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## **Arkansas Trucking Association announces technician scholarship recipients**

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. – The Arkansas Trucking Association is pleased to announce the 2019 recipients of the Carl Tapp Memorial Scholarship Fund. High school seniors Ryan McKnight of West Fork High School and Clint VanPoucke of Elkins High School will both receive \$7,500 to pursue training for a career in medium/heavy duty truck technology.

“Arkansas relies on the trucking industry as a major employer in the state. One in twelve working Arkansans have a career in our industry. It is vital to the state’s economy that we capture the right talent and make the highly skilled training accessible to trucking’s future technicians,” says Shannon Newton, president of the Arkansas Trucking Association. “This year’s scholarship recipients will someday be caring for the machines we share the road with every day, and we wish them well in their education and careers because their success is our safety.”

While at West Fork High School, Ryan McKnight has been a member of the Future Farmers of America and Future Business Leaders of America. He also played football and baseball and was a student officer for SkillsUSA, an organization that improves the quality of future skilled workforce through the development of framework skills that include personal, workplace and technical skills grounded in academics. McKnight also won the 2019 Northwest Arkansas Regional Career and Technical Leadership Award. This fall he plans to attend Northwest Technical Institute in Springdale, Ark.

Elkins High School senior Clint VanPoucke displayed his technical talents at the SkillsUSA competition for diesel technology at the national level. He also worked at Washington Regional Medical Center and plans to begin the medium/heavy duty truck technology program at the Northwest Technical Institute this fall.

“This year’s crop of applicants was outstanding. We had students from across the state with excellent credentials,” says Kenneth Calhoun, founding member of the scholarship committee. “Ultimately the committee had to take on the challenging task of selecting just two winners. Clint and Ryan rose to the top, and when the process was complete, the choice was clear. We are excited at the prospect of having these fine young men join our industry. It will be exciting to track just how far they go.”

The Arkansas Trucking Association’s Maintenance & Technology Council established the Carl Tapp Memorial Scholarship Fund to celebrate Carl Tapp, the council’s first chairman, and his career-long commitment to nurturing new talent in the industry. The Fund is intended to enable and encourage growth in the state’s diesel technician workforce and to help assure that the safest, most knowledgeable and skilled technicians are working on the trucks and trailers on our nation’s roads. Candidates were evaluated based upon their interest and performance in STEM courses, teacher and mentor recommendations and personal interviews with the scholarship committee of industry experts.

This scholarship has been made possible by the vision and investment in the future of trucking in Arkansas by the following companies and individuals: ArcBest Companies, Bruce Purkey, DAVCO Technology, Kenneth Calhoun, Maverick Transportation, McKee Foods Transportation, Pressure Systems International, Summit Truck Group, TechForce Foundation, The Tapp Family, Truck Centers of Arkansas, Truck-Lite Co., and Walt Luethy. Contact Sarah Sheets ([sarahsheets@arkansastrucking.com](mailto:sarahsheets@arkansastrucking.com)) for more information about the Scholarship Fund.

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The Arkansas Trucking Association (ATA) is a statewide business league comprised of approximately 300 trucking companies and service companies to serve as the political and public relations arm of the trucking industry. The ATA has continuously served the Arkansas trucking industry in this capacity since its incorporation in 1932.