



American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

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For Immediate Release

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ASLRRA Honors Individuals for Career Excellence in Safety

Keith LaPorte, Old Augusta Railroad, Safety Person of the Year

Ron Sparks, Arkansas & Missouri Railroad, Safety Professional of the Year

Washington, DC – May 8, 2017 – The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

(ASLRRA) honored two outstanding individuals for their career commitment to safety compliance and culture at the 2017 CONNECTIONS Convention in Grapevine, Texas.

“It is an honor to recognize individuals for whom safety is a way of life, integrated into everything they do on a daily basis to ensure that their colleagues go home safely each night,” said Linda Bauer Darr, President of ASLRRA.

Keith LaPorte, Old Augusta Railroad was honored with the Safety Person of the Year Award.

This award recognizes a non-management employee of a member railroad, who has never had a reportable personal injury in their career, works with management of their company to make their safety programs effective, exhibits a high degree of safety awareness, and contributes off-duty time to activities promoting safety awareness in the community.

Jacob Cripps, Transportation Operations Manager, Old Augusta Railroad, noted Keith's 32-year career with the OAR without an FRA-reportable injury. "Keith has been a leader on the safety committee not only delivering the message of the importance of safety, but also expressing the 'why' of the message by explaining the benefits of working safely as well."

Mr. LaPorte is also deeply committed to the community as well, serving on the Board of the Mississippi Operation Lifesaver, furthering their goal of educating the traveling public about the potential dangers involved with railroad crossings at grade.

The Safety Professional of the Year was awarded to Ron Sparks, Director of Safety, Training and Legal Affairs at the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad (A&M). The Safety Professional of the Year is awarded each year to the railroad management employee who demonstrates an exceptional work ethic and dedication to safety.

In his letter of nomination, Brent McCready, President, A & M, writes of Sparks, "Ron has produced documentable safety achievements during his tenure with the A & M, and is well respected by all who have had the privilege of working with him. A & M's zero injury success in 2016 can be directly attributable to Ron. Ron's personal belief is that safety is a 24-hour concern for our employees."

Mr. Sparks is an active participant in the railroad industry's safety based efforts including serving on ASLRRA's Railroad Police and Security and Safety and Training Committees, the National Association of Chiefs of Police, the Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police, and Operation Lifesaver.

Videos detailing all recipients can be found at www.youtube.com/aslrra.

About ASLRRA - The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of the nation's 602 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, touching in origination or termination one out of every four cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad network.