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Charles McAlpin



Charles McAlpin joins other businessINSIDER advisory board members in limo ride to site of first advisory board meeting.

## ADVISORY BOARD SPOTLIGHT

### Charles McAlpin Wins 2000 Heritage Award from TIA

Charles McAlpin, president and CEO of McAlpin Corporation in Alabama, received the distinct honor of being awarded the 2000 Heritage Award by the Transportation Intermediaries Association (TIA). A charter member of the association since 1978, he earned this accolade by his dedicated commitment to the trade association and over fifty years of outstanding leadership in the transportation industry.

The presentation took place in Orlando, during the TIA President's Dinner and Award Ceremony. The TIA Board of Directors established the Heritage Award in 1997 to demonstrate their appreciation for the pioneers and pivotal leaders of the transportation intermediary industry. It specifically honors individuals and/or companies who have significantly supported TIA's growth and success. Previous Heritage Award recipients were Ronald Williamson, president of RJW Logistics and Alan Lund of Allen Lund Co.

Charles McAlpin began in the trucking business over fifty years ago with a used 1930 one-ton truck that he purchased for \$15. After hauling exempt agricultural commodities for 28 years, he was averaging 50¢ a mile, when regulated freight paid twice as much. When the opportunity presented itself, he jumped at the chance to broker a load of steel. From those humble beginnings, the business-minded Alabama trucker built one of the most successful transportation brokerage companies in the country.

His experience includes 28 years as a successful owner/operator, 9 years as a common contract carrier with a fleet of over 100 trucks, 22 years as a major broker, and 15 years with computerized trucker and brokerage software systems. In 1978, Charles met Betty Jo Christenson, Chairman of

the ICC, through an ad she placed in Transport Topics, asking exempt brokers to attend a meeting in Washington, DC, in order to help the little shippers in the "boonies".

Charles attended the meeting and learned that Ms. Christenson wanted exempt brokers to do, for regulated freight, what they did for exempt freight. Her remarks were: "You guys always took care of the produce. The prices may vary, but you never failed to get it to the market." She said, "Congress has asked me to take care of these little shippers in the boonies." She told participants that all they had to do was register and they'd get a broker's permit. Since no rules existed at that time, when the participants returned the following year, their experiences during the year helped to define the rules that were established.

This was the beginning of the Transportation Brokers Conference of America (TBCA), which became the Transportation Intermediaries Association (TIA) in 1995. Bob Gallagher, a former ICC attorney who helped McAlpin get the broker's license, was also instrumental in setting up the TBCA.

"This [TBCA formation] was the most important event in my transportation life," McAlpin said. "Deregulation, TBCA, and DAT Services (Jubitz Corporation) were the ingredients that made the transportation system work." A self-made millionaire, the award-winner concluded, "The market-driven free enterprise system has made America strong and wonderful."

When deregulation began in 1978, McAlpin became the founder and owner of Charles McAlpin Trucking, Inc., and Subsidiary, Charles McAlpin Brokerage, Inc. Deregulation allowed him to solicit freight from anywhere to anywhere.

As a broker, McAlpin was able to load his own trucks through his own brokerage permit. He then used his experience to help about 250 other trucking companies to obtain authority to solicit freight using this system. By 1985, he had 110 trucks grossing about \$14 million a year - \$10 million in trucking and \$4 million through the brokerage. McAlpin sold the business in 1987, expecting to retire.

However, unable to stay retired, Charles successfully opened a branch office for C.H. Robinson, the nation's largest truck brokerage firm, in Madison, Alabama that same year. A year later, he also opened a new brokerage division for East-West

## Transportation in Decatur, Alabama.

In 1989, not only did this energetic businessman set up his own trucking brokerage company, McAlpin Bestway Services, which he operated for six years and sold in 1994, but he also created an advertising agency, Trans-Media, to recruit drivers for the trucking industry.

In 1999, McAlpin started another transportation brokerage firm, McAlpin Corporation, to handle logistics brokering loads and equipment nationwide. McAlpin has built a brokerage empire, based upon his hands-on expertise in the transportation industry. With a history like this, it's no wonder that TIA chose to salute Charles McAlpin in 2000.

This is not McAlpin's first award. In 1995, the North Alabama Traffic Club awarded him the Transportation Professional of the Year Award and they awarded McAlpin Corporation the Outstanding Business of the Year Award.

In addition to TIA, McAlpin is a member of American Trucking Association, Alabama Trucking Association, Transportation Brokerage Conference of America, Transportation Brokers Institute, Inc., Decatur, Alabama, Chamber of Commerce, North Alabama Traffic Club, Kenworth Drivers Board of Directors, Wellborn Cabinet, Inc. Board of Directors, International Rotary Club, Business Council of Alabama and the Better Business Bureau of Huntsville, Alabama.

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