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## CSX's Chatrathi earns AAR environmental award

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Raghu Chatrathi (left) with AAR Assistant VP Environment & Hazmat Bob Fronczak.

CSX

**The Association of American Railroads on Oct. 27, 2015 awarded the 2015 Professional Environmental Excellence Award, “the highest honor for environmental professionals in the railroad industry,” to CSX’s Raghu Chatrathi, one of eight nominated.**

The annual award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated outstanding performance in environmental awareness and responsibility during the year. It was presented during the Railroad Environmental Conference at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

“For 21 years, Chatrathi’s adept technical skills and creative ideas have been indispensable assets to CSX’s environmental team and the railroad industry as a whole,” AAR said. Chatrathi began his career in the rail industry working on environmental compliance and remediation projects. He later joined CSX as a remediation manager, focused first on real estate and then on the environmental group. Chatrathi has worked on “Rails-to-Trails” projects in 11 states and has guided his department through many other large-scale environmental projects, which include helping to negotiate with the Environmental Protection Agency to avoid a cost of more than \$3 million by neutralizing soils on site and disposing them as non-hazardous waste. He also led CSX’s environmental team in upgrading their Environmental Management Information System (EMIS). “His training has spanned across two continents over two decades and culminates in the innovative solutions and expertise he brings to the industry today,” AAR noted.

“Environmental conservation is a cornerstone of the rail industry and the Professional Environmental Excellence Award recognizes those railroaders who promote environmental awareness,” said AAR President and CEO Edward R. Hamberger. “Employees like Raghu Chatrathi, who work diligently to encourage responsible behavior and reduce the environmental footprint, will ensure our environment is protected for generations to come.”

The other 2015 Professional Environmental Excellence Award nominees were:

*Mike Ball, Canadian Pacific:* Ball, Hazardous Materials Officer with CP, has served the rail industry for more than 40 years. “In his position, Ball focuses on preventing incidents before they occur, using education, inspections and hands-on experience to constantly improve CP’s approach to hazmat transportation,” CP said. “He was instrumental in the design of one of the company’s latest hazmat training tools. Ball came up with the idea to create a simulator that is used to teach locomotive shutdown procedures, patient extraction and how to breach the cab. The first-of-its-kind prop can also be tilted to simulate real derailment scenarios. He demonstrates his dedication to educating others as part of his duties and in his passion to provide training to first responders. He has been a guest instructor at the National Fire Academy in Maryland and the Security and Emergency Response Training Center (SERTC) in Pueblo, Colo. Additionally, he helped develop SERTC and AAR first-responder training programs and commits off-duty time to provide training on hazmat transportation.”

*Curtis D. Bartz, CN:* Bartz is an Environmental Officer who manages all aspects of environmental compliance, assessment and remediation for CN’s Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois Divisions. “He maintains a complete level of compliance in his territory and has organized an internal auditing program conducted with operating departments that accept responsibility for addressing findings, review status and brainstorm on improvements to ensure that chronic compliance issues are addressed in advance of formal compliance audits,” CN said. “He was instrumental in the closure of one contaminated yard that reduced the company’s liability by \$100,000 annually. Bartz assists departments in making changes to the way they work in order to ensure compliance and participates in cleanup projects in which he takes time to speak to employees regarding the significance of good housekeeping on environmental compliance.”

*Joanne L. Maxwell, Amtrak:* Maxwell functions as both a manager and technical expert in the Law Department at Amtrak. “With more than 28 years of experience in the environmental industry, Maxwell always thinks about how to improve environmental performance and reduce financial risks,” Amtrak said. “In an effort to improve the environmental literacy of employees, she pioneered the first computer-based training on Amtrak’s Environmental Policy, allowing environmental education to reach more than 20,000 employees. Maxwell recently collaborated with the Mechanical Department to integrate Environmental ‘Hot Topics’ into the templates for Safety Briefings, helping mechanical field employees focus on a relevant environmental compliance issue each day. She has actively participated in Amtrak’s ongoing effort to identify risks to the company as well as controls that are in place to manage those risks. Under her guidance, Amtrak surpassed its corporate goal for environmental compliance for the most recent fiscal year. Because of her commitment to environmental stewardship, Maxwell takes public transportation to work every day.”

*Traci S. Rohde, Union Pacific:* An Environmental Field Operations Program Manager with UP, Rohde “has helped achieve environmental compliance in an area that is complex due to its large, diverse and active regulatory community,” UP said. “She was instrumental in developing and implementing an employee environmental engagement plan that produces consistent, accurate and timely communications with field personnel to achieve sustainable compliance. Her team has imbedded itself within work units, sharing

environmental messages during day-to-day interactions, staff and safety meetings and conference calls. The end result is a much higher employee awareness of environmental issues associated with work activities. A standard waste process crafted by Rohde and her team has simplified the system across the company, ensuring waste is properly characterized and disposed of at appropriate, approved facilities. Outside of work, she gives back in ways that go beyond basic recycling and conservation. She is an organic farmer who raises fruit and vegetables to support 14 people.”

*Janet Sommerhauser, Kansas City Southern:* An Environmental Health and Safety Administrator for KCS, Sommerhauser began her career there as a contractor before becoming an Environmental Health and Safety Specialist and now the department’s Administrator. Since joining KCS, Sommerhauser has taken responsibility for the wastewater management program. “She visits each wastewater treatment site annually to perform an internal audit of the facility and its records,” KCS said. “Sommerhauser has played an integral role in the development of an Environmental Management Information System (EMIS) as KCS. Recently, she negotiated directly with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency regulators regarding a solid waste issue at a KCS yard, avoiding a violation and significant fine. Sommerhauser also improved the vegetation management program efficiency without increasing the budget. Currently, there are projects under way with goals of improving environmental performance, reducing safety hazards, increasing efficiency of operations and reducing the potential for violations.”

*Michael Stanfill, BNSF:* Stanfill “has been a leader in the adoption of environmental awareness as part of the business process in the railroad industry throughout his 38 years with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway,” BNSF said. “He was one of the early members of BNSF’s Environmental Department, and from the beginning, convinced those around him to take the environment into consideration while serving others. His efforts on locomotive emissions issues have been instrumental in ensuring that the railroad meets grant obligations, and he has worked tirelessly to ensure that the program has been well-documented and that all work was completed on time. Stanfill’s training has been used to make work crews aware of environmentally sensitive areas and allows them to understand the best practices they can employ during maintenance and construction activities. His approach to environmental matters has resulted in widespread support for new permitting processes that will allow BNSF to work closely with internal and external stakeholders to achieve permitting in more efficient manner.”

*Paul Zottola, Norfolk Southern:* Zottola comes from a family of railroaders. He, his father and his grandfather have a combined 126 years in the business. Before retiring from NS in August 2015, Zottola “was responsible for ensuring corporate compliance with an array of state and federal environmental laws and for managing preparedness and response to emergency situations,” NS said. “He approached his responsibilities with the perspective that the railroad has a corporate responsibility to protect and preserve the environment and natural resources. Zottola regularly attended local safety and service meetings to discuss environmental issues related to daily railroad activities with his colleagues. In one noteworthy project, he managed the remediation of one complex site where petroleum from an old diesel shop was leaking into a local creek. Through his efforts, more than 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel were recovered and recycled, effectively stopping the seep into the creek. Zottola trained hundreds of first responders at TRANSCAER® and earned individual achievement awards in recognition of his support of the program.” .

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