off once started. The truck catapulted right into the bay door. That short cut cost him a bay door and repairs to his truck! The customer was lucky...

It cost him money, but what if someone had been standing in front of the truck?

YOU CAN’T PUT A PRICE ON A LIFE.

	2010 Injuries	2011 Injuries	2012 Injuries	2013 Injuries	2014 Injuries	2015 Injuries	2016 Injuries	2017 Injuries	2018 Injuries	2019 Injuries
Statesville	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Columbia	5	0	1	1	1	3	0	3	1	1
Chesapeake	5	4	3	3	1	2	3	3	0	2
Weyers Cave	10	6	3	3	6	6	4	4	1	3
Charlotte	5	6	2	6	1	3	6	2	3	3
Chester	13	7	4	4	9	9	5	11	4	5
Roanoke	15	8	11	10	6	7	8	5	10	5
Total	53	31	24	27	24	30	27	29	19	19
Injury - an employee went to the Doctor for a work-related injury.										



Employee Spotlights



Terry Myers, one of our shop foremen in Roanoke, is a dedicated employee who has been an excellent mentor to new technicians and has served the company for 43 years! Terry has been effectively and efficiently managing throughput and scheduling, and he has incredible knowledge of the industry. Thank you Terry for always being a great leader for our team and serving our customers well.



Logan Grimm in Weyers Cave Sales is enthusiastic and customer focused. He brings energy to his work and is building strong relationships with his customers. He also recently brought us a new customer, selling our first truck to Rockingham Mill. Congratulations, Logan, and we are glad to have you on our team!



Brandon Medina in Statesville Parts is an excellent leader with an exceptional attitude, strong and consistent performance, and skilled customer service. Brandon is forward thinking in streamlining processes and is proactive in improving our customer experience. Whether in the office or the warehouse, Brandon is quick to tackle any challenge with a positive and solution-focused attitude. Way to lead the pack, Brandon!



David Gregory in Chesapeake Service brings a wealth of experience and an incredible work ethic to the team. With over 30 years of technician experience, David mentors new technicians, stays late, does anything asked, is proactive, keeps the facility in shape, and does walk arounds. David is truly a leader and role model!



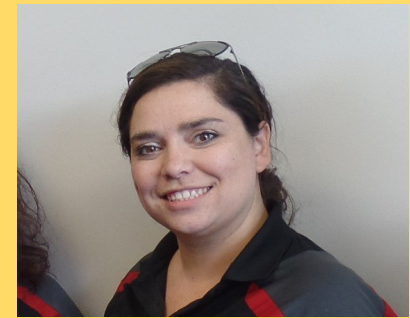
Scott Chasteen in our Columbia Shop has an excellent work ethic and attitude. He mentors new employees, fills in as a foreman when needed, and is always ready to go above and beyond. He takes on any job with a smile, and has been helping get new trucks ready for delivery to customers. Scott regularly comes in early and stays late to get the customers taken care of, and he always has a positive attitude. Thank you Scott for being a leader in the shop! We appreciate all of your hard work!

Employee Spotlights continued

Robert Crudup in Charlotte Parts is a dedicated, hard working leader for the Parts Warehouse. He has an excellent work ethic, a positive attitude, and is customer service oriented. Robert is always willing to help train new employees, lead by example, and go the extra mile to get something done. We are very grateful to have Robert as one of the team leaders in Charlotte's warehouse!



Tiffany Llamas in Chester Service always brings a great attitude in to work with her. She is always positive and happy to help both coworkers and customers with a smile. Tiffany juggles a lot of responsibilities and tasks at the front service counter, and goes above and beyond by covering extra shifts when needed. Thank you for all you do Tiffany! We, and the customers, recognize the difference you are making!



Employees with 30+ Years of Experience

Paul Brammer, Roanoke's Back Parts Counterman, celebrated 48 years with the company June 01st.

Terry Myers, Roanoke's Senior Foreman, celebrated 43 years with the company August 01st.

Margie Tucker, Chester's Inventory Control Specialist, celebrated 29 years with the company and a total of 50 years with the predecessor dealership.

Tony Hart, Roanoke's Service Technician, celebrated 42 years with the company on June 01st.

Richard Thompson, Roanoke's Senior Accountant, celebrated 41 years with the company July 15th.

Larry Bryant, Road Service Technician, celebrated 40 years with the company April 01st.

Melanie Walker, Statesville Parts Manager, celebrated 4 years with the company and a total of 39 years in the transportation industry.

Gary McClung, Roanoke's Parts Counterman, celebrated 38 years with the company October 26th.

Reggie Hunley, Roanoke's Maintenance Man, celebrated 36 years with the company July 18th.

Becky Phelps, Charlotte's Finance Manager, celebrated 12 years with the company and a total of 34 years in the transportation industry.

Mark Smith, Charlotte's Regional Parts Support Manager, celebrated 12 years with the company and a total of 34 years in the transportation industry.

Norris Hart, Charlotte's Parts Counterman, celebrated 12 years with the company and a total of 33 years in the transportation industry.

John Purser, Roanoke's Parts Counterman, celebrated 32 years with the company September 28th.

Bill Wood, Roanoke's HD Service Manager, celebrated 32 years with the company May 01st.

Rex Barbee, Charlotte's Parts Counterman, celebrated 12 years with the company and a total of 31 years in the transportation industry.

Judy Parker, Roanoke's Finance Coordinator, celebrated 36 years with the company on July 23rd.

Pete Witt, Roanoke's New Truck Sales Manager, celebrated 30 years with the company February 13th.

Mary Caldwell, Roanoke's Finance Manager, celebrated 30 years with the company June 14th.



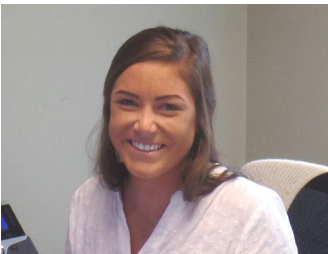
Austin Chavis and George Collins in Chesapeake



Trace Harrell in Columbia



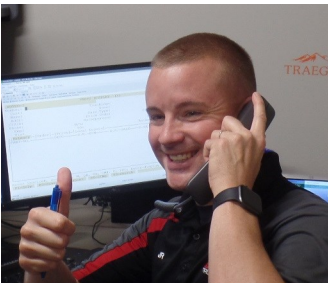
Cory Arnette and Brandi Booth in Chester



Sarah Brewer in Charlotte



Kevin Simmons in Weyers Cave



J.R. Mitchell in Roanoke



Edgar Hodges (Left) and Jim Porter (Right) in Roanoke

Take a minute to tell your drivers how much you appreciate them! They often miss company luncheons and other events due to being out on the road, but they are still an important and valued part of the Excel Family!

Excel Customer Loyalty Club

Excel implemented a Loyalty Club that recognizes our used truck customers. This club features a VIP card, a free hat or t-shirt, a \$1,000 off the next truck purchased and financed through Excel, a \$1,000 off the next extended warranty purchased and one free oil change! Our goal is to build strong relationships with our used truck customers and become their “Complete Solution Provider”.



Elite Support—300 Strong and Still Going!

In 2010, Elite Support began through the collaboration and brainstorming of Freightliner and 8 Freightliner dealerships who wanted to develop a program that focused on improving the customer experience. Excel’s Charlotte Dealership was one of the eight dealerships involved from the beginning. With over 300 dealerships to date, the vision to provide the best overall service, parts, and sales experiences in the industry has paid off. Dealerships across the U. S. and Canada provide a network that customers can count on for Elite customer support.

Customer Profile: Fleetmaster

We are delighted to celebrate our continuing relationship with Fleetmaster Express. Fleetmaster companies operate over 300 trucks and 1300 trailers, and have locations in 9 states. With the industry's high demand for capable long-haul drivers, Fleetmaster has incentivized its team by providing them with the nicest trucks on the market: Freightliner Cascadias.

Between the top of the line driver experience and the market-leading fuel efficiency, the new Cascadia is a perfect fit, and Fleetmaster turned to Excel to supply their fleet.

We have provided Fleetmaster with their Freightliner tractors and Wabash Trailers since the mid-90s, and 40 more Freightliners are expected to join their fleet by the end of the year.

Our longstanding partnership with Fleetmaster has seen both of our companies grow, and the culture of dedication and employee recognition is something that we both share. To celebrate the purchase of Fleetmaster's 300th Freightliner Cascadia, and to recognize the seven years of exceptional work from one of their drivers, Cynthia Lamb, they awarded her with a beautiful and fully-equipped, brand new Freightliner Cascadia from Excel. Thank you Fleetmaster for making us a part of your business!



Serving Others

Sean McGary, Charlotte New Truck Salesman, volunteers at the Second Harvest Food Bank of Charlotte where he sorts the charitable contributions and stages them for transport to various distribution centers around the area. Sean feels donating time to help those that are less fortunate is very important.

Are you or your coworkers supporting your community? Email the details to sduvall@exceltg.com for a chance to be in the next Excelerator!

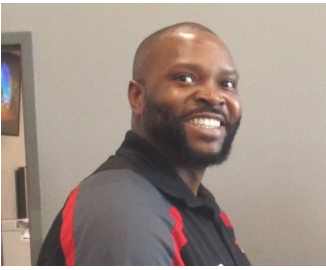


Company Outings

Everyone was invited to a relaxing day of sun and fun with their families at Smith Mountain Lake! We had a dunking booth for Dunk Your Boss, Water Toys, an icecream truck, face-painting, and even a special appearance by the local Fire Department's fire boat.



We also hope everyone had a great time at the Employee Cookouts and our Employee Appreciation days at Carowinds and Kings Dominion! We know how much each employee contributes to our shared success, and we thank you for your hard work, and your families for their role in supporting you as you support Excel.



James Brown in Columbia



Super Tech Challenge

This is Excel's eighth year competing in the Tech Challenge. Techs from across Excel compete in a written and hands-on test to demonstrate their skills. The winners of Excel's Tech Challenge went on to compete in the 15th Annual Super Tech Challenge in Raleigh, NC. The three heavy duty technicians that competed this year were Neil Cline (Chester), Ben Siron (Weyers Cave), and Bill Zwisle (Columbia). In addition, Excel had two trailer technicians compete for the first time. They are Ted Hulse (Weyers Cave) and Don Kirby (Roanoke). The competition included over 150 technicians and students from local colleges around the country. All of our technicians did well and represented Excel Truck Group with pride. Congratulations to all participants - we are proud to have you on our team!



Daniel Bedford in Charlotte



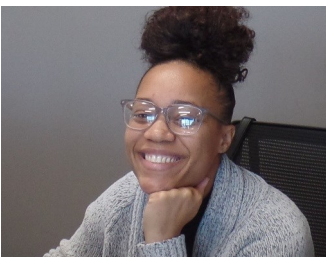
Kevin Sisson in Chester



Dallas Stevens in Chesapeake



Mark Celentano in Statesville



Taniece Ford in Chesapeake

Did You Know?

Rutrough Mack, the Roanoke Mack Dealership that would eventually become Excel Truck Group, was purchased by Frank Ellett in 1981. That is the same year that Daimler purchased Freightliner from Consolidated Freightways.

Freightliner was founded in 1942 in Portland, Oregon. Leland James, the owner of Consolidated Freightways, decided to build trucks out of lightweight aluminum rather than the heavier and more commonly used steel.

Today, Freightliner has a 40% share of the Class 8 Market, more than double the second-place competitor, and is the industry leader in innovation and efficiency.

While trucks may have changed since 1981, Excel's commitment to our customers and employees has not!

Retirements, Remembrances, and More

Brent Ferguson has stepped down from his post as Roanoke Parts Manager after 13 years with Excel. He is now working in the parts phone room, and he has been very helpful in onboarding the new Roanoke Parts Manager, Carter Moore. Brent served at an old Roanoke facility, was a Trailer Parts Manager, and a Parts Marketing Manager, and while Brent lead the Roanoke team, Roanoke's parts business grew from less than \$1 million/month to over \$1.7 million/month, and has seen countless changes. Brent, we thank you for your incredible service, leadership, and dedication to the company and your team. Thank you!

Pete Witt will be retiring after 30 years with the company. He began his career with Excel as a salesman dedicated to the Freightliner product and transitioned to the Sales Manager position in 2001. Over the last 30 years Roanoke's annual truck sales have grown from 150 to 1,000. Pete attributes his success to his sales team and great customer base. Congratulations and best of luck to you, Pete!

Jay McGary is retiring after 12 years with the company. He started with Excel as the general manager in Charlotte and then transitioned to new truck sales where he had a successful career selling to high profile accounts. Congratulations and best of luck to you, Jay!

Wilbur Adkins, Chester parts driver, will be retiring after 10 years of service. Congratulations and best of best of luck to you, Wilbur!

Larry Bryant, Roanoke's primary Roadside and Mobile Service Technician and an employee for 40 years, suffered a serious injury in September while working on his farm. Our prayers and support are with Larry.

Congratulations to Cheyenne Duck in Chesapeake on her recent baby!

Congratulations to Cory Skaggs in Chesapeake on his new baby!



Brent Ferguson in Roanoke



Pete Witt in Roanoke



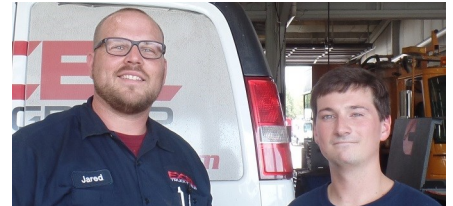
Josey Pangle and Kevin Burne in Weyers Cave



Cody Shifflett, Tony Schmidt, and Frank Sabbatini in Weyers Cave



John Grizzard, Dale Blankenship, and Joe Bradshaw in Chester



Jared Hance and Wesley Freeman in Statesville



Debbie Vaden, Casey Germain, and Michelle Ouellette in Roanoke

In Memoriam

We are deeply saddened to share that Rick Rogers passed away recently. Rick was a Parts Counter representative in Charlotte, and had worked at



Rick Rogers in Charlotte

the Charlotte dealership for over 21 years. He was known by all to be a genuine, caring, and helpful teammate, who would drop whatever he was doing to give someone a hand. Rick mentored others, and always had unbelievable energy, never slowing down. He will be dearly missed.

Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.



Mark Linton and Peggy Fair in Charlotte



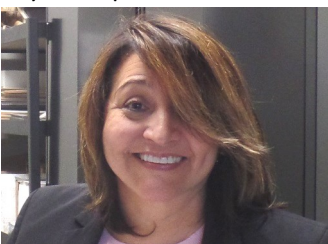
Joe Barlow in Chester



Dave Sanders and Kurt Jackson in Weyers Cave



Taylor Earp in Columbia



Belinda Prichard in Chesapeake



Wayne Day with a customer in Roanoke

Cyber Security—Don't get Phished!

As always, it is important that we remain vigilant about our cyber security. If you receive an email you weren't expecting, or one from someone you don't recognize, exercise extra caution. If there is a chance the email is not legitimate, do not open any attachments, do not click on any links, and do not forward it.

What you can do is send a separate email to Helion (support@heliontechnologies.com) with a screenshot of the email and the time you received it, and ask them if it is safe.

As a reminder of why this is so important, one cyber attack could cost our business millions of dollars. We have had cyber attacks before that crippled our facilities for several days.

No matter how good our systems are, we are only as safe as we are careful. Everyone needs to take cyber security seriously to protect themselves and the company.

Truckers Parade Against Cancer (TPAC)

This event started in 1997 when a team of women and men participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life to honor the passing of one of the team member's sister who died from breast cancer. After participating in the relay for several years, Shelia Dodd Jones, the team leader, collaborated with her husband Darrin and Darrin's uncle and aunt, Kermit Jones and his

wife Rhonda, to create the Trucker Parade Against Cancer. In the fall of 2000, TPAC hosted the first parade of trucks with banners honoring those that lost their life to cancer. From 40 trucks in 2000 to roughly 260 trucks nineteen years later TPAC has donated over

\$1,000,000 to the American Cancer Society. For more information, please go online to www.truckersparade.com. Excel Truck Group is a proud sponsor of this event.



Celebrating 50 Years in Chester!

Margie Tucker in Chester recently celebrated her 50th year with the company! She was working for the factory-owned Mack Truck branch before it joined the Virginia Truck Center (Excel Truck Group) family. Margie has been with the same group of coworkers and serving the same customers with a smile through those changes and more.

Margie says that while technology and the scale of the business have changed a lot, the sense of family she shares with her coworkers and customers has not. Margie, we are delighted to have your wealth of experience and the great attitude you bring to the Excel Family!



Aric Finney wins FUSO award

Aric Finney was awarded the Mitsubishi Fuso Top Sales Performer Award in the first quarter of 2019. Aric joined Excel 23 months ago where he has made an impact in the Charlotte market, building strong relationships with class 4 & 5 customers like Wilmar Leasing. Congratulations and keep up the good work, Aric!



Leland James Award

The Leland James award is a Freightliner sponsored sales program that recognizes top producing truck sales professionals in three primary product segments: On-Highway, Vocational, and Medium Duty. In addition to truck sales, each winner completed online classes needed to receive a designation of Master Sales Professional Certification.

Congratulations to Excel's Leland James Winners:

Terry Keith, Elite Winner (Charlotte)

Kermit Jones, Silver Elite Vocational (Roanoke)

Bobby Critcher, Silver Elite On-Highway (Chesapeake)



Kermit Jones in Roanoke



Bobby Critcher in Chesapeake



Al Wrighton and Ricky Mullins in Charlotte



James Baxley and Chris Smith in Columbia



Carl Herrera in Chesapeake



Travis Donahue, Doug Morgan, and Hunter Padgett in Roanoke



Matt Cook, Kent Mongold, Matt Johndrow, Dustin Ambrose, Matt Long in Weyers Cave



Nikki Pennington and Lloyd Sanderson in Chesapeake



Tyler Burnette, James Suggs, and Gary Santerre in Chester



Jamie Gonzalez and Coty Plume in Weyers Cave

Daimler Trucks North America earns Clean Air Award

Daimler Trucks North America, the parent company of Freightliner and Western Star, was recognized recently with the 2019 Clean Air Technology Award from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD).

Recognition was given to Freightliner for its Innovation Fleet, which is comprised of battery-powered electric medium and heavy-duty trucks.

Roger Nielsen, CEO of DTNA, said “Our team is fully committed to co-creating the future of sustainable transportation with great customers and with great partners like AQMD”.

The electric fleet is currently testing the integration of battery-powered commercial vehicles into large-scale transportation operations by fleets like Penske in Long Beach, CA and Los Angeles, CA.

The Freightliner eM2 and eCascadia were unveiled in June 2018 and are part of Daimler’s global electrified initiative. Full production of the electric models is scheduled for late 2021.