

Richard (Rick) Clark: A Life of Achievement

Rick Clark is the third generation of his family to be in the new and used truck industry. His son Michael is now fourth generation. The family's trip into truck sales began with Rick's great-grandparents, farmers in western New Jersey. His grandfather, J.C. Wright, decided to find work in the city. With Newark his destination, J.C. Wright became a service writer in 1921 for the White Motor Company's Newark factory branch. From there he moved into truck sales as a branch manager, then Vice President in Cleveland, and the dealer principal of a number of White-Autocar and Freightliner truck dealerships back in New Jersey. Rick's father, Dick Clark, became involved in the dealerships and then became a dealer principal for White-Autocar, Freightliner and International trucks.

Rick started doing odd jobs at the White-Autocar dealership as a young teenager; painting the facility and washing and prepping new and used trucks for delivery to retail customers. With his driver's license in hand, he began a part-time job delivering parts and trucks to customers during the summer months. At that time, he had very little interest in trucks or diesel engines. In honesty, he actually couldn't tell a fuel pump from a water pump.

Graduating college early and working on his Masters' degree, Rick began looking for a career that was not truck related. He leaned more toward the automobile industry. After going to 16 automobile dealerships without a single job offer, Rick went to a Cummins distributorship. He'd previously picked up and delivered parts to this facility, but this time he asked for a job as an engine salesman. Basic training at Cummins consisted of six months in their service department and another six months in their parts department. During that time Rick learned as

much as he could about how a diesel engine worked. After that “hands-on” training the sales training began. That training centered on trucks and he learned about horsepower, torque, gearing, or fuel savings. Somehow Rick found himself back dealing with trucks.

Rick also served as the Cummins distributor’s dealer representative. In this position one of his dealers was Dover Diesel Service (DDS) located in northwest New Jersey. At a DDS picnic one Saturday afternoon a discussion came up about warranting power-trains on used trucks. Together, the dealer principals and Rick worked on the idea of warranting these vehicles. Within a year Rick left the Cummins distributor and went to DDS selling service, parts, and warranties with the hope of becoming a dealer principal.

As the company grew they added a number of new truck OEM franchises that never worked out. The company moved 40 miles east to a site with more land available, and DDS opened a used truck center of which Rick became a part. The used truck center became very successful. The owners then decided to open a leasing company to supply used trucks to this center when the leases termed. Rick became the president of Paragon Truck Leasing, a PacLease franchise leasing new Kenworth and Peterbilt trucks in the North Jersey market.

In the early years of National Truck Protection (NTP) the company’s legal and first corporate name was Dover Diesel Engine Protection Service (DDEPS). The company started locally with sales and then expanded regionally to nationwide coverage in fewer than 10 years. Because of the increase in growth at NTP, Rick had to spend more time with NTP on a national basis with truck OEMs and major accounts.

Rick served on the Used Truck Association’s board of directors from 2004 to 2015. He’s held several committee chairman positions, as well as three different offices, including President.

Rick and his wife, Leslie, are the proud parents of have three children; Kristin, Lauren, and Michael. Their daughter Kristin has two young children; Claire and Julie. Kristin and Lauren are both elementary school teachers in neighboring towns. Michael is employed by Daimler Trucks Remarketing.