

# Queen of the Road Awards



WELCOME  
TO Fabulous  
**LAS VEGAS**  
NEVADA

presented by  
**REAL**  
Women  
IN Trucking

# Welcome to the Fourth Annual "Queen of the Road" Awards

Presented by the  
**REAL Women in Trucking, Inc.**  
a 501 (c)(6) Driver Membership Organization



April 2020

## THE MISSION:

**Awareness is the First Step Toward Accountability**

Since 2009 we have provided thousands of women comfort and guidance when they contact us in distress following an unsafe truck driver training experience. Some of these women have been raped by a trainer or co-driver, some badgered for sex until they abandoned their training fleet, only to find the carrier placed a negative mark on their driver file making them un-hirable elsewhere.

Annually, numerous women report to RWIT that substandard truck driver training put them in jeopardy, some report being misled into lease truck programs and discovered that they were paying more for the truck than they were making in their paycheck.

The turnover rate remains staggering in truck driver training which in turn has a direct impact on the retention of qualified drivers. Women being lured into the industry continue to lack proper preparation to become successful and transparency in recruiting remains absent.

In 2018, RWIT was successful in a Motion to Intervene in the CRST sex harassment case in order to unseal court documents. Unfortunately, it was widely ignored by mainstream trucking trade publications who have the power to educate drivers and newcomers to the industry.

Instead of a demand for accountability, we saw an increase of "Tokenism" at major truck driver training fleets and from establishment industry organizations.

In 2019, RWIT hand delivered a petition with over 10,000 signatures to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration demanding immediate action on sexual misconduct in truck driver training fleets. This led to an invitation for a meeting on the topic with acting administrator Jim Mullen in November 2019 in Washington D.C. where we met with several individuals at the Department of Transportation and with elected Congresswomen and Senators to explain the issue. Our work is not complete.



Please be informed on this issue and support us as we continue to fight for accountability.

*Rank does not confer privilege or give power. It imposes responsibility. ~ Peter Drucker*

[www.realwomenintrucking.org](http://www.realwomenintrucking.org)

## ORGANIZATION MISSION:

To Deliver Highway Safety Through Leadership, Mentorship, Education, and Advocacy



# QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARDS

Saturday, August 29th  
at 6:30 p.m.

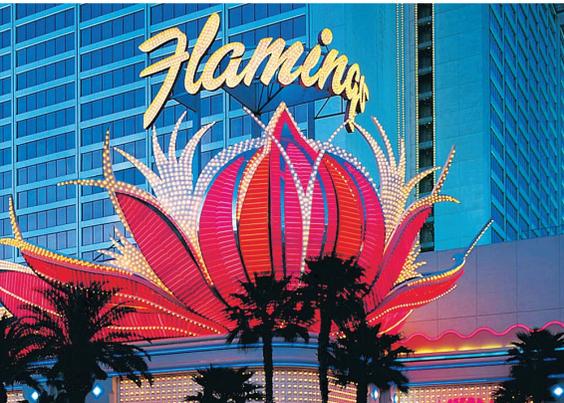
Award ceremony presenters will include Emmy Award Winning Actor, Max Gail from the television show "Barney Miller" and most recently "General Hospital", as well as past Queen of the Road and Trucking Industry Trailblazer award recipients.



Location: Flamingo Hotel, El Dorado Room  
3555 S Las Vegas Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89109

*The event will also be live streamed on the REAL Women in Trucking Facebook page.*

*A weekend get together of women truck drivers is also planned in Las Vegas, Nevada from August 27-31, 2020.*



# QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARDS

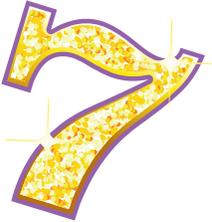


## Purpose

*To create a dignified recognition award for women who work as truck drivers that have overcome personal challenges and demonstrate a "Pay it Forward" approach to help others with gratitude.*

Must be either a past or present Commercial Driver's License holder. Must have hands-on experience to operate a tractor-trailer without assistance and ability to deliver freight. Must fit the R.E.A.L. criteria.

- R. Reaching Out
- E. Encouraging Others
- A. Achieving Personal Success
- L. Leadership



## TRUCKING INDUSTRY TRAILBLAZER AWARD



*President's Choice Award to recognize outstanding individuals that have served the trucking industry with distinction, dedication and professionalism.*



FAMILY OF BRANDS



**Saturday, 8/29/2020 from 6:30 PM to 9 PM at the  
Flamingo Hotel, El Dorado Room  
3555 S Las Vegas Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89109**

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# 2017 QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARD WINNERS



**Adriesue  
"Bitzy" Gomez**



**Dee  
Sova**



**Daisy  
Delaney**

## NOTABLE NOMINEE'S



**Alison  
Morris**



**Janet  
Steverson**



**Candace  
Marley**



**Naza  
Silva**

## TRUCKING INDUSTRY TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNERS



**Idella  
Hansen**



**Sandi  
Talbott**



# 2018 QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARD WINNERS



**Cheryl Lynn  
Ibane-Bean**



**Sandy  
Long**



**Carolyn  
"Reanee" Swiger**

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## NOTABLE NOMINEE'S



**Kimberly  
Bali**



**Ingrid  
Brown**



**Jacinda  
Duran**



**Connie  
Miller**



**Joyce  
Brenny**



**Ramona  
Buentello  
Sexton**



**Shelle  
Litchi**



**Sonja  
Tucci**

# 2018 TRUCKING INDUSTRY TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNER



Tracy  
Ellis



Tracy  
Livingston





# 2019 QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARD WINNERS



**Ramona Hogue**



**Audrey White**



**Michelle Scolari**



**Elizabeth Sweet**

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## HONORABLE MENTIONS



**Michelle Corson**



**Jessica Graham**



**Tamara Brock**



**Rebekah Meadows**

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## NOTABLE NOMINEE'S



**Molly Walker Bulger**



**Natalie Jassopadilla**



**Shannon "Shay" Palmer**



**Phylisia Compton**



# NOTABLE NOMINEE'S



Ikea  
Coley



Teri  
Nycum



Candy  
Bass



Kristy  
Mathews



Brita  
Nowak



## 2019 TRUCKING INDUSTRY TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNERS



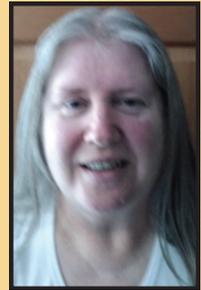
Michelle  
Kitchen



Alta  
Brown



Karen  
Shank



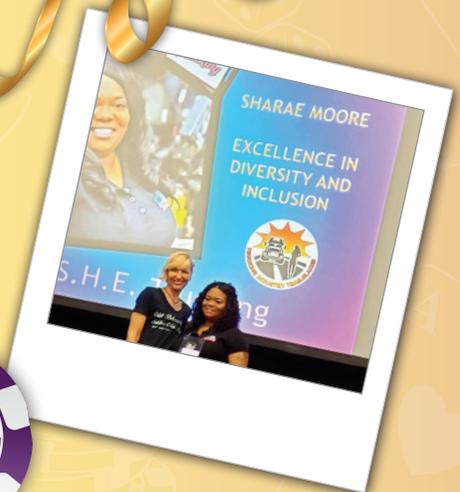
Julie  
Hedglin



Ronihazel  
Sherman



Sharae  
Moore



# 2020 QUEEN OF THE ROAD AWARD WINNERS

## Edwina Webb



Edwina Webb is a mentor and friend to truckers everywhere. Her smile and her stories light up any room. She is smart, savvy, and willing to share these traits with anyone new to professional driving. She started driving truck more than 30 years ago, when only one trucking company would hire African Americans.

She has driven solo over all 48 states since then. Though the industry is much more diverse now, she remembers hearing racial slurs from dispatchers and on loading docks, as well as from the public. She has also faced medical challenges, at one point losing sight in one eye. Despite all this, she keeps driving. You may have seen her in the ad copy for JB Hunt the company she drives for since they sometimes feature her, and her 3-million-mile safe driving record. Edwina Webb was Nominated by Anne Balay.

## Kristy Mathews



Kristy Mathews loves helping even when she has nothing to give, she will find a way to help and give back. She takes great pride in the ladies she gets to train and mentor at her company. She refuses to let someone fail and she does whatever she can to help them succeed!

This girl will not give up! There is no such thing as "I can't" in her world. At a young age when she started her career, there was a lot of doubt and she would often be talked down to by the men she was working with just because she was a small lady. But she would never let them beat her down and she would hold her head high and show them who was the boss on any jobsite. She has shown her worth and is greatly respected by many. I am proud to say that she is UNSTOPPABLE! Nominated by Randy Schoumaker.

## Vonnie Whitemaggie



Vonnie Whitemaggie interacts with everyone she meets; She is always happy and not a day goes by that she does post about a new friend, couple, or hilarious situation that could have gone bad, but for her wit, charm and personality was turned to a learning situation. I spent a weekend layover with her a few years ago and to watch her interact with everyone from a grumpy old driver to the young fella picking up trash on cold rainy day, it was enlightening. When she was done, they all had a smile and bounce in their step. She is Native American (Rosebud Sioux), a Survivor of childhood abuse who went on to become a psych tech helping pregnant women, women coming out of prison, children, and addicts helping them on a path to recovery. As she started to burn out, she became a truck driver even when a friend said, "No, you can't do that"! She since has taken the time to converse with and encourage everyone she meets (that is how she and I met), she will help anyone along the way. She is involved in numerous Facebook pages and groups – Road Warriors is her favorite. Nominated by Victor Popelka



# 2020 HONORABLE MENTIONS

## Cheryl Pollard



Cheryl Pollard has overcome many obstacles to become an owner operator in 2004. She struggled with a rough childhood, rape, drug addiction and even jail time before overcoming all those things to become an advocate for other women in trucking for over 15 years. She is a part of the REAL women in trucking organization and has achieved R.E.A.L. success. Including being the vice president and co-founder of TRUCKS with ROOM to SPARE, which is a non-profit group that helps with disaster relief and those affected. She has also been a part of OPERATION Blue, radio host on the TRUCKING ROUNDUP. "Most recently, Cheryl has helped to distribute PPE to truck drivers in need during the Coronavirus Pandemic. She is passionate and willing to help anyone in the industry. She is admired for her strength and generosity to others. Cheryl was nominated by Susan Couch".

## Jacinda Duran



Jacinda Duran is an amazing female trucker that bring positivity and encouragement to all truckers through her social media. My favorite endeavor of hers is Mutts for Trucks. She is a third-generation lady truck driver who has been driving six years. She spreads positivity and encouragement to inspire women to get into truck driving. She currently does enclosed car hauling for Plycar Transportation. Her goal is to gain as much experience as possible to become the first female trainer the company has had in their history. She shares her journey and makes everyday an adventure across her social media platforms. Nominated by Elizabeth Sweet.



# HONORABLE MENTIONS

## Shundora Bell



Shy Bell was nominated by her former trainee Sheila Kitchens who wrote: "She was my trainer when I first started my CDL life journey. Now she is one of my dearest friends. She never gives up; she has raised two of the most awesome sons I have ever met. There are so many memories with this woman from the first day that I got in her truck to start my journey in truck driving. Without her I do not think I would be the driver that I am today".

## 2020 NOTABLE NOMINEE'S



**Ellie  
O'Daire**



**Nickie  
Pointer**



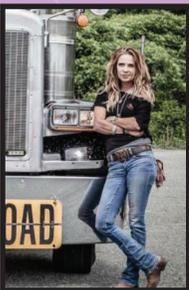
**Shelly  
Burton**



**Kandy  
Qualls**



**Dale  
Estwick**



**Rebekah  
Meadows**



**Michelle  
Braithwood**



**Donna  
Sleasman**



**Brittany  
Richardson**



# TRUCKING INDUSTRY TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNERS

## Deb Desiderato



Deb Desiderato, who is an active mentor and advocates for a better industry. She is a regular blood donor for the Red Cross and whenever there is a domestic disaster, she immediately makes herself available to haul Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supplies to affected areas of the nation. In 2019, she received the NASTC Driver of the Year Award. She was

featured in the documentary "Autonomy" to speak for truck drivers about concerns regarding autonomous trucks and the effects on labor. Deb also developed an app called "Trucker Notes" for truck parking locations that truck drivers prefer that will always remain free for them. Deb is always willing to assist with a welcoming demeanor, a smile on her face and a guitar handy to play a tune.

She is the Mother of three Sons and to an adopted shelter dog, Bubba who sadly crossed the rainbow bridge in June 2020.

Born in Tasmania, Australia and raised in Sydney, her teen years were tumultuous. She was sent to New Zealand where her brother introduced her to truck driving. During a vacation in America, she was in a horrible motorcycle accident and could not fly home which resulted in an extended visa. During that time, she met her future husband. Today, she is an American citizen. Deb overcame her injuries, marched thru the tedious immigration process, raised her 3 sons

From car hauling to dry van, Deb moved on to learning to do her own compliance paperwork, get her authority and buy her own equipment. Currently she is transitioning from trade shows, military, and FEMA loads into other sectors of freight., Deb is an inspiration to all those who know her. Nominated by Michelle Kitchin

## Tamara Brock



Tamara Brock's career began following a hospital stay. She did a full 360 turn as far as careers go. She went from running a successful business into trucking. She lost everything and started over. She has phenomenal strength! It was a drastic change when she committed to obtaining her CDL. She raised incredible young men that she supported, especially her youngest, while working as an over the road truck driver. She also started a YouTube channel sharing what she has learned. Sharing tips of the trade and mentoring both men and women. Through this channel, she has built a huge following of more than 35,000 followers. Her wisdom and insight have helped many people enter and build successful careers in the trucking industry. She later became a lease operator and trainer that taught many drivers that they did not have to settle for being a company driver, including myself. Because of her, I took the leap of faith and it changed my life. The entire time she has had her own personal challenges and keeps going. From her role as a YouTuber and lease operator, she went on to start several other businesses, one of which is as an independent recruiter to over 50 companies. Through that outlet, she has assisted numerous drivers who were once unemployable. She helps them get into trucking companies and become gainfully employed. Through her recruiting business, she has employed the stay at home spouses of drivers and others to help support their families by working from home. She continues to give back to the industry and inspires many along the way because of her passion in this industry. She is a wonderful motivator speaker for drivers, and she is a businesswoman who looks out for her fellow brothers and sisters of any race. She places people in trucking jobs who have a hard time being hired and if they are hungry, she is always there to help. Her continued role as an advocate through her active volunteer work with RWIT, made it possible for her to go to Washington DC and be present on numerous other platforms as an awesome advocate for women drivers. We are all truly proud of her. Nominated by Dee Sova, Antonio Harris, and Shelia Shelton.



# *In Memorium*

## **Sandy Long**



Sandy had over 40+ years' experience. She was recognized posthumously with a 2018 Queen of the Road Award. She passed away on 12/21/17. She was known by many in the truck driver community as a passionate and eloquent writer. Many knew her only through social media, though she wrote extensively to help other organizations gain credibility with the drivers. Sadly, some of the very organizations and groups she helped to build have largely have moved on with out honoring her significant contributions to their growth. One

lady driver who was her friend remarked that "it's as if she never existed".

Sandy began her trucking career driving a big truck for the carnivals. She would share stories of how hard it was for women to be respected and to be validated as "legitimate" truckers. When she started in OTR, the lack of respect was (and still is at times) loud and clear. "There were many truck stops that didn't have a women's bathroom, let alone showers!" Sandy gave back countless times over to potential drivers, students and to the seasoned drivers learning to deal with new regulations and new equipment. She was all about helping and mentoring truck drivers. Her last thoughts before she passed, were about truckers.

Many are not aware that Sandy Long was a founder of a women's trucking organization many years ago called the "The National and International Women's Trucking Association", or WTA". The Mission was more closely aligned with the need to address the violence that women truck drivers faced rather than recruiting.

The Mission read:

*"We are the first National & International Women's Trucking Association dedicated to the betterment of Women in the Trucking Industry in North America. The WTA was formed to provide women truck drivers a safe and secure site in order that they can find knowledge to help them become professional drivers, instill in them the professionalism needed to promote the positive aspects of the industry and to give them aid as they need it to combat sexual harassment and/or problems inherent to their jobs and personal lives. Furthermore, we will promote the trucking industry by providing accurate data, statistics, and information to the industry and the general public in regards to women in the trucking industry by internet, personal contact, appearances at seminars, and in contacting industry and governmental leaders."*

Sandy Long was a LADY TRUCKER through and through. A pioneer that paved the way for all of us. Sandy Long was nominated by Deb LaBree. Sandy was named as a TA/Petro Citizen Driver in 2015, the Oak Grove, Missouri location was renamed in her honor. Her award money was donated to the "Truckers Final Mile" organization and a plaque with her named was created and requested to be hung at the TA/Petro location named in her honor. We are unaware if this request was granted.

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## Alta Brown



She overcame a childhood that included incest, sexual assault in addition to racial prejudice, difficulty learning and being publicly ridiculed. As a young woman she battled addiction and later had to learn how to reinvent her life after incarceration. As a woman of color with few resources, she found truck driving like so many other similarly situated women have done. Being vulnerable without much knowledge of the industry, she ended up doing her truck driver training at CRST van expedited but had to abandon the carrier when her trainer told her she would have to have sex with him to pass.

Though she refused him and had to abandon her training, she did not give up trucking. Finally, in 2017 she was able to realize a dream to become an owner operator with Jim Lawrence trucking bringing over a decade of experience as a truck driver. She has overcome many challenges with determination, endurance and grace. However, now she is fighting the battle of her life after taking a load across I-70 through Colorado in the Spring of 2018 where she was affected by the altitude and had to be rushed to the hospital. They found not only fluid in her lungs but also that she had a 6 lb. malignant tumor and needed to come off the road to go through radiation and chemotherapy treatments immediately. Despite her battle with cancer, she always had a big smile on her face and a positive attitude. Alta passed away March 2020.





## Adriesue “Bitzy” Gomez

During the late 1970's Adriesue “Bitzy” Gomez found truck driving as a means to support her three Daughters as a single Mother. Truck driving paid about \$500.00 per week which was good money for a woman managing a one parent family in those days.

Since she lacked family support that could help with her girls, she sought out neighbors and friends to babysit while she was away. The compensation she was able to provide was barely enough to cover their food and laundry while she was gone. Without truck driving, her alternative to provide for her children was to remain in an unhappy relationship or go on welfare, both she said left her feeling degraded.

A common practice she encountered when she entered truck driving when seeking employment was to be told that she would have to have sex with the instructor to pass her road tests.

Rather than walk away from truck driving discouraged she fought back by exposing the “Sleeper Test” a form of “Quid Pro Quo” Harassment that still exists today, and that is most commonly reported to be occurring at some of the larger truck driver training fleets that train new students who require team driving as part of the training.

Bitzy often said that women entering trucking must stand up for themselves and adopt to their vernacular the statement that “...co habitation with a man they have no relationship with is not a requirement for employment...”. She began working with other women truckers to file hiring discrimination lawsuits against a number of trucking fleets. These women worked together to identify carriers that would deny employment based on gender and challenge their practices in court.

Bitzy was a founding member of the “Coalition of Women Truckers” that was formed under the NOW organization. She was written about in TIME Magazine, Women's World Magazine and numerous newspaper articles. She was known internationally according to her Daughter Dolores who said that she remembers women truckers from the United Kingdom coming to visit her Mother in California during the late 1970's. The Coalition also pushed for women's restroom facilities at truck stops and they walked picket lines to support other driver causes.

During one of her over the road trips, Bitzy's babysitter's home was raided by welfare investigators who came in the middle of the night. They were suspicious that the babysitting activity was additional unreported income, a

common practice in the late 1970's. As a result of the raid, the children were placed into foster care.

Bitzy returned to California to search for her Daughters and fight the State of California to get them back.

Her job as an over the road truck driver had been deemed unfit for a woman. She lost custody of the children but eventually she was able to afford representation from a young lawyer by the name of Gloria Allred according to Daughter Dolores Gomez.

During their time in foster care the girls were harmed emotionally and sexually. Bitzy was finally able to be reunited with her kids. She later went on to become a truck driver with the teamsters. The Coalition of Women Truck Drivers at one time had international membership and chapters throughout the United States.

It ceased to exist after the custody battle. Today, women truckers rarely recognize the sacrifices that Bitzy Gomez and her three Daughters made on behalf of all of the women who have entered truck driving as single women that had no advocate. Bitzy simply had a deep desire and determination to become a qualified truck driver and to earn a living.

Bitzy loved truck driving. It gave her the financial support and self-confidence to live with a level of dignity despite the other hardships she endured during her life as a child and a single mom. She was once quoted as saying, "...a good truck is what a man ought to be, ... big and strong, and takes you where you want to go..."



# KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

## REAL Women IN Trucking

- R. Reaching out
- E. Encouraging Others
- A. Achieving Personal Success
- L. Leadership

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[www.REALWomeninTrucking.org](http://www.REALWomeninTrucking.org)

REAL Women in Trucking, Inc.  
is a 501(c) 6 Trade Association



## REAL DRIVERS, REAL ISSUES

*Driving the Industry Towards Corporate Social Responsibility*



**Our Members Are Our Voice! Support Our Mission! Become Engaged and Involved! Join Us Today! Membership Application Online**

[www.realwomenintrucking.org](http://www.realwomenintrucking.org)

- Supported by members and sponsors focused on driver issues
- Educational Events to learn about your rights as a truck driver
- Advocacy on sexual misconduct in entry-level driver training fleets
- Annual Recognition Awards Honoring drivers
- Lady Truck Driver Networking Events



GET REAL



**Be on The Right Side of History! Join Our Movement!**

