

FAMILY HELPING FAMILY



SPENCER BOYS TRANSPORTATION LENDS A HAND

MOST COMMONLY, a family is a group of people comprised of parents and children living together in a household. But when you ask Landstar Agent Adam Spencer about his family, he simply replies that his family also is made up of every one of the professionals who are part of the Landstar system. Spencer says he's been part of the Landstar family for the last 21 years of his life. At just 32 years old, he is now the chief operating officer of his family-run agency.

"My dad, Sam, started Spencer Boys Transportation Inc. 21 years ago and when he passed away in 2013, my brother, Alex, my mother, Diane, and I picked up where he left off. Landstar has always been my family, the agents I grew up knowing, and the BCOs we've worked with – they are my family," says Spencer.

In 2016, Spencer's commitment to family became evident as two opportunities to help others came to light. First was for a Landstar business capacity owner (BCO), the company's term for truck

owner-operator, who lost everything during Hurricane Matthew.

Landstar BCO Mathew Nickolson recalls that fateful day. "Before the storm hit, for some reason, I decided to move my truck away from the house, to a different part of our property. If I hadn't done that, we would have lost the truck too," Nickolson said.

Nickolson and his family felt Hurricane Matthew's destruction firsthand in Hemingway, South Carolina. Matthew became a Category 5 Atlantic hurricane on October 1, 2016. Hurricane Matthew caused widespread destruction and catastrophic loss of life as it traveled across the Western Atlantic. Although the storm weakened as it traveled up the U.S. coast, its wrath caused damages reported in excess of \$15 billion.

"Thankfully, we had evacuated to my in-laws' house, so no one was home when a tree fell on our house and literally split it in half. When we arrived home to check out the damage, we had to use a chain saw to cut away all the other fallen trees just to get to our property," said Nickolson.

After hearing about Nickolson's situation, Spencer immediately did what he could to help his agency's dedicated BCO.

"I set up an account for people to donate relief funds and solicited donations," said Spencer. "I have known Mathew for a long time and it was the least I could do to let others know, 'Here is one of our great BCOs and he needs help right now.'"

Spencer started the Go Fund Me account in effort to raise \$2,500 for the Nickolson family. Thanks to

Landstar's BCO Benevolence Fund is available to provide financial assistance to business capacity owners in hardship situations. The fund was established to distribute financial assistance to qualified BCOs who do not have the assets to meet their existing financial obligations.

For information about the Landstar BCO Benevolence Fund, contact BCO Services at 1-800-872-9541 or email bcofund@landstar.com

Spencer, the goal was more than met, with \$4,752 in donations.

“The generosity makes me so glad to be where I am today with Landstar,” said Nickolson. “Without Adam’s help and the generosity of the Landstar family, we probably would have lost more than our home.”

Dozens of independent Landstar agents and BCOs, and even some complete strangers contributed to the fund to aid the Nickolsons. “It was incredible to me, people who don’t even know me, helped us,” Nickolson said.

The BCO was also grateful to discover that he qualified to receive money from the Landstar BCO Benevolence Fund. He said that he and his wife, Yvonne, have always contributed to the Benevolence Fund through raffle ticket sales during BCO Appreciation Days, but they never thought they would be the ones in need. “With the money raised through Adam and what we received from the Landstar BCO Benevolence Fund, we were able to keep up with bills. It’s a blessing. We never imagined we’d be put in this position.”



Late in 2016 another dire situation put Spencer in a position to expand his definition of family, and to help others. Spencer, also a volunteer fire fighter and paramedic, put together a donation operation to help an entire community in need after fire destroyed parts of his home state of Tennessee.

“As a firefighter, I saw things the public didn’t get to see on the news. People’s lives were destroyed by this fire. They lost everything and I wanted to get them help,” recalls Spencer.



Fire ripped through the Great Smoky Mountains during November 2016, scorching homes and businesses, and prompting thousands of people to evacuate from the resort towns of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge. Just 270 miles west in Tennessee, Spencer started making plans to help. He began by rallying his community of Springhill to donate goods for the fire victims, then he turned to his contacts at Landstar.

“Within 48 hours of my first call, I had the use of a trailer for transport. I called on a few BCOs and, before I knew it, Landstar BCO Mike Hermes donated his time, truck and fuel to haul the donated goods from Springhill to Gatlinburg, Tennessee,” explained Spencer.

In just a few days, the community had gathered everything from furniture, bedding and blankets, to water, canned goods and baby supplies.

“I was really surprised at the turn out, I’d never seen anything like it,” said Landstar BCO Mike Hermes. “What Adam did for the fire victims was incredible, through the power of social media, he and the members of his church were able to collect so much that the trailer was full to the brim. I was proud to be part of the effort.”

Spencer and the Springhill community packed the Landstar trailer with 15,260 pounds worth of supplies for fire victims in Gatlinburg. ★

The fire that burned through Gatlinburg, Tennessee in November of 2016 destroyed more than 2,400 homes, businesses and other structures and caused more than \$500 million in damages, according to CNN News.