



American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

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ASLRRRA Honors Career-Spanning Dedication to Railroad Safety

*Sam Peterson, Safety Person of the Year and Albert Manning, Safety Professional of the Year
to be Honored at ASLRRRA Conference & Exhibition*

KANSAS CITY, MO., March 25, 2024 – The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association recognized career-spanning dedication to safety today at its Annual Conference & Exhibition. Sam Pederson, Railcar Repairman, Mission Mountain Railroad (MMR) was named Safety Person of the Year, and Albert Manning, Training Program Manager, Florida East Coast Railway (FECR) was named Safety Professional of the Year.

These awards recognize individuals who have dedicated their career to focusing on safety - leaders who hold their companies and their peers accountable to and for each other, and participate in volunteer efforts to raise safety awareness in their communities.

“A good day on a railroad is a safe day, and employees must be accountable to each other,” said ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker. “Sam Pederson of the MMR, and Albert Manning of FECR make safety personal on their railroads. Leading by example, each has earned the respect of their peers, and made a positive and lasting impact on their railroad. We are pleased to highlight their significant contributions to safety culture and performance.”

Safety Person of the Year – Sam Pederson, Railcar Repairman, Mission Mountain Railroad

Kyle Jeschke, General Manager, Mission Mountain Railroad characterized Sam in this way. “Safety has always been a top priority for Sam on and off the job. She is conscientious about following all safety rules while performing her duties as a Car Repairman, she is always looking out for her fellow Team Members. Everything from making sure blue flags are in place to mopping up puddles from melted snow in the depot. Sam goes above and beyond.”

Sam mentors new employees on the railroad and has participated in the Safety Team. She regularly stops unsafe procedures and offers support and redirection. Outside of working hours, you can find Sam coaching youth soccer. Even there, Sam is safety-forward, offering guidance on safe practices such as hydrating properly that she learned on the railroad.

Safety Professional of the Year – Albert Manning, Training Program Manager, Florida East Coast Railway

Albert's career with Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) began as a conductor in 2005, followed by promotion to locomotive engineer in 2006. Over the next 16 years, Albert established a reputation among his colleagues as an expert in train handling on the FEC network. This expertise, along with his unique ability to build relationships and positively influence his peers, led to his promotion in 2022 to the role of Training Program Manager. This pivotal position, within the Safety, Training, and Compliance Department, is responsible for molding the safety culture at FEC.

As Training Program Manager, Albert played a vital role in redesigning the technical and field training program for conductors and engineers. The revised program incorporates additional classroom and hands-on training sessions during the OJT phase. The result is an improved experience for the employee and an opportunity to identify and remediate trainees struggling to master certain concepts.

“The hands-on approach Albert takes with trainees is evident in every aspect of the training program. He collaborates with local managers to identify employees who may be struggling to understand a process, and schedules individual sessions with these

employees to bridge the gaps and build a coaching plan for their future success and growth,” explains Chris Guenther, Assistant Vice President, Safety, Training and Compliance, FECR. “Every employee gets the same message: Even though your formal training is over, I remain a resource for you, which you can call on at any time.”

The impact of Albert's approach to training and coaching employees is evident in year-over-year incident numbers. In 2023, employees with less than one year of service were responsible for seven human factor train incidents, a decrease of 70% from 2022. Additionally, this cohort ended 2023 with zero injuries, compared to five injuries in 2022.

Albert utilizes his skills as a locomotive engineer not only for the benefit of FEC employees, but also to support the community and children in need. He volunteers his time to serve as engineer of FEC's Santa Train, spreading holiday cheer to children along Florida's east coast as well as the annual Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Train Ride, providing an exciting escape for kids fighting childhood cancer and their families.

For more information on Safety Awards, click [here](#).

About ASLRRRA - The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of the nation's 603 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, or approximately 29% of the national railroad network, touching in origination or termination one out of every five cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad network. www.aslrra.org