

LEARNING

Curve

Volume 6, No. 3
Fall 2005

NETWORKING THE FINEST EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY



Check your
Region —
Contact your
Region
Coordinator.

NAPFTDS FALL REGION CONFERENCES

Offering high-quality, workshops/seminars on national and regional issues for truck driving instructors and support staff. *Free of charge to attendees.* Allow about 1½ days per conference.

Check your Region - Contact your Region Coordinator

Region #1

Dec. 8-9 Thurs., Fri.

Wade Westphal, Coordinator
Bates Technical College
Tacoma, WA

Ph. 253-680-7491

Region #2

Oct. 13-14 Thurs., Fri.

Dave Terry, Coordinator
Southwest Applied Technical College
Cedar City, UT

Ph. 435-586-2899

Region #3

Oct. 20-21 Thurs., Fri.

Dave Keays, Coordinator
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Eau Claire, WI

Ph. 715-855-7541

Region #4

Oct. 6-7 Thurs., Fri.

Van O'Neal, Coordinator
Houston Community College
Houston, TX

Ph. 713-718-8201

and
Nov. 10-11 Thurs., Fri.

Robert McClanahan, Coordinator
Central Tech Transportation & Safety Education
Drumright, OK

Ph. 918-352-2551 x314

Region #5

Sept. 29-30 Thurs., Fri.

Mayanne Turner, Coordinator
Vincennes University
Indianapolis, IN

Ph. 317-381-6029

Region #6

Dec. 1-2 Thurs., Fri.

Roy Williams, Coordinator
Sandersville Technical college
Sandersville, GA

Ph. 478-553-9239

Region #7

Sept. 29-30 Thurs., Fri.

Tina Frindt & Dan Stroupe, Coordinators
Northampton Community College
Tobyhanna, PA

Ph. 570-839-2778 (Tina)

Vendors are encouraged to exhibit products or services at Region Conferences. Cost to exhibit is \$150 at each Region.

Featured School

Pinellas Technical Education Centers

The Pinellas Technical Education Centers' (PTEC) Commercial Vehicle Driving program, located in St. Petersburg, FL, is now in its 16th year of teaching the fine art of driving tractor-trailers.

PTEC entered into the truck driver-training business when state funding, through the Department of Education (DOE) was appropriated in 1988. Utilizing a well-designed program combined with progressive technical equipment — including a classroom multiple-user stimulator — PTEC has built a reputation with local carriers that would be the envy of many schools.

The Commercial Vehicle Driving (CVD) program, headed by Department Chairperson **Jack Piehl**, boasts a job placement rate that's annually 90% or better. The 320-hour program includes 120 hours of classroom instruction and 200 hours in the truck. The curriculum's 14 classroom modules cover everything from regulating agencies and driver qualifications to safely loading and operating a tractor-trailer. Time is also provided for the advancement of computer skills and employment preparation.

The Council on Occupational Education (COE) accredits PTEC. Approximately 70% of the program is devoted to hands-on driving by the student. This includes four weeks of pre-tripping, shifting and backing practice on the driving range, followed by at least 1,000 miles of actual open-road driving — 20% of which is night driving under various weather conditions.

Instructors are active members of the

Florida Trucking Association. They participate in the Safety and Education Committees, Road Patrols, and they help judge the annual Truck Rodeo.

Acceptance into the CVD program isn't easy. Prerequisites include being drug and alcohol free, a valid driver's license, good driving record, successfully passing a CDL-type physical, and meeting all DOT eligibility regulations. Additionally, students must adhere to a strict dress code and attendance requirements. While financial aid is available to some applicants through a trust fund, most rely on outside sources for tuition.

Most recruits come to PTEC through trucking company recommendations or word of mouth from past students. Through the efforts of CVD instructors and the use of simulation and other excellent resources, PTEC produces quality drivers that trucking companies want to have as employees.

PTEC's CVD program also offers mini truck-driving courses that provide advanced defensive driver training to fire departments and local industry, and help city employees upgrade to a higher paying driver classification.

For more information, contact Jack Piehl, PTEC-St. Petersburg campus, 901-34th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711; 727-893-2500, ext. 1053.

In This Issue

- ◆ **President's Message**
- ◆ **Training Lawsuit Filed**
- ◆ **Trio is Tennessee Bound**
- ◆ **NAPFTDS Supports Bill for Veterans**
- ◆ **Region Conference**
- ◆ **Denmark Driving Program**

National Convention
March 30, 31, April 1, 2006
— DoubleTree Hotel —
Nashville, TN



I know you've heard this before, but I strongly encourage all members to attend a Fall Region Conference.

In today's tight economic times, we realize that not every member school can send representatives to our National Convention. As a result, the Association's intent in offering Region Conferences is to allow public school representatives to attend a conference at an affordable cost that's closer to home. With five new sites this year, we hope the upcoming regionals will be closer and more affordable than ever.

The quality of the workshops and seminars is excellent. Relevant topics this year will include the latest technology, regulatory updates, and teaching strategies. Region Conferences are also a great way to network with your peers. They say if you're not learning you're falling behind, so if you think about it, you can't afford not to go!

The location for the Region #5 Conference has been changed. The *Learning Curve* previously reported that it would be in Quincy, IL. That is no longer the case. It will now be held in Indianapolis, IN. The dates, Sept. 29-30, remain the same. The various conferences will run through Dec. 9. As President, I wish to thank the Region Coordinators, and their host schools and administrators for their professionalism and dedication to quality truck-driver training.

Contact the coordinator in your area if you know someone who would like to sponsor a Region Conference. Vendors only pay \$150 per conference to exhibit. See page 1 in this issue of *Learning Curve* to contact a coordinator — or for more information on any of the regions.

Naturally, we still encourage everyone to attend the National Conference. The 2006 event will be held March 30-April 1 at the Double Tree Hotel in Nashville, TN. Co-chairs **Dave Terry**, **Martin Garsee**, and **Phil Steinkamp** have been listening to member input and are planning a terrific agenda. Fill out the registration form that is inserted in this issue, or register online at the Association's website (www.napftds.org). Rooms book fast, so call the Double Tree Hotel (615-244-8200) or go online at www.nashville.doubletree.com as early as possible.

*Talk to you again
in the next Learning Curve!*

RULES & RIGs

Entry-Level Driver Training Lawsuit Filed

By **Robert McClanahan**
and **Arlene Kirby**

On April 21, 2005, a group officially submitted to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, a brief filed in opposition to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's entry-level driver training rule. The joint brief was filed on behalf of the Advocates for Highway Safety, the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, and the United Motorcoach Association.

The brief presented detailed arguments stating that the Final Rule, which was effective May 2004, is arbitrary and capricious because it is contrary to the evidence before the agency. In addition, the brief states that the agency has presented no evidence that the rule will enhance the safety of commercial motor vehicle operations.

The Roots of the Rule

In 1991, FMCSA was under specific mandate from Congress regarding the entry-level training rule as required in the ISTEA legislation. It took the agency 13 years to publish a final rule on entry-level training. However, that rule was only in four areas of knowledge and required no training in skills. The agency

did state in their final rule that the CDL tests were a measure of basic knowledge and skills necessary to operate a CMV.

However, CDL tests are not an indication that a person has had any formal training in the actual operation of a CMV. In their conclusion, the Petitioners state that the Court should declare the final rule arbitrary and capricious, vacate it, and remand to the agency with instructions to issue a new final rule requiring entry-level training in the skills and knowledge necessary to actually operate a commercial motor vehicle.

NAPFTDS Responds

Members of the NAPFTDS board have spoken with an attorney representing one of the petitioners. He told us that briefs from all sides have been presented. The next step will be the appointment of three judges to hear all arguments in the case. It is thought that a hearing should be scheduled in September or October this year. A decision is expected by the end of the year.

NAPFTDS will be prepared to respond to the ruling, and we will keep our membership informed. If anyone has comments or additional information, please post it on our Association website.

Robert McClanahan, Past President of NAPFTDS, is the Director of Central Tech Transportation & Safety Education in Drumright, OK. Arlene Kirby, Vice President of NAPFTDS, is Director of Industrial Training at the College of Southern Maryland in La Plata, MD.

Trio Planning for Tennessee Nashville is National Convention Site in 2006

A trio of volunteers is preparing for the NAPFTDS Annual National Convention scheduled for Thursday, March 30 through Saturday, April 1, 2006. The leadership and planning of the Nashville Convention is headed by **Dave Terry**, Southwest Applied Technical College, Cedar City, UT; **Martin Garsee**, Houston Community College, Houston, TX; and **Phil Steinkamp**, John Wood Community College, Quincy, IL.

During our 2005 National Convention, the trio asked for membership evaluation, and, using this input, they are developing the agenda for the 2006 event. They plan to offer longer Carrier Round Table sessions, enabling members to focus on meth-

ods that schools can use to become better partners with industry in producing more and better qualified entry-level drivers.

The popular updates on rules and regulations will again be featured, with focus likely to be on the status of the entry-level driver training lawsuit that was filed, the hours-of-service ruling, and other pertinent regulations that affect our public schools.

Please be sure to note the registration form inserted in this issue. It's not too early to fill it out and mail it to **Tina Frindt**, NAPFTDS Treasurer. You may also register online at www.napftds.org. Early registrations help our Association prepare ahead.

Important notice to those who are not yet members of NAPFTDS!

If you are not a member of the Association, and you would like to continue receiving the *Learning Curve* and other benefits of membership, please complete the MEMBERSHIP PRE-APPLICATION FORM in this newsletter and return with your payment of appropriate dues. While we have generous supporters, member dues are the backbone of our Association.

NAPFTDS Supports Bill for Veterans

Responding to a request from **Christie Cullinan**, Director of Workplace & Fleet Safety at ATA, NAPFTDS recently wrote a letter of support for a bill introduced by Representative **Michael Michaud** (D-ME).

The bill is H.R. 717, and, with its passage, it would expand the scope of programs for which accelerated payments of educational assistance may be made under the Montgomery G.I. Bill. Currently, only high-tech programs qualify for the accelerated payments. This resolution would amend the current law (Title 38, U.S. Code), enabling truck driver-training programs, that lead to the issuance of a CDL, to qualify for accelerated payments for military veterans who enroll in such programs.

NAPFTDS Past President, **Robert McClanahan**, believes that the passage of this bill can aid veterans and our public schools. In a letter of support, he explains, "Veterans have the reputation of being outstanding employees within the trucking industry. They understand the need for training, accept government regulations and can adjust well to changing situations and conditions. ... The passage of H.R. 717 should greatly enhance our ability to recruit and train a greater number of veterans."

President Bill Fath agrees and, furthermore, views this as another example of how an Association such as ours can collectively influence legislation, thereby helping all public truck driving schools in the country.

Special thanks to our ad Sponsors in this issue of

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Please consider their quality products and services. For information on advertising, contact **Chuck Collins**, call 920-739-9786

Bringing the Issues 'Home' There's a Region Conference for You!

The welcome mat is out for all truck driving instructors and support staff at our public schools. Region Conferences are being planned for eight locations throughout the country — from Washington in the West to Pennsylvania in the East, and from Wisconsin in the North to Texas in the South. Simply check your region on page one of this issue, and then contact your region coordinator.

The conferences, offering high-quality workshops and seminars on national and regional issues, are free of charge to attendees. Each conference lasts approximately 1-1/2 days. Driver recruiting strategies and the status of the rule on entry-level training are just a sampling of the relevant topics in store for members.

President Bill Fath realizes that many people cannot attend the annual National Convention, so he is proud that NAPFTDS can update its members by bringing the issues "home" to the regions. He stresses, "This is a great opportunity to get together to talk to other school members and discuss the challenges confronting those of us who are involved in publicly funded truck driver training."

Fath considered it a privilege to attend many of the conferences during his first year as president. He feels that the membership would appreciate reading the purpose and guidelines of the Region Conferences. This information answers questions not only for members, but also for coordinators and vendors. It follows below.

The Region Conference: Purpose and Guidelines

The purpose of a regional meeting is to update and inform members of current issues both nationally and on the local, regional level. All public schools, association members and non-members with truck driver training programs should be invited and encouraged to attend. Also trucking company representatives and vendors for training should be invited and, if possible, asked to sponsor part of the cost of the meeting.

All regional meetings should be promoted as a Regional Meeting of the National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools (NAPFTDS). Registration fees or other charges to member schools for attendance are discouraged. However, vendor sponsorships should be encouraged. The standard sponsorship fee is \$150. The Association will assist in the cost of each regional meeting up to \$500 with proper documentation. If possible each meeting should be held on the campus of the sponsoring school or program. This will allow for each attendee to view your program and to learn how other programs are successful in training entry-level drivers. Meetings should be one and a half or two days in length on a Thursday and Friday. Typically regional meetings are held in the fall of each year.

Regional meetings allow time for attendees to view new products from vendors and the trucking industry. Training aids such as the use of simulators or computer-assisted programs are constantly being

upgraded. Vendors should be allowed to promote their products with time allowed to talk to all attendees. Trucking company representatives should be used as a resource for input on content of the program. Local, state and government agency representatives are a good source of invited speakers. State and/or national trucking association members are also a good source for presentations.

Regional meetings provide the perfect opportunity to promote the value of membership in the association. All attendees that are non-members of the association should be encouraged to join as either a member school or as an associate member. Any public school with a truck driver training program can join as a member. Any trucking company or vendor interested in promoting quality training can become an associate member. Public schools that outsource training to a private entity may join as an affiliate member and are subject to review by the board of the association.

Those that should attend a regional meeting are:

1. Member school administrators and instructors
2. Associate members
3. Non-member public schools
4. Vendors
5. Local/state trucking Associations
6. Local/state government officials
7. Federal trucking agency representatives
8. Local/state media

Denmark Offers Challenging Truck Driving Program

By Pat Spillane

As part of an International Studies Program between FVTC and EUC Vest, I recently had the opportunity to spend 14 days in Denmark. EUC Vest is a Technical College in Denmark with programs and training similar to that offered at Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, WI.

I was delighted to have an opportunity to represent FVTC on their first exchange for truck driving instructors. Even though International Study Programs are most often associated with the University systems and not with Technical College systems, international exchanges are very common. In fact, for the students at EUC Vest, it is a requirement for completion of their program.

Just a few words about the country; Denmark is a beautiful country with a population of approximately 5.3 million people. Not too long ago, realizing that Denmark's natural resources were limited, the government chose to invest in its people. They realized, perhaps earlier than most, that to be a survivor in a global economy, education had to be a priority. In Denmark, not only is education free but, in most cases, students are paid to go to school.

Primary education (the first nine years) is compulsory. In addition to regular course work, students are required to study a foreign language. Most of the Danish population speaks at least two languages; English is taught beginning with the third grade. Many Danes are fluent in German as well as English and it is not uncommon to find the younger generation speaking four languages. About 50%-65% of students choose practical schools for job training. The remaining students opt for schools that will prepare them for college and/or the University system. Although students must take a competitive exam to be accepted for the University, once accepted, the education is free. There is also a system called AMU for training adults who either did not get proper vocational training or need retraining in new skills.

Truck Driver Education in Denmark is rigorous. Most of the students attending the Truck Driving program at EUC Vest have signed three-year contracts with employers. During the three years, students are required to attend 50 weeks of training at the college. The remaining time is spent working at



Unique equipment is used in Denmark to transport the base of a windmill.

the employers, gaining valuable on-the-job skills. Once the students have completed the program, they are classified as "skilled workers." This is one of the major pluses for their system. As a skilled worker, a driver is paid a higher wage than someone who also holds the appropriate license but has not completed a similar program. The unskilled driver is at a disadvantage when competing for the few truck driving jobs available in Denmark. There is a strong labor union in Denmark, and the employers are committed to supporting both the unions and education system.

One of the highlights of the trip was a weekend in Copenhagen. All I can say is wow!! Our trip through the countryside was nothing short of spectacular. As is true in all major cities I've visited, traffic can be somewhat problematic, but when you add all those bicycles to the mix ... I'll say no more. Our hosts at EUC Vest treated our group to an evening at Tivoli. Tivoli is a popular tourist attraction with amusement rides, restaurants, gardens, and outdoor music theaters. The Pantomime Theatre in the park was showing "Thumbelina," a Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale. I would not be able to do it justice if I tried to describe the costumes. We also took a short cruise on the harbor; after all, one cannot visit Denmark without seeing the Little Mermaid. Most of the weekend was spent visiting some of the historical sites and just walking around the city soaking up the culture.

On a personal note, I had a wonderful time visiting EUC Vest. Their staff, students, and our hosts went the extra mile to see that all of us had both cultural and educational experiences that will not soon be forgotten. I would highly recommend the experience to both your students and staff.

Pat Spillane, a recently retired truck driving instructor and team leader, is also Past Treasurer of NAPFTDS.

NAPFTDS MEMBERSHIP PRE-APPLICATION

Organization/Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

FAX: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Return form to:

Tina Frindt, Treasurer, NAPFTDS
1900 Corporate Center Drive East, Suite 100
Toboyhanna, PA 18466
Fax: 570-839-3534

Questions about membership may be directed to:

Chuck Collins, Executive Director, NAPFTDS
Office Phone: 920-739-9786 • Cell Phone: 920-205-4259

FULL MEMBERSHIP (\$175): Any publicly funded school or representative employee of that school engaged directly in providing truck driver training.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP (\$350): Any industry or representative employee of that industry which indirectly supports public truck driving schools, limited to agencies such as trucking companies, insurance companies, publishers, and equipment manufacturers interested in the welfare of publicly funded truck driving schools.

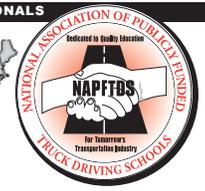
AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP (\$250): Limited to administrators or staff at a publicly funded school interested in the trucking industry or administrators in schools that contract with proprietary organizations to provide truck driver training.

THE NEXT STEP: Application for membership shall be made on an application form as may be required by the Board of Directors. A majority vote of the Board of Directors is necessary for the acceptance of an application for membership. All applicants who have been accepted into the membership of the Association must submit a fully completed and signed application form that, by doing, signifies their adherence of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of said Association. Membership in the applicable class shall be complete upon application of the Association, approval of the Board, and payment of the appropriate dues.

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NEWSLETTER FOR PROFESSIONALS



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National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools

An association of nonprofit, post-secondary, public schools whose purpose is to encourage member schools to promote high standards and ethical principles in the creation and/or administration of training programs.