

# WESTERN DAKOTA

---

## TECHNICAL COLLEGE

January 12, 2024

Dear ATEA Silver Star of Excellence Award Selection Committee:

Western Dakota Technical College nominates Floyd's Truck Center for the Silver Star of Excellence Award. Floyd's Truck Center has nine locations in four states (Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, and Montana), including a site in Rapid City, South Dakota, where WDTA is located, and is a dealership and repair center for Freightliner, Western Star, and Sprint diesels. WDTA is nominating Floyd's because this company has been a tireless supporter of WDTA and its diesel and truck driving programs over the past decade, primarily through the efforts of Jon Gillam, General Manager in Rapid City.

To support the diesel technology program at WDTA, Floyd's has donated \$20,000 towards a new training engine, a C12 CAT engine, and a complete tandem differential with brakes for a training aid in the past two years. Just this year, WDTA's diesel program received \$10,000.00 in training aids, four differentials, four diesel exhaust particulate filters and a Western Star brake and suspension trainer.

In addition, the diesel program annually receives 10 free DTNA diagnostic licenses and free "Get Ahead" training for every student enrolled in the program. This free training provides students with the ability to receive Get Ahead certifications while they are enrolled at WDTA, thus improving their skill sets at graduation. Floyd's Truck Center has consistently been an active member of WDTA's Diesel program advisory board.

Floyd's Truck Center has also been a big supporter of WDTA's professional truck driving program. During the pandemic, WDTA's program needed to purchase an additional diesel truck to meet demand for truck driving instruction. Because of manufacturers being shut down across the nation and the supply chain challenges, finding diesel trucks for sale new was challenging; however, WDTA could afford only used trucks. Despite these shortages, Floyd's was able to "find" a high quality used truck within WDTA's price range, which was below the market value at that time. We do not know how many calls Floyd's had to make to find a truck for us, but this situation demonstrates the level of support and commitment shown by Floyd's Truck Center to WDTA, as well as their support of technical education during the most challenging times for two-year colleges.

In addition, 52% of the diesel technicians at Floyd's are WDTA alumni going back 24 years; many more employees at Floyd's graduated from other WDTA programs, such as business and accounting, as well as receiving CDL training at WDTA. Floyd's provides internships and part-time jobs to WDTA diesel students and Build Dakota Scholarship resources.

The support of Floyd's Truck Center towards WDTA's diesel and truck driving programs is clearly demonstrated in the paragraphs above; however, it is also very important to note that Floyd's is a supporter of the College. Mr. Gillam, Floyd's General Manager in Rapid City, served on the WDTA Foundation Board for two terms, including as President. In fact, since 2018, Floyd's has donated

*Western Dakota Technical College prepares students to be highly-skilled professionals through accessible, career-focused programs to improve their lives, while adapting to community workforce needs and positively impacting our economy.*

# WESTERN DAKOTA

---

## TECHNICAL COLLEGE

monthly to the Foundation for a variety of scholarship programs, as well as making larger donations to fundraising campaigns like the 80/20 Student Emergency Fund endowment. The endowed emergency student fund provides any WDTA student with access to up to \$500 per year to mitigate an emergency situation that will help a student stay in college. This includes situations like unexpected expenses caused by illness or accidents. Because the majority of students attending WDTA are in poor financial situations, this resource is critical and has helped many students continue their education. Because of the ties between Floyd's Truck Center, through Mr. Gillam and other Floyd's employees, many students at WDTA have been able to finish their education.

Each year, Floyd's continues to expand its partnership with WDTA and is consistently looking for new ways to work with the College in supporting students and creating a more sustainable workforce in our area. Floyd's has done this through scholarships, equipment and educational materials donations, internships and part-time jobs for students, as well as through service on the Diesel program's advisory board. Floyd's Truck Center's commitment to technical education is evident through Mr. Gillam's six years on the WDTA Foundation Board and his officer roles, including treasurer, chair, and past-chair. Mr. Gillam's strong, positive influence on the Board, including his support of the Student Emergency Fund endowment, as well as his work to articulate and solidify the Foundation's role to support the college and its students, exemplifies the perfect combination of corporate leadership and tangible resources brought to bear in support of technical education at WDTA.

In light of the points outlined above, we feel there is no better nominee than Floyd's Truck Center for the Silver Star of Excellence Award.

Thank you for considering our nomination.



Ann Bolman, Ed.D.  
President