**2013 Spring CTP Profile**

**Tony Jolly, CTP, General Mills**

Twenty years ago, the first class of private fleet managers earned their Certified Transportation Professional credential. At the upcoming NPTC Annual Education Management Conference and Exhibition, April 28-30, 2013 in Cincinnati, more than 50 private fleet professionals will earn their CTP designation, bringing the total number of people who have achieved this, the highest honor in the private fleet community, to more than 1,000 individuals.

In that first group of graduates was Tony B. Jolly, CTP, who was then Corporate Fleet Manager for Pet, Inc. Tony has 37 years in the transportation field with responsibilities ranging including transportation management of all modes. He has experience in all aspects of fleet management, both private and dedicated, with emphasis on collaborative solutions. He has also helped to provide transportation service solutions for retail food products involving all the various modes of transportation by working with carriers and shipping facilities to develop efficient shipping strategies. In his various roles, Tony has taken responsibility for safety and compliance, both process and control development and implementation. Today, he is the National Manager of Dry Transportation Operations, Retail for General Mills, based in Minneapolis, MN.

A graduate of Southern Illinois University with a BS degree in Management, Tony has been active with NPTC and its predecessor organizations. He has been a member of the NPTC Board of Directors since 1992 and has served as Chair of its Membership Committee, Third Party Users Division Chair, and on its Safety Committee.

In 1990, while still with Pet, he relocated from the company’s production plant in Anthony, TX to the corporate office in St. Louis MO. “My role had changed at that time from managing a single fleet, the Old El Paso fleet, to managing multiple fleets,” he explains. “As a part of this process we were implementing technology (computerized dispatch and routing systems as well as onboard computers for the drivers).

Pet was a member of the NPTC at the time, and Tony says, “My boss felt like there would be value in my sharing our best practices as well as networking with industry peers through the council to identify and further implement best practices. I have been a participant ever since.”

Several years later, he took this commitment to a new level when he enrolled in the inaugural CTP class. “Pursuing the designation comes with a level of commitment and responsibility,” he says. “You have to be committed to staying current with what is going on in the industry.”

But he’s quick to note how much the program has changed. “At that time, resources, training, and preparation were minimal,” recalls Tony.

But it provided Tony with a valuable lesson into the importance of peer interaction, which remains a staple of the program. He explains, “A small group of us met in St. Louis to be briefed on what the expectation would be for the certification process as well as the disciplines that would be covered. We had a list of training seminars that would be occurring at various points across the country. We knew full well that none of us would be able to go to all of them, so in collaboration we decided who would go to which training, copied our notes and training materials, and shared that information with others who were not able to attend those sessions. This was the best way to have access to all the materials.”

To this day, Tony continues to put that networking process to work. “There is always so much to learn and further develop when you are working in a dynamic field such as transportation,” he says. “Whether your expertise or responsibility is in private fleet, contract transportation, or dedicated operations, the CTP process enables you to share information and solutions with a colleague or new manager.”

“The refreshing part of the CTP process has been the constant review and updating to ensure the content is relevant. The process is leagues ahead of where we were as we have started leveraging technology, interactive training tools, networking, and the availability of an intense, week-long seminar supported and led by experts in their field. These are excellent tools and training methods designed to set up transportation professionals for success.”

Tony is putting this learning process to work at General Mills, one of the world’s leading food companies, operating in more than 100 countries. Its brands include Cheerios, Fiber One, Häagen-Dazs, Nature Valley, Yoplait, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Green Giant, Old El Paso, and Wanchai Ferry. Headquartered in Minneapolis, MN, USA, General Mills had fiscal 2012 worldwide sales of US $16.7 billion.

“Transportation in our organization, as in most organizations, is a critical part of what we do to ensure we have the right products in the right places, at the right time to support customer needs, both internal and external,” explains Tony.

“In Transportation and Supply Chain, we have a strong emphasis on processes that drives efficient high-quality service to our customers,” he says. “By working to drive out waste and create transportation solutions, we are able to provide additional value to our customers.”

Part of that value has been achieved in reducing the number of outside carriers the company uses to haul its freight. “Modifying our carrier base has been a part of a longer term strategy utilized by a number of shippers over the years to transition from a transactional user of transportation to more of a strategic user of transportation,” he explains.

“In our case, we worked to get the carrier base down to a more manageable size through a bidding process over time and provided guidance to the carriers to favor geographic regions where they could demonstrate strength and efficiency. With a smaller core-carrier base, we are able to leverage mass and scale to drive efficiency as well as create unique transportation solutions. It’s much easier to have conversations with 20 to 30 carriers as opposed to more than 350 when you are driving a new solution or strategic initiative forward.”

Tony credits the CTP preparation, testing and certification process for providing him a strong well-rounded understanding of transportation operations.  “By having this in-depth understanding, I can contribute at a higher level when looking at situations such as those mentioned above and speak to possible cost and service impacts as well as possible solutions to some of these issues.”