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| **Word of Encouragement: "No man is a failure who has friends"**Most of these Words of Encouragement are based on stories that are sent to me about individuals who are, in their own inimitable way, making a positive difference for others in life.That said, some Words of Encouragement will occasionally highlight someone that I know personally and would like to introduce to our readers. Some of these individuals may have done, or currently are doing, extraordinary things. Others are just delightful people to be around.While these individuals come from diverse backgrounds and do different things, they all have one thing in common; These people bless others with their kind words and actions. Whenever you meet people like this and spend time with them, you’re going to walk away with a smile on your face and think to yourself: “I am glad that I ran into this person.”With that thought in mind, I’d like to introduce you to Fred Piercy Jr. After graduating from Tennessee, Fred's dad (who was a transportation manager) encouraged him to sell freight because "all they (a.k.a. sales reps) do is ride around in their company cars and take people to lunch."If you are a shipper that has lived in the Southeastern part of the United States for any length of time, there is a good chance than you know Fred Piercy Jr. Following his dad's advice, Fred worked for Carolina Freight and then ABF (after they purchased Carolina Freight). Fred retired from ABF - for about a minute - and then was snapped up by JB Hunt, where he worked for 12 years until he actually did retire earlier this year.I first met Fred about thirty years ago at NASSTRAC’s Annual Conference. Whenever I ran into Fred at NASSTRAC events or any other industry conferences, he always had a smile on his face and would treat me and others warmly and respectfully.  Last week, I had the pleasure of seeing Fred once again when I gave the keynote address at the North Carolina League of Transportation and Logistics (“NCLTC”) annual meeting. And true to form, Fred was enthusiastic, gracious and made me feel like a champion when he came up and welcomed me to the event.june16-1                                                             Fred Piercy, Jr.The NCLTC is a ninety-four-year-old association that has a storied history. One of the reasons why I accept their invitations to speak is because I get to catch up with friends that I have known for years. I also get to interact with a lot of like-minded members who are as passionate about transportation and logistics issues as I am and who are also genuinely nice people and dedicated professionals.At their annual conference, they honor a member with the Bill H. Teague Lifetime Achievement Award. After arriving, I learned that Fred was going to be honored as the 2023 recipient of the Bill H. Teague Lifetime Achievement Award. It was an inspired choice by NCLTC.Whenever I speak at conferences, I normally get in and get out. But this year, the group invited me to stay for the entire conference and attend the annual dinner. I’m glad I did, because I got to sit back and hear a bunch of people talk about how their friendship with Fred had impacted their lives.Can I get personal with you for a moment? Years ago, I heard a profound message where the speaker talked about how people will at times walk around and wonder: “Does my life matter?” The point of his message was to underscore the importance of letting the people in your lives know that they do matter! They matter to God, and they matter to you. It doesn’t cost a dime or take a lot of time, but it can make all the difference in the world. It was special to hear Fred's friends share how their friendship with him had impacted their lives.The next day, as we were saying our goodbyes after the morning session was over, I smiled as I watched Fred being Fred and living out those words from Thessalonians about the need to “encourage one another and build each other up.” Fred has a gift for making others feel important and valued.june16-2In the classic movie, “It’s A Wonderful Life,” George Bailey wondered if all the small things he had done actually made a difference for the folks living in Bedford Falls. Fortunately, his guardian angel Clarence helped George see how his “ordinary” life had indeed made such a big difference for the people in his life.After Clarence reminded George that “no man is a failure who has friends,” George’s little brother Harry referred to him as “the richest man in town.” Fred Piercy Jr is also one very rich man.  |

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