ASLRRA Announces 2020 Business Development Award Winners

Four Short Lines Recognized from the Most Competitive Field to Date

WASHINGTON, May 4, 2020 – The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) annually recognizes member railroads for outstanding business development activities designed to grow the short line railroad business. In 2020, ASLRRA had a record number of submissions covering partnerships for new business growth, investment in facilities, and creative growth activities with currently served industries and customers.

“The Business Development Award recognizes the essence of the short line story – working closely with customers to deliver real value, excellent service, and win-win opportunities,” said Chuck Baker, President, ASLRRA. “This year we had a record number of submissions, a testament to the ingenuity, flexibility and commitment that the short line industry shows again and again. In a year when Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) continued to transform the broader rail industry, these small business railroads found new ways to become indispensable partners in connecting their customers to the U.S. and world economies. Each of the 603 short line railroad operations in the country is unique, and these four award winners demonstrate the best of how short lines grow with their customers.”
To be considered for the award, a railroad must demonstrate one or more of the following: utilization of the railroad’s unique operating characteristics to deliver value; partnership with other development authorities, Class 1s, or companies; delivering economic success to both the railroad and the community it serves.

For 2020, the following railroads were selected:

**Ann Arbor Railroad (AA)** – The company’s analysis of the auto industry’s sales and production trends, coupled with the identification of an under-utilized facility in Toledo, Ohio led to a partnership opportunity with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) to create a new distribution center for finished automobiles – the Silver Creek Vehicle Distribution and Homologation Center. Breaking ground in 2018, and beginning operations in time for the Jeep® Gladiator launch in July of 2019, the facility supports FCA’s Toledo and Detroit assembly production with an 1,800 car through-put capacity per day, has created 102 new jobs, and has helped stabilize the local economy.

**Delmarva Central Railroad (DCR)** - Discussions with existing customers uncovered that certain liquid ingredients, vital to the manufacture of chicken feed, were being trucked in from beyond the Delmarva Peninsula. DCR approached the market leaders and partnered with these suppliers via long-term agreements to ship railcars of liquid feed ingredients to the eastern shore of Delaware, Maryland, & Virginia for transloading at their previously acquired facility in Seaford, Delaware. Significant investments were made to the site to allow for the efficient handling of this new rail traffic that was a 100% conversion from long-haul trucks. The result has created long-term value for all stakeholders including the community by taking traffic off the road.

**The Indiana Rail Road Company (INRD)** – The INRD forged a partnership with Indianapolis-based trucking company Venture Logistics to build a 406,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art, rail-served distribution center in Indianapolis. The Venture Rail Warehouse, which features 58 truck docks and 15 indoor rail car spots, is the most modern rail-served facility in central Indiana. In 2017, the warehouse’s first full year of operation, the INRD moved more than 1,200 carloads into the Venture Rail Warehouse. The rail business more than doubled to 2,600 carloads in 2019. The $21 million dollar investment has allowed the INRD to
diversify, provided a much-needed modern facility in the logistics hub of Indianapolis, and will drive
continued growth with a partner that was formerly considered solely a competitor.

**Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad (RBMN)** – The railroad has continued to pursue its
strategy of working closely with customers to provide unique transloading opportunities to grow current
customer business, and to provide new customers with efficient rail service. RBMN opened two new
transload facilities in 2019, in West Hazelton, and in Ransom, Pennsylvania. In addition, in 2019 RBMN
brought the trucking piece of transloading in house at all four of their transload locations. The addition of
truck loading services provides a competitive advantage over other operators, allowing for control of all
aspects of the operation (rail, transloading/warehousing, and trucking), providing customers with a timely
and seamless flow of goods and material. Collectively, transload efforts have resulted in nearly 900
carloads in 2019, contributing to the company’s overall carload traffic growth of 6%. RBMN handled a
record breaking 34,000+ carloads in 2019.

Visit [www.aslrra.org](http://www.aslrra.org) to learn more about this Business Development Awards.

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**About ASLRRA** - The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing the
interests of the nation’s 603 short line and regional railroads and railroad supply company members in legislative and regulatory matters. Short
lines operate 47,500 miles of track in 49 states, or approximately 29% of the national railroad network, touching in origination or termination
one out of every five cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad
network. [www.aslrra.org](http://www.aslrra.org)