

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



North American Rail Shippers Elect Officers, Honor Members, and Award Scholarships

CHICAGO—September 30, 2021 ([James Street Media Services](#))—The North American Rail Shippers Association (NARS) elected new officers at its recent annual meeting in September. The association also honored members with two major awards and chose its 2021 scholarship recipients.

“We were thrilled with the strong attendance at this year’s meeting, the first since the onset of the pandemic,” said newly elected NARS President Patrick McGrath. “I want to thank outgoing president Tom Tisa for his tireless work to keep our organization strong during these challenging times.”

The [2021-2022 NARS officers](#) are: President Patrick McGrath, McGrath Ground Logistics; First Vice President Bruce C. Mann, Port of Houston; Second Vice President John Meyers, DM Bowman Company; Secretary Kate Luce, Mississippi Export Railroad; Treasurer Ray Hufnagel, Plastic Express; and Immediate Past President Tom Tisa, CSX.

Each year, NARS recognizes exemplary leadership in the rail shipping community through the NARS Person of the Year Award and the Edward R. Hamberger Lifetime Achievement Award. For 2021, the NARS Person of the Year is Craig Longardner for his outstanding service both to NARS and the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers (MARS). Longardner is the corporate director of logistics for Steel Dynamics, Inc.

The 2021 co-recipients of the Edward R. Hamberger Lifetime Achievement Award are Jeffrey Usher and Dana Burleigh. Usher is with the Association of American Railroads (AAR) serving as assistant vice president in the Safety and Operations Department. He also serves on the Board of Directors of NARS. Burleigh is vice president of Lynch Logistics and just completed 10 outstanding years of service to NARS, including a term as president.

“Craig, Jeffrey, and Dana have done so much for NARS and our regional associations over the years,” said McGrath. “Not only have they supported our association, but they are also great role models and mentors for people entering our profession.”

During the annual meeting, NARS announced its 2021 class of [scholarship recipients](#). The 10 college students were selected based on their academic achievement, extracurricular activities, and community service. They are a blend of traditional undergraduate students as well as some working on advanced degrees in fields associated with the rail industry.

"We are pleased to support these outstanding students with their college studies," said McGrath. "Our NARS Scholarship Committee noted that the caliber of these students is truly remarkable, and they represent a bright future for the industry."

The recipients of the NARS scholarships are:

- Connor Bente, University of California, Los Angeles
- Clara Blitz, Towson University
- Jeffrey Collins, University of North Texas
- Zachary Crawford, California State University Maritime Academy
- Nhu Hoang, University of North Texas
- Garrett Jackson, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
- Usama Khalil, Rutgers University
- Nicholas Mayorga, Liberty University
- Matthew Parkes, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
- Lisa Tuivavalagi, Wayne State University

The 2021 annual meeting agenda included presentations from top executives by most of North American's major railroads, rail shippers, and insights from industry experts. A selection of presentations is available [online](#).

The next NARS annual meeting is scheduled to be held [May 9–11, 2022 in Kansas City](#).

[About The North American Rail Shippers Association](#)

The North American Rail Shippers Association (NARS) is comprised of a network of five regional North American associations including the Pacific Northwest Association of Rail Shippers (PNWARS), the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers (MARS), the Southwest Association of Rail Shippers (SWARS), the Northeast Association of Rail Shippers (NEARS), and the Southeast Association of Rail Shippers (SEARS). Headquartered in the Chicago area, NARS brings together representatives from this network of more than 7,000 members of the rail shipping and railroad community in an annual forum, which enables open discussion of rail transportation issues. For more information, please visit the NARS website at www.railshippers.com.

MEDIA CONTACT

Bill Fahrenwald
James Street Associates
708-528-0681
bill@jamesstreet.net