Watco's South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad receives CRISI funding

Customers on Watco’s first rail line, the South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL), will be seeing a change in service in the coming years thanks to receiving a $27 million award. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program granted the award to the Kansas Department of Transportation for use on the SKOL project, with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation as a match participant. Watco will be investing $12.1 million, making the total investment in the infrastructure $40.6 million.

The goal of the program is to enhance track infrastructure to eliminate capacity inefficiencies and increase track speed from 10 mph to 25 mph on the SKOL’s Tulsa, Moline and Neodesha Subdivisions of the SKOL. This will be achieved through upgrades to track structure and substructure such as rail, ties, ballast, surface, turnouts and bridges. Of the 433-mile network, 239 miles will be upgraded enabling the tracks to handle additional stress caused by transporting heavier railcars. With the completion of this project, 95 percent of the SKOL will be able to safely transport 286,000 lb. railcars.

“We’re excited to see the improvement our customers will experience in transit times throughout the entire Kansas and Oklahoma railroad network,” said Jimmy Patterson, senior vice president of sales. “The railcar movements in the region are so interconnected that our customers on the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad and Stillwater Central Railroad will benefit from this funding as well.”

U.S. Senator Jerry Moran, R-Kan., assisted with the team’s efforts in obtaining the funding.

“Farmers and businesses that have made their homes in rural communities rely on rail transportation to move their products to markets around the state and country,” said Sen. Moran. “This grant will allow the South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad to modernize their railways, increasing the speed of transportation and permitting heavier shipments to move across the region. I’m excited for the new economic opportunities this grant will afford our farmers and manufacturers in rural Kansas.”

Infrastructure upgrades are the costliest constraint on short line railroads. The heavier 286,000 lb. cars are supplanting the lighter-loaded cars and are now the industry standard, especially on the nation’s Class I railroads. Lighter-loaded cars cause operational chokepoints due to insufficient operating capacity on main lines, in rail yards and in locations where railroads interchange with each other. Railcars with larger loading capacity provide higher operating efficiencies by reducing labor, fuel and maintenance costs while increasing capacity and synergy for rail operations and rail shippers.

With the track upgrades, including a proposed 140,000 new crossties, the SKOL will be able to operate at Class 2 levels safely. On the Tulsa Sub, for example, the SKOL is restricted today to running at 10 mph or less. The rail line averages 35-40 track-caused slow orders a month, and a fully loaded train of 100 railcars takes more than 26 hours and three crews to make the round trip between Owasso, Oklahoma, and Cherryvale, Kansas. Post-construction, the efficiency gains will reduce that same trip by half and slow orders by 75 percent. Besides boosting safety, this project will improve and enhance trade opportunities and will have significant positive impacts on regional economic vitality, innovation and performance while leveraging state and federal funds with private capital.

Many Watco team members worked for months on the project and provided valuable assistance with their areas of expertise. Laura McNichol, Watco senior vice president, government and industry relations, and project lead, had the privilege of being with many of those who helped when she received the exciting news.

“I had just finished a presentation at the Railroad General Managers Summit and saw I had a message on my cell phone. When I saw who it was from, I knew exactly what the call was about, and I stepped up in front of the team and played the message from Senator Moran, announcing that we had received the funds.”

“It was the best feeling to see the faces of the team members who had worked so hard on getting the funding when they heard the news,” McNichol added. “This was a very robust application process, and I’d like to thank all of the Watco team members who assisted. Without them, it would never have happened.”

Team members included Jerry Waun, SKOL general manager; Brandon Craddock, SKOL roadmaster; Shellee Currier, sales manager; Neal Jacobs, division engineer; Scott Adams, VP of engineering; Ailsa von Dobeneck, AVP government relations; Caleb Dellasega, assistant accounting manager; P.J. Forbes, VP of operations; Steve Coomes, SVP of operations; Angela Schaefer, accounting manager, Ali Denzel, operations accountant; and Carla Ewing, VP of sales.

Waun, said, “The SKOL team is more excited about receiving the grant than anyone. The improvements are changes the team has wanted to see for a long time, they were just very expensive upgrades to take on.”

He added, “The improvements will alleviate frustrations our team members had in not being able to serve our customers in the most efficient manner. Being able to move at higher speeds, reducing trip times, and turning cars around quicker is a benefit to all parties involved.”

It will take a few months to collect bids and get materials ordered but Waun is expecting to see the work starting in late Fall 2020.
Winsers of January Winter Freeze bonuses selected

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Watco’s 2019-2020 Winter Freeze Safety program has hit the midway point and is still going strong. The January winners display the emphasis on teamwork, especially when it comes to safety. Several submissions consisted of teams of two or more as they noticed issues, discussed them and then reported them.

Charlene Huskey, administrative assistant, at the Pittsburg, Kansas, office, made a suggestion to increase the training for cyber and communications security and has been active in requesting additional training for office team members. Her corrective action suggestions are leading to an increase in training available for security, as well as general OSHA safety. The safety team will be rolling out a program in the near future to better prepare all team members on communications security. This will also be offered in Spanish to be more inclusive and to ensure we can impact all of our team.

Team members Andrew Mitchell and Branson Herring at the Bogalusa Bayou Railroad reported a near miss they caught while switching a customer who receives loaded boxcars inside their facility. While in the engine, Andy determined the hi-cube boxcar would hit an overhead pipe in the facility when moved. Andy notified Branson, and he double-checked the clearance. Branson discovered that the car sat lower due to its loaded weight when initially brought in, and it allowed the car to clear. He requested that the facility reload some product into the car to weigh it down, allowing it to clear the pipe. The facility was not initially designed for that type of car, so the attention to detail by the crew averted a potentially serious incident, and they were able to rectify the situation by working together. The team performed an overall job hazard analysis of the facility, and the lessons learned will extend to any future equipment arrivals at the facility.

Grand Elk Railroad Conductor Kyle Cornelius identified a hazard on the newly re-opened Hastings lead. The community was not used to seeing traffic on this previously little-used track and paid little attention to the crossing signals. This was a signifi- cant hazard, both to the community and the team. As part of the corrective action, the team placed a locomotive on the head end of the movement, eliminating the need for a trainman to ride a long shovc and be better protected, as well as provide a better warning to vehicle traffic on the line.

Trenton Jones, outbound inspector, at the Fitzgerald, Georgia, mechanical shop, noticed a torch hose had been patched with electrical tape in an attempt to fix a gas leak. Knowing this was an unacceptable fix, Trenton tagged the equipment, notified safety and removed the equipment from service pending replacement. All other equipment was inspected for unauthorized repairs, and team members discussed what is required to inspect gas lines, and what to do if wear is shown.

Andre Simon, at the Hockley, Texas, mechanical shop, identified a long-standing practice of using an air hose without a valve on the end to blow off water and materials. This could create an impact injury if the hose were dropped while under pressure. Valves were installed on the hoses, and the facility was inspected to identify similar conditions, resulting in several unprotected hoses being fitted with check valves to allow shutting off the pressure without resorting to “kinking” the hose.

Scott Smith, a bosun at the Elizabeth, New Jersey, terminal, worked with his fellow team members on an issue on the location’s dock. While the dock had ladders at each end, when two barges were secured alongside, a gap existed between the barges. If a person were to fall in the water, it would require a lengthy and challenging swim around a barge to access one of the ladders. The suggestion led to the installation of an additional rescue ladder that can be deployed in the middle of the dock, making rescue much easier and safer.

Andrew Jones, Elizabeth supervisor, said, “This was a huge team effort, a lot of folks worked on it and figured out how to resolve the issue.”

Jon Beach, mechanic, Ghent, Kentucky, terminal noticed the cross member on the frame of a facility dump truck he was working on was broken. If not corrected, it could lead to extensive damage to the driveshaft and transmission, or cause injury to the operators in the area. This spurred an inspection of all similar vehicles to identify and repair issues.

Morgan Giesy, operator, Fryburg, North Dakota, terminal, noticed some of the facility radios had their talk alert signal rendered inoperative or were not activated when they were put in service. The alert lets the team know when they are transmitting. The issue was identified on several radios, and all were reprogrammed, which alleviated a potential safety issue when issuing radio communications at the facility.

When Leon Norrgard and James Marr, at the Omaha, Nebraska, terminal, were unloading coils from a container, they discovered that a different forklift was needed to unload a larger than usual coil. As it was raised, the forklift wheels began to push through the wood floor of the transport container. The movement was stopped, and a different procedure was used to unload the large load. This action resulted in a review of the processes and equipment for this movement in the future.

Elizabeth, New Jersey, terminal shift 2 (l-r): Kyle Pillsworth, Timothy Pillsworth, Lawrence Rizzo, Joel Santana, Raymond Sepulveda, and Brian Pillsworth. (Not pictured: Oscar Baeza).

Elizabeth, New Jersey, terminal shift 1 (l-r): Scott Howe, Stephen Krupp, Thomas Napoli, Corey Hornig, Scott A. Smith, Michael Mazzone and Scott C. Smith.

Trenton Jones
Mechanical Division
Outbound Inspector
Fitzgerald, Georgia

Andre Simon
Mechanical Division
Quality Assurance Inspector
Hockley, Texas

James Marr (l)
and Leon Norrgard
Terminal & Ports Division Operators
Omaha, Nebraska

Jon Beach
Terminal & Ports Division
Mechanic
Ghent, Kentucky

Morgan Giesy
Terminal & Ports Division
Operator
Fryburg, North Dakota

Charlene Huskey
Administrative Assistant
Pittsburg, Kansas

Branson Herring
Conductor
Bogalusa Bayou Railroad

Kyle Cornelius
Conductor
Grand Elk Railroad

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Six-year-old Hope Drummond is a strong little girl. At three years old, she was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Now, she is six years old, and on February 26, she rang the bell as she finished her last treatment and is cancer free.

A couple weeks before Christmas, her father called Courtney and said Hope wasn’t feeling well. Courtney planned to travel back to California for Christmas. Hope wasn’t getting better, and she told her dad she’d meet them at the emergency room when she arrived. After running some tests, they got the devastating news on Christmas morning: Hope had leukemia.

She was in the hospital for 10 days, and had to stay in Loma Linda, Calif., for seven months before the doctors cleared her to travel to Texas to reunite with the rest of the family. Courtney stayed with her and Richard regularly made the 19-hour drive back and forth. Finally, when they were ready to return to Dallas together, the family prepared to make the long drive again.

“That’s when Cameron (Lundy, director of operations – Southwest) stepped in. He talked with Mr. Webb, and they said, ‘There’s no way you’re driving 19 hours with Hope,’ and got us all a flight to Dallas,” said Courtney. “We’d like to thank (Executive Chairman) Rick Webb, Cameron, and (SVP of Operations) Steve Coomes for all their support and everything they’ve done for us.”

Doctor visits continued in Dallas, and the teams at the repair locations continued to step up. “We’re so grateful for Richard’s team members in Dallas, Hatton, and Mill Creek. They covered for him during his trips to California and any other time he needed to be gone. Thank you for all your support,” said Courtney.

All the support, prayers, and Hope’s strength paid off. She’s now six years old and living life cancer-free.

Oklahoma reviews short line tax credit

Oklahoma State Representative Brian Hill understands the importance of rail to the state’s economy and is working to help get an increase to the state’s short line tax credit bill. The proposed legislation would increase the allowable tax credit per mile from $1,500 to $5,000 for eligible infrastructure expenditures with a 5-year sunset.

Watco operates three short lines with 400 miles of track in the state of Oklahoma. A section of the 275-mile Stillwater Central Railroad is located in the representative’s district. Ryan Piddle of Mickelson & Company, LLC, and Ken Lucht of Watco Companies visited with Oklahoma lawmakers in late February to discuss the improved state short line railroad tax credit bill. Michelson & Company is responsible for managing the tax credits for the short lines and customers.

Representative Hill of Mustang, Okla., currently serves as Vice-Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations and Budget and supports the short line industry tax credit.

Lucht said, “We appreciate Representative Hill’s support, and we hope to get something passed by the end of this term. There are 1,200 miles of short line rail in the state of Oklahoma, and this would be beneficial in maintaining the infrastructure to keep our customers’ products moving. It would be used for structural upgrades, such as replacing ties and fixing bridges.”

Stefan Loeb elected President of MARS

The Midwest Association of Rail Shippers (MARS) elected Watco’s Stefan Loeb as president of the organization at the annual Winter Meeting earlier this year. The 2020 MARS officers include Loeb, First Vice President Carrie Evans, Iowa Interstate Railroad, and Second Vice President Kathy Bathurst, CSX Transportation.

The organization’s goals are to provide a medium through which the members can gain a better understanding of current rail issues; to promote the interchange of ideas in anticipation of rail equipment supply and service requirements; to encourage and promote operating efficiency through maximum loading, prompt and proper handling of rail equipment; educate members on new developments relating to the transportation industry, and make members aware of state and national legislation affecting rail transportation.

Watco EVP and Chief Commercial Officer Stefan Loeb, (left), is congratulated on being elected president of the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers (MARS) by outgoing president Tom Surma at the 2020 Winter Meeting in January.

Oklahoma Representative Brian Hill (center) met with Ryan Piddle of Mickelson & Company, LLC (left) and Ken Lucht, Watco’s AVP, Government and Industry Relations to discuss the Oklahoma short line tax credit.
by Jay Benedict  
Digital Communication and Social Media Specialist

Commodity: Potatoes  
Customer: Corey Brothers Produce  
Location: Charleston, West Virginia - Kanawha River Railroad

Short line railroads often play the crucial role of the first-mile and last-mile service providers for rail customers. Sometimes, it works out so that Watco’s short lines get to provide that service at both ends of a cross-country move. That’s the case for the potatoes arriving at Corey Brothers Produce in Charleston, West Virginia on the Kanawha River Railroad. They start their journey on the Eastern Idaho Railroad at Sun-Glo in Sugar City, Idaho.

"Corey Brothers is a long-standing rail customer in West Virginia’s capital city and we’re honored to play a minor part in their overall business. To emphasize the uniqueness of rail and Watco’s connectivity in the U.S., the same potatoes offloaded in West Virginia on the KNWA were first loaded about two-weeks prior on Watco’s Eastern Idaho Railroad in Sugar City, Idaho – a genuine ‘farm to table’ Watco experience,” said Chase Gunnoe, KNWA sales manager.

Corey Brothers is a 3rd generation, family-owned produce supplier that distributes fresh vegetables throughout West Virginia and the surrounding states. So, Idaho, famous for its potatoes, was a natural place for Corey Brothers to source potatoes for their customers. Several years ago, they partnered with Sun-Glo, and started bringing the product in.

Corey Brothers currently receives about two railcars each month. Each car contains around 130,000 pounds of potatoes and transports a variety of 14 different sizes of packages and containers, depending on the needs of their customers. From their warehouse, the potatoes are distributed to food service providers and retail stores across West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Ohio, and Virginia. Some customers also resell the bulk potatoes, extending their reach from Cincinnati down to Tennessee.

The potatoes are unloaded into their warehouse, and then put onto pallets and loaded into trucks for delivery to their customers. Barry Thomas, Corey Brother's warehouse supervisor, says the cost savings is what drives them to use rail.

"Since it’s a cross-country shipment, rail is our best option. The only thing holding us back from shipping more by rail is the time it takes for some shipments to arrive," Thomas said.

If you’re around that tri-state area of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, and beyond, the next time you’re picking up potatoes at the store or enjoying some fresh fries, there’s a chance two Watco railroads provided that critical first-mile and last-mile rail service that helped bring it to you.

"Corey Brothers Produce is a valued customer on the KNWA. A single refrigerated railcar provides the Kanawha Valley – and the neighboring Tri-State area with an abundance of fresh Idaho potatoes,” Gunnoe. “Whether its consumers at a local produce market or kids at a school cafeteria, the potatoes we deliver in a single railcar help feed thousands.”

Watco partner C1st Technologies recently created a scholarship fund to benefit two graduating high school seniors. Each recipient of the award will receive $1,500 and the scholarship is open to students across the United States. Students do not need to have an affiliation with C1st Technologies to apply.

Applicants need to be planning to pursue an undergraduate degree in Computer Science or a related field and must graduate with a 2.5 GPA. Apply using the link below, deadline is April 15, 2020. 
https://www.c1sttechnologies.com/community

AVP Operations Paul Suarino held a meeting in Elizabeth, New Jersey, with the leaders he supports last month. They covered topics including behavioral based interviewing, performance reviews, progressive discipline, and safety. Pictured are team members who participated in the training (l-r): Paul Suarino, AVP (Division B); Sunil Bangari, terminal manager (Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens); John Moschella – terminal manager (MTS - Hamilton and Southwest Brooklyn); Chris Jackson, terminal manager (MTS - Elizabeth); Albert Perez, terminal manager (Linden); Wyndle Darby, supervisor (Bayway); Andrew Jones – supervisor (MTS – Elizabeth); Gabe Chavez, crane manager (MTS Sites) and Rob Hill, operations support.
Every day is a new day in the transportation industry

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communication and Social Media Specialist

We always say no two days are the same in the transportation industry, but as part of the Watco Supply Chain Services (WSCS) team, that’s definitely the case. Transportation coordinators play a key role at WSCS. They’re the link between our customers and the truck drivers that deliver their goods from point A to point B. With all the variables that come into play with over-the-road freight transportation, things can get pretty hectic, but that’s one of WSCS transportation coordinator Courtney Norris’s favorite part of the job.

“I really enjoy that it’s constantly changing, constantly different. It’s not for everyone. You definitely have to be flexible and work in a strenuous environment,” Courtney laughed. “We’re busy all the time, but it’s great.”

Courtney joined the Watco team in July 2019, so she’s been on the job for about eight months. Her team is based on the Overland Park, Kansas, office, and focuses mainly on over-the-road transportation. Put simply, her job is to get freight from point A to point B. Sometimes, she reaches out to customers, and often, they reach out to her. Transportation coordinators play the middleman role between the customers who need their products shipped and the truck drivers that actually move the product.

“We do the dirty work so our customers don’t have to. We coordinate with the drivers, we coordinate with the shippers and receivers, and make sure everything goes smoothly along the way,” Courtney said. “Obviously, there are obstacles throughout, but we adapt when they come about, and a lot of that comes with knowledge of the industry. I’m only eight months in, but I feel like I’m pretty knowledgeable at this point because every day is different.”

Courtney says the job can be stressful sometimes. Part of their job is calling potential customers and generating new business. Knowing what to say, how to make yourself and Watco stand out, and being able to have difficult conversations are skills that develop over time. As team members do this, their portfolios of customers grow.

“At Watco, I definitely think there’s a home for everyone, but this job isn’t for everyone,” she said. “You get told no a lot. You just have to overcome the adversity and get over that hump. Someone like myself, I have a big personality, so it’s a little easier for me to do something like that. Whereas I’ve seen others struggle. Yes, we are out there looking for customers, but that’s not what we do on a day-to-day basis.”

She came to the Watco team with no transportation experience, fresh out of college. Courtney graduated from Missouri Valley College in Marshall, Missouri, in December 2019 with a business degree. She did have family ties to the company, though. Her brother, Austin Norris, is a team lead on the rail logistics side of WSCS, and her mother, Lynda Patterson, is an SVP of sales, logistics for WSCS as well, and helped build WSCS from the ground up. But she didn’t rely on those connections to get her position.

“I won’t say I knew transportation, but I heard them talk about it, and thought, ‘Wow, I feel like this might be something I can do, and if it’s not something I can do, maybe there’s somewhere else within Watco.’ But I kind of found that this is my home. I can talk all day long, and I don’t lose my personality,” Courtney said. “Yeah, I do have family within Watco, and it helps to know people, but I did this myself. My mom didn’t even know I had an interview. I’m here to prove myself, not to say, ‘I’m Lynda Patterson’s daughter.’”

Aside from the fast-paced nature of the transportation industry, she also enjoys learning the types of products that are in the trailers she sees on the road every day, and her favorite aspect is her team’s dynamic.

“Our team is pretty young, but there’s a mix of ages. I’m the youngest at 22, but all of our personalities work really well together, and I’ve never once felt uncomfortable,” she said. “Obviously, we have strong personalities on the team. We have challenges to overcome every day, so we all have to work very well together, and I really love that we do. I can be myself every day.”

Outside of work, Courtney’s two-and-a-half year old son keeps her busy. When she has free time, though, anything outdoors usually grabs her attention, and as a former college volleyball player, she loves anything athletic. Craft beer is one of her passions too. Courtney visits new breweries whenever she has the chance.

“I’m actually trying to get into moving freight for breweries too,” Courtney laughed. “I love the fermentation process and everything about it. I like to spend time with friends, my son keeps me on my toes, I visit breweries when I can, and anything athletic, I love it.”

Team members at the Overland Park, Kansas, office practiced hands-only CPR on “Rescue Anne” at training held in the office on February 20.
Watco team members at the Fitzgerald mechanical shop recently attended a two-day training session on the Foundations of Leadership. Training and Development Manager Darl Farris lead the course held in Tifton, Georgia. Team members from the Fitzgerald shop are (l-r), Jackie Brady, material manager; Steven Everett, supervisor; Eric Davis, supervisor; Jennifer Fore, quality assurance manager; Joseph Lunsford, foreman; and John Shealey, EHS manager.

Five team members recently completed Foundations of Leadership training in Linden, New Jersey, on March 3 and 4. The team members who successfully completed the course are (l-r), Johnny Lima, crew leader, Linden, N.J.; Dwayne Smith, supervisor, Linden, N.J.; Tiffany Poland, terminal manager, Crafton, Pennsylvania; Danny Ramesh, supervisor, Brooklyn, New York; and Tommy Damus, supervisor, Bayway, N.J.

Team members from our various service areas participated in Team Member and Safety Improvement Committee (TS&IC) training on February 18 and 19 in Hammond, Illinois. Team members completing the course were (l-r), Doug Mitchell, conductor, Whiting, Indiana; Bill Dobbin, conductor/engineer, Whiting; Robert O’Connor, railcar mechanic, Crown Point, Ind.; Pete Rinzel, railcar repairman, Cudahy, Wisconsin; and Cesar Maldonado, conductor, Whiting.

2020 Boys STEM Lock-in held in Alabama

Pictured are some of the attendees of the 2020 Alabama Boys STEM Lock-in held in Birmingham, Alabama. Alabama STEM Executive Director Juanita Graham is on the right.

Watco’s All Aboard Foundation recently helped sponsor the 2020 Alabama Boys STEM Lock-In. The annual program rewards young men from the local underrepresented and underserved middle and high schools for maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA and having great character in and out of school. The boys were hosted at the Birmingham Sheraton Presidential Suite and treated to a catered dinner and basketball training with elite coaches from around the city. Rounding out the night was a trip to Topgolf, a private concert and, of course, career enlightenment in STEM.

Juanita Graham serves as the executive director for the program. Her husband, Cedric, is a 15-year team member currently working at the Birmingham Terminal Railway.
March Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following team members celebrating March anniversaries.


2 Years: Joel Armenta-Delgado, Trace Azure, Bobby Baker, Jacob Baker, Timothy Beford, Robert Boettcher, Tanner Bond, Michael Burns, Michael Catterson, Jordan Chamberlain, Linda Cisneros, Antonio Colunga, Talon Cook, Aaron Dean, William Deets, Aaron Erikens, Amanda Evers, Wyatt Frank, Kyle Futrell, Jordan Garcia, James Harden, Jeremy Horning, Laura Jagels, Katelyn Junyor, Gavin Laquet, Jason Meyer, Giles Olsen, Thomas Pellington, Jonathan Pierangelii, Davis Rodriguez, Zachary Rogers, Joseph Santucci, Walker Schrag, Marquis Sloan, Montel Stanley, Dustin Tally, Abednego Trevino, Jason Treviso, Scott Wolff, Justin Wooten

3 Years: Amy Andrews, Justin Cunningham, Brent Eggers, Capus Hendrix, Bobby Irving, Michael Jackson, Thomas Kaczynski, William Lester, Albert Lierz, Curtis Marks, Angela Meales, Robert O’Neal, Kory Phillips, Victor Rainey, Brad Rampy, Antonio Reyes, Jeffery Sanchez, Joshua Theis, Dakota Vincent, Bobbie Wright

4 Years: Maurice Acklin, John Bates, Myles Black, Jesus Hernandez, Anwar Jenkins, Chase Kinard, Joshua Krisley, Dorminick Lampkin, Cameron Leighton, Jeffery Leone, Delmer Lydick, Jennifer Morgan, Howard Nostrand, Jared Rahmn, Franklyn Roldan, Zachariah Wilson

5 Years: Zachary Barajas, Christopher Blackman, Ronnie Boston, Gavin Burrell, Corey Corrick, Michael Dally, Christopher Foxhuler, Gabriel Garman, Joely Gath, Kenneth Green, Natalie Hammond, Neil Heerdink, Joe James, Benjamin Langan, Anthony Nati, Austin Norris, Victor Rivera, William Rowell, Daniel Slade, Hayden Slade

6 Years: Cody Brooks, Rasheda Combs, Jason Doane, Christian Gomez, Homer Imel, Nathan Kuykendall, James Moore, Victor Proslow, Jason Selzler, Jared Vandal, Grover Wise

7 Years: Chance Adair, Bryant Boatman, Travis Bost, Jerry Bruce, Rene Cantu, Richard Carter, Matthew Crisswell, Ryan Gossens, Michael Hayden, Miles Mahler, Jerry Morris, Bryant Payne, Colin Pinson, Jeffery Robertson, Corey Sepulvado, Cory Trowe, John Vance

8 Years: Jacob Bagby, Brent Killian, Jeremy Madsen, Marc Massoglia, Brad Payne, Bradley Seideman, Wesley Smith, Jeffery White

9 Years: Cassie Bicknell, David Brown, Taylor Carter, Evaristo Corona, Richard Grant, Norman Jones, Daniel Paul, Gerard Sybert, Malcolm Young

10 Years: Dustin Coester, Kyle Hittesdorf, Anthony Jones, Vicki Langford, Joseph Naines, Nickel Reeves, Shelly Rustad, Dean Schexnayder, Jason Stot, Angela Sydney, Kenneth Thomas, James Trammell, Cesar Valentin, John Woods

11 Years: Kenneth Cathell, Richard Chadwell, Skipper Hastings, Timothy Largent, Gerard Martinez, Bernardino Osorio Vargas, Johnny Rankin, John Rood, John Rowland, Cecil Traylor

12 Years: Tina Castro, Sean Corr, Gwen Foster, Robert Gable, John Glover, James Maddux, Brett Norris, Judson Rogers, Eva Rokezewski, Lloyd Wilson

13 Years: Sergio Arratia, Kelvin Banks, Mandi Favalora, Paul Minnis, Danny Sims

14 Years: Frederick Blondiau, Stephen Brath, Michael Colburn, Vincent Frazier, Marlin Garcia, Michael Rogers, Joe Sandoval, Heath Sepulvado, Gary Westphal

15 Years: Patti Audet, Adelita Barajas, Tyler Batley, Robert Boyd, Michael Galla, Kim Van Royen

16 Years: Kent Ainsworth, Brenda Caruthers, Charlene Huskey, Bartolome Marrero, Robert Martinez, Rocky Ramage, Kevin Watkins

17 Years: David Bullion, Frank Davis, Roger Easterling, Mario Garcia, Kenneth Lucht, George Spencer

18 Years: James May, James Napoleon

19 Years: Robert Bradfield, Joshua Kramer, Brad Snow

20 Years: Edward Garcia

21 Years: Sunil Bangari, Woodrow Jackson, Mark Krause, Terry Parsons, Cheryl Pollo, Robert Triebsch

22 Years: Michel Davis, Bridget Liden

23 Years: Ronald Tapley

24 Years: William Carroll, Anthony Jernigan

25 Years: Fernando Almanza

26 Years: Mark Green, Steven Morgan, Billy Morris

27 Years: Mike Broussard, Herbert Lamkin

28 Years: Silas Whiteley

29 Years: George Kachmar

30 Years: Sherri Leport

31 Years: James Crawford, Michael Howarth

34 Years: Billy Eddington, Paul Oppel

36 Years: Jim Herman

37 Years: Steven Lowther

39 Years: Steven Lang

42 Years: Thomas Beverly

45 Years: Jerry Brown

Anthony Joseph Bailey

Will and Kristan Bailey welcomed baby boy Anthony Joseph to the family on February 21, 2020. Anthony weighed 5 lbs., 6.6 oz., and was 18.5 inches long. Will is the branch manager at the Supply Chain Services office in Joplin, Missouri.
The Dispatch goes digital

Watco published its first newsletter on October 5, 2000, and in the 20 years since, it's undergone many changes. From welcoming 14 new team members in the first issue to celebrating the March 2020 anniversaries of 303 team members, growth has been a part of the evolution of the newsletter. Growth is what has led to the decision to take the newsletter to a digital-only forum and discontinue mailing the printed version.

Logistics are what Watco specializes in, and logistically, the most efficient and timely way to communicate with our team members is electronically. Most team members communicate with a handy device called a cell phone that provides a mountain of information at the request of the user. The Communication team's goal is to provide easy access via phone or computer to the same information and to enhance the timeliness and the amount of information.

What this means is that we still need you to continue sending us your stories, ideas and photos about the tremendous accomplishments of your team members and families. Using a digital version, we will be able to share even more stories, so we really need assistance from the field. Our team members might be humble, but we enjoy celebrating your successes.

The newsletter will continue to be made available through the Watco website, and your stories will be shared on social media and on the Watco blog.

See you online!

All Aboard Foundation provides scholarship opportunities

The All Aboard Foundation is pleased to announce its Scholarship Program is now open for applications. The scholarship will be available to dependents of Watco Companies team members. The recipient must be in good academic standing and plan to attend a post-secondary institution within one year following high school graduation.

Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of $500 each and will be issued in two $250 disbursements for the first two semesters of college and will be credited to the recipients account at the financial aid office of the college of their choosing. The number of scholarships awarded will be determined by the number of applicants with a minimum of two awarded per year.

Applications are available at http://allaboardfoundation.com/scholarships/. Please submit your application to info@allaboardfoundation.com or mail it to:

All Aboard Foundation
315 West 3rd Street
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Applications need to be submitted no later than March 31, 2020.

A committee will review all applications, and the winner(s) will be notified and announced in the June issue of The Dispatch.

The All Aboard Foundation was established to provide funding for a better quality of life in the communities in which Watco serves.