



## **Duncan History**

Duncan and Son Lines has been a family owned business for 64 years. The Duncans were one of the original families in Buckeye and have been an active member of ATA for the past five years.



### **The Five Original Duncan Trucks**

The company was founded in 1943 by (Richard) Blaine Duncan Sr. to haul cotton, grain & hay around the greater Phoenix area. In 1975 his son, Richard Duncan Jr., took over and survived the transition from a regulated monopoly to an interstate carrier. In 1997 the third generation, Rick Duncan III, took over as president. Today, it remains a family owned and operated business. The fourth generation is also in the business, continuing the Duncan family heritage. Rick's son David is VP of Operations, son Blaine heads up Maintenance and his daughter Gayle takes charge of IT and Training. Additionally his son-in-law and daughter-in-law work for the company.

Due to tremendous growth in the import and export trade, Duncan and Son Lines has grown to running over 200 trucks, and now specializes in moving ocean containers from the LA/Long Beach harbor to the southwestern United States. Some of Duncan's key customers include Walgreens, Target, KB Toys, Mor Furniture and Costco. Additionally a logistics division, R.B. Duncan and Son, Inc., specializes in the transport of agricultural products such as cotton & squash.



### **Five of the Modern Fleet**

Community support is important to Duncan and Son Lines. The company helps fund youth activities in Buckeye as well as leadership training and scholarships for high school students. Rick has recently started serving on the ATA Board and has been selected to participate in the West Valley Leadership program.

### **Duncan's Challenges**

One of Duncan's challenges is the Ports of LA and Long Beach Clean Air Action Plan. While everyone wants clean air, Duncan considers this proposal to be too aggressive. It could seriously hamper the way goods are being transported to and from this key port.

In the industry, diesel pricing is a big factor. It is especially difficult for Duncan to pass fuel increases to foreign based customers when their fuel prices are already much higher than those in the U.S.

### **Creating Duncan's Culture Retained a Driver**

Another industry challenge which also affects Duncan is driver availability. Rick says they must continue to be innovative to retain and attract drivers. He wants to create a company culture that will attract and retain good employees as well as successfully transition the next generation.

To help with this, Rick is partnering with Attainment, Inc., also an ATA member. Rick participated in their facilitated process where he defined the company's values, vision, mission, purpose. This outlined their ideal corporate culture. Then came the sometimes

uncomfortable part, comparing how the company is today with the ideal. From there, goals were established as well as people development needs. Realizing he couldn't take the company to the next level alone, Rick also involved his team in the process.

Rick and some of his leadership team have successfully completed Attainment's eight week leadership development program designed for specific behavior changes. As part of the program, leaders identified and are implementing High Payoff Activities, Job Descriptions, Feedback Logs, Delegation Plans, Motivation Plans and People Development Plans.



**Rick Duncan III presents David Duncan with a  
Leadership Development Certificate**

Now these are being developed for every Duncan employee. Written processes are being developed for each key task. This will support the Duncan value of consistent, high quality customer service.

Rick shares an interesting story that shows all this hard work will pay off. Rick communicated the new company values and their definitions to each employee by including them in the employee pay envelopes. A driver, who was on the verge of quitting, saw the values and asked to meet with Rick. The driver told Rick that if the company was serious about these, he would continue working for Duncan. When Rick assured him that there was a high commitment to living these values, the driver decided to stay.

When asked about what has made them successful, Rick replied, "For 64 years, we have provided superior service to our customers and have assisted them in achieving their goals. Through progressive policies and high attention to customer needs we continue to expand. Our mission is to use technology to plan our growth and consistently recognize

safety, employee value and high quality customer service. We utilize our competent staff in a manner that maintains profitability and assures customer satisfaction.” Attending to these things and valuing people as their greatest asset, Duncan and Son Lines will be thriving for at least another 64 years! For more information, please visit:

<http://www.duncanandson.com/index.html>