

Former CN Railway CEO Will Launch U of M's Freight Transportation Leadership Academy

Because the University of Memphis is situated at the center of one of the greatest freight laboratories in the world, which provides transportation executives a unique opportunity for a real-world educational experience, the Intermodal Freight Transportation Institute (IFTI) at the University will this month host its first Freight Transportation Leadership Academy class.

E. Hunter Harrison, former CEO of CN Railway, will visit the U of M on Friday, March 9, to launch this new executive leadership course. Harrison will lead an educational session about company culture and share best practices for being a transportation industry leader.

Harrison began his career in the railroad industry in Memphis in 1963, when he joined the Frisco (St. Louis-San Francisco) Railroad as carman-oiler while still attending school. He advanced through positions of increasing responsibility in the operations function, first with the Frisco, then with Burlington Northern (BN) after BN acquired the Frisco in 1980.

He was the chief operating officer of Illinois Central Railroad from 1989 to 1993 and its president and chief executive officer from 1993 until February 1998. In 1998 Harrison became chief operating officer of CN Railway Company; then, in January 2003, he began serving as the president and chief executive officer, a position he kept until December 2009.

Harrison was named North America's Railroader of the Year by *Railway Age* magazine in 2002. One of the Academy site tours will be at the railroad yard that bears his name.

The Freight Transportation Leadership Academy is one way the U of M provides expertise and leadership that has a significant impact on the freight industry. The Memphis transportation

community has opened its doors to the Academy by granting students, faculty, and program participants access to tour their facilities free of charge. Local, national, and international transportation industry experts have agreed to provide leadership for the Academy and mentoring for the participants. Some of the participating corporations and organizations are Dunavant Global Logistics Group, CH Robinson, International Paper, Schneider National, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).

The four-part certification program offered through the Academy is targeted to mid-level and upper-level executives. In 2009, Harrison suggested that IFTI explore ways to fill this important industry need. The Academy is a concise, affordable professional primer that teaches leadership skills, offers hands-on experience, and allows participants to gain a total understanding of the transportation industry, thus creating a pipeline for future professional leaders. This program offers a unique collaboration between academic and industry experts that will insure that participants receive the most up-to-date information on critical issues facing the freight transportation industry.

IFTI addresses critical issues affecting the planning, design, and operation of the nation's intermodal freight transportation systems, with an emphasis on the intermodal issues that have local significance with national and international implications. The extensive transportation infrastructure in the Memphis region provides the perfect working laboratory for IFTI to solve critical problems facing the freight industry and generate educational opportunities to develop tomorrow's leaders.

More information about IFTI is available online at www.Memphis.edu/IFTI. More information about the Freight Transportation Leadership Academy is available online at www.Memphis.edu/the_academy.php.