



Second Quarter | 2025 | AACF eNews

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A Message from John Kairys, Executive Director of AACF



Dear Friends and Supporters,
Greetings All! I've just returned from SEMA's annual *Leaders and Legends* event, where each year they honor the newest inductees into the SEMA Hall of Fame recognizing individuals whose remarkable accomplishments and lasting impact continue to shape our industry.

This year, I had the privilege of watching the AACF's very own Luanne Brown be inducted. I also had a chance to catch up with another Hall of Famer and former AACF Executive Director Joel Ayres, as well as AACF Board Members Kathryn Reinhardt and Mike Spagnola. Huge congratulations once again to Luanne and the rest of the Class of 2025: George Lathouris, John McLeod, and

Larry Pacey.

It was a spectacular evening, emotional, full of gratitude, and truly celebratory. As I listened to each inductee reflect on their journey, I was reminded of the power of purpose, passion, and the deep connections we make through relationships. Each of them spoke about feeling destined to be part of the aftermarket. They all shared a fierce love for this industry and expressed heartfelt appreciation for those who supported them along the way.

When people connect, relationships grow—and with that growth comes greater awareness of who we are and what we do. These connections expand our reach and fuel powerful personal and professional networks.

On behalf of everyone at the AACF, thank you for being part of *our* network. Your support through financial contributions, sponsorships, and donations has brought meaningful help to countless individuals and families in the aftermarket during their hardest times.
But today, we need something more: your voice.

The aftermarket is vast, diverse, and incredibly powerful. Yet despite its size, there are still too many people who don't know about the AACF and the vital support we offer. Awareness is our greatest hurdle, and it's one that can only be overcome with your help.

You're not just supporters, you're storytellers, connectors, and champions. We ask you to share AACF's mission with your colleagues, clients, and networks. Whether it's through a social media post, a forwarded email, a casual conversation, or a mention at your next industry event, your voice can help us reach someone who truly needs it.

Let's make sure every member of our aftermarket family knows they're not alone in times of crisis. Let's turn compassion into action. Be the spark that connects someone in need to AACF's support.

Thank you for being a catalyst, a connector, and a champion in this journey. Your network can light the path for others. Help us spread hope across the aftermarket by amplifying AACF's impact today!

Together, we *can*—and *will*—make a difference!

With Gratitude,
-John Kairys
AACF Executive Director

AACF RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

From Tragedy to Stability: How AACF Helped Rana and Her Son Rebuild After Loss

When life takes an unexpected turn, the road to healing can feel long and uncertain. But for Rana and her 7-year-old son, support from the Automotive Aftermarket



Charitable Foundation (AACF) helped light the way forward during one of the most difficult times of their lives.

Rana first learned about AACF through her family's connection to the aftermarket industry. "My family owns a couple of Midas shops, and they attended the Midas Convention in Florida this year," she shared. "My aunt told me about AACF and how they help families in the

automotive industry in times of need."

Soon after, Rana would face a devastating personal tragedy—her husband died by suicide, leaving her as the sole caregiver and financial provider for their young son. Overwhelmed and unsure of what to do next, she turned to AACF for support.

"I applied for assistance because I was left to care for my 7-year-old son and all the financial responsibilities in our home," she explained. "The grant provided to me has helped my son and I keep a roof over our heads. This has been such a blessing to us."

Her story is a powerful reminder of the real-life challenges faced by families within the aftermarket industry—and how AACF steps in when it matters most.

To those who may be hesitant to ask for help, Rana offers heartfelt encouragement:

"This is an amazing organization. They are here to serve others in very difficult times. They are compassionate and caring for those in need."

A friend of the family recently reached out with words of gratitude, saying, "Thank you so much for helping Rana and her son during this difficult time. AACF has made mourning and rest a little easier. It is with great gratitude that I thank you personally for this amazing deed. God bless you and your organization."

How You Can Help

Your support allows AACF to continue serving industry families like Rana's in times of crisis. Whether through donations, corporate sponsorship, or simply spreading the word, you can be a vital part of that impact.

[Learn How We Help >](#)
[Become a Golf Event Sponsor >](#)
[Share Our Application with Your Team >](#)

Together, we can continue to be a safety net for those who give so much to our industry.

AACF BOARD NEWS

Board of Trustee Updates



We're pleased to recognize **Greg Dunkin** of **Hunter Engineering**, who has joined our Golf Committee in an advisory role. His leadership and passion for the industry are a perfect fit for one of our most important annual events.

We've made several positive changes to our committee structure, including the development of committee charters to better define goals and responsibilities. All newly formed committees and subcommittees have already met and are actively working toward improvements that will strengthen our operations and impact across the industry.

We're deeply grateful to our **Board of Trustees** for generously giving their time, energy, and expertise to support AACF.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 17-19

ACA Leadership Days & Legislative Summit
Washington, DC

[More Info](#)

Sept. 22-25

ASC-Fall Membership Meeting
Chicago, IL

[More Info](#)

Oct. 5-7

MEMA Technology Conference
Springfield, MO

[More Info](#)

Oct. 20-24

VIPAR 2025 Impact
Conference
Orlando, FL

[More Info](#)

Nov 4-7

SEMA / AAPEX
Las Vegas, NV

[More Info](#) / [More Info](#)

Who is AACF?

The Automotive Aftermarket Charitable Foundation (AACF) supports people in the automotive aftermarket industry and their families during the hardest moments of their lives.



[Congratulations Hollis Black of Prescott Valley, AZ!](#)

Hollis was shocked to receive a call from our Executive Director last month letting him know he was the winner of our First Annual Classic Car Sweepstakes.

"I've dreamed of owning a 1965 Mustang since I was 14 years old. Winning this car was unbelievable." — Hollis Black

We plan to bring the sweepstakes back for a second year, offering another chance to win big while making an even bigger impact. Thank you to all that participated and to our sponsors - Hunter Engineering, Lucas Oil, PowerStop, TechNet & Yokohama.



[AACF Expands Reach Through VIPAR Heavy Duty Partnership](#)

We are proud to announce a new partnership with the [VIPAR Heavy Duty](#) Family of Companies, expanding AACF's reach into the heavy duty aftermarket community. Through this collaboration, we can now provide vital financial assistance to individuals and their immediate families in the [heavy duty industry](#) facing serious hardship or personal crisis.

We want to sincerely thank VIPAR for offering this powerful platform to connect with more families in need. Their support allows us to extend our mission and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who keep our industry moving.

[Read More >](#)

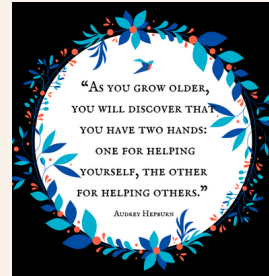
Who We Help:

If you work in the automotive aftermarket, we're here to help. Since 1959, AACF has supported individuals and families facing financial hardship due to unexpected adversity like:

- Floods, earthquakes, storms and fires
- Catastrophic medical conditions
- Life-changing accidents
- Devastating fatalities

Have more questions?

[Read our FAQ's](#)



MAKE AN IMPACT

AACF has provided over **\$230,000** in support so far this year—but the need is growing, and we can't do it alone. With your help, we can reach even more families in crisis across the automotive aftermarket industry.

[Give Today](#)
Become a Monthly Donor



[Now Accepting Stock & Securities Donations](#)

We're excited to announce that AACF now has a brokerage account to accept donations of

The **Aftermarket Hearts Giving Circle** is your opportunity to make a direct impact on aftermarket families facing unexpected crises. By giving just a small amount each month, you become part of a collective effort to provide relief when it's needed most.

stocks and securities. This new giving option allows supporters to make a meaningful impact while potentially receiving additional tax benefits. It's a smart way to give — and a powerful way to help families in need. [Contact Us for more info.](#)

What is the Aftermarket Hearts Giving Circle?

It's a community of industry professionals who care about their own—people just like you who want to help fellow aftermarket families in times of hardship. Your monthly donation helps provide financial assistance for medical emergencies, natural disasters, and other life challenges.

Ready to Make an Impact?

When you become an Aftermarket Heart, you're not just making a donation. You're standing beside the people who keep our industry moving. [Join Aftermarket Hearts Today »](#)

TEE UP FOR A CAUSE



The Countdown is On!

We have begun planning and registering foursomes for this year's Bob Schoeberl Memorial Charity Golf Tournament. Last year, you helped us raise nearly \$600,000 to support aftermarket families in need. Let's do it again—even bigger.

This year's tournament is scheduled for November 2-4 at the beautiful Spanish Trail Country Club. The weekend will feature some exciting new additions, including a live auction on Sunday evening, our exciting prize drawing, and a few surprises you won't want to miss!

Don't miss your chance to make a difference and be part of the industry's most impactful event.

- 👉 [Register Your Foursome Team](#)
- 🎯 [Sponsor a Tee](#)
- 🎁 [Donate a Prize](#)

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

We're proud to recognize the incredible generosity of our partners. Because of your support, AACF is able to step in for aftermarket families during their most difficult times. Your commitment truly makes a difference.

- [SEMA](#) – A longtime Champion Donor, SEMA's continued commitment helps us reach more families each year.
- [Rollie and Gayle Olson](#) – Their heartfelt contribution as a Champion donor is a powerful example of personal generosity and belief in our mission.
- [TIA \(Tire Industry Association\)](#) – Donated \$2,500 to support industry members in crisis.
- [APSG \(The Group\)](#) – As a Champion Donor, APSG's consistent support strengthens our ability to respond quickly when families need help.
- [YANG \(Young Automotive Network Group\)](#) – Contributed \$7,500 and went the extra mile by raising additional funds through their t-shirt campaign.
- [ACPN \(Automotive Content Professionals Network\)](#) – Raised over \$1,700 through their "ACPN Gives Back" t-shirt initiative, combining community engagement with charitable impact.

To each of you—thank you. Your compassion and commitment are changing lives in our industry. Together, we're proving that the aftermarket takes care of its own.



Rollie and Gayle Olson



Shop Talk: What's Keeping You Up at Night?

In the fast-moving world of the aftermarket, business challenges are constant—but the most urgent ones often hit closer to home.

What do you do when your top technician loses his home in a flood? When a service advisor suddenly becomes the sole caregiver to a sick child? When an employee is quietly grieving a loved one?

These are the moments that keep employers up at night—because behind every role is a human being facing real-life struggles.

[AACF is here to help.](#)

We provide emergency financial support to aftermarket industry employees facing hardships like natural disasters, medical crises, and unexpected loss.

“Your best technician just lost his home to a flood. Do you have a plan to support him? AACF does.”

Our simple application, compassionate process, and industry-specific focus make it easy for your employees to get the help they need—without adding stress to your business.

[Join Our Partner Program >](#)

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - JACKI LUTZ



Currently serving as Director of Content at the Auto Care Association, she previously held the role of Global Head of Communications, Training & eCommerce, Auto at Sensata Technologies. With 14 years of marketing experience—including nine in the automotive aftermarket—Lutz brings a wealth of knowledge and perspective. She also serves on several other industry boards, including the Young Auto Care Network Group (YANG) and Women in Auto Care, and is a past president of the Automotive Communications Council.

Q: What inspired you to get involved with AACF?

A: Jon Owens approached me several years ago and thought AACF could benefit from my communication skills and digital presence. I knew about AACF and was very familiar with the cause, I didn't have to think too long before saying “yes”. If they could benefit from me doing what I love, then why not gain the extra experience and make a difference in people's lives while doing it?

[Read More Q & A with Jacki Lutz >](#)

AACF COLLATERAL

[3 Ways to Give](#)



[Create an Employee Fundraiser](#)



[Natural Disaster Flyer](#)



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About AACE

[The Automotive Aftermarket Charitable Foundation \(AACF\)](#) has been helping aftermarket families turn tragedy into triumph since 1959. Like the industry, AACF is driven by passion and devoted to family. It's tough to ask for help, but when someone in the aftermarket family faces profound circumstances, AACF is there to help put the tough times in the rearview mirror. As a nonprofit, AACF accomplishes its mission through the support of generous donors, awareness partners and dedicated volunteers.

To learn more, visit [AftermarketCharity.org](#).

To donate, visit [AftermarketCharity.org/donate](#)

To apply for help, visit [AftermarketCharity.org/get-help](#)

The AACF is a not-for-profit organization.

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