National, First-Place Winning INVESTWRITE Essay,

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Keep on Trucking,

By Mariah Roberts, Fifth Grader
Arnold Drive Elementary School, Jacksonville North Pulaski School District, Arkansas

"Smokey & the Bandit" reruns and trucking company stories from my dad have me in an "Eastbound and Down" mood. In other words, I'd like to work for the same trucking company my dad did, J.B Hunt. It's more than my dad's stories and movies that have me looking at this company though.

It's how the company operates, what it does for the employees, and that it's a good investment. For 2017, J.B Hunt Transport (JBHT) saw revenues increase by 10 percent to $7.2 billion. The company may soon be approaching the $10 billion milestone.

J.B Hunt's business can be described by its four primary operating segments: Intermodal, dedicated contracted, integrated capacity solutions, and trucking. The company has three operating segments, which generated more than $1 billion in revenue. Intermodal remains by far the dominate one at $4.1 billion, but dedicated contracted may get to $2 billon in 2018. The ICS segment recently broke through the $1 billion mark. These are all good signs of a well-managed company. The company trades for about $110 a share, making it affordable. Seven years ago it was trading for about $4.77, so that's a solid upward growth of 2,700 percent presently – so, truck on.

That's all good as an investor, but what about for the employees? The company allows pets to ride; they have apps to help drivers; they help after natural disasters; and they give children at hospital's toys for Christmas. J.B Hunt offers a comprehensive menu of benefits and coverage options that have the flexibility to meet individual and family needs. Plus it has a strong focus on hiring veterans. I'm not one yet, but it's good to know.

Once I'm well established in the company, I'll invite CFO David Mee, I think I'll be able to just call him Dave, for coffee and talk about the state of the industry, and financial growth. As a first-place stock market game winner he will know that I have the background and experience to talk finance and because he was named one of the Nation's best chief financial officers in 2017, I know that he knows what he's talking about. We'll talk about bonds, mutual funds and stocks.

A bond fund, debt fund and security bond funds can be contrasted with stock funs, and money funds. A bond ID is the safest but has the least return.

A mutual fund is an investment strategy that allows you to put your money with other investors. A mutual fund is the second safest investment with the second best return.

A stock is ownership of shares of a company. A stock is the shakiest, but has the most return.

I would suggest to Dave that any money the company plans to invest be split into quarters. Put one quarter of the money in an easily accessible cash account like a money market account. Then put 25 percent in the stocks such as Apple, Amazon, Netflix, and of course JBHT. Another 25 percent should go into mutual funds such as HSNAX with a five year return rate of 17.22 percent. With the last quarter invested in bonds funds, maybe the very cautious Vanguard Short-Term Investment Grade Investor (VFSTX).

Fortune magazine has the company on its list of "America's Most Admired Companies." It has been listed on the IDG Computerworld's list of "100 Best Places to Work " six different times and is a four-time recipient of G.I. Jobs magazine's award as "One of the Top 100 Military-Friendly Employers. They employ 20,000 people across 400 factories across the county.

So why wouldn't I want to be a part of J. B Hunt?