



# Still The Gold Standard

## Certified Transportation Professional® (CTP) Begins Next 25 Years of Excellence



by Gary Petty  
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**A**S THE ONLY RECOGNIZED NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR PRIVATE FLEET PRACTITIONERS, founded in 1993 and now officially sponsored by J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc., NPTC's Certified Transportation Professional (CTP) community is made up of more than 700 certified fleet practitioners focused on high standards and continuous improvement. Through active engagement in NPTC's networking system of peer-to-peer benchmarking and shared best practices, these CTP managers gain exceptional ROI value year after year.

A good example is Mari Roberts, CTP. Roberts has worked her entire 18-year career in progressively more responsible transportation management roles for PepsiCo (Frito-Lay), the number one ranked private fleet for the past two years, and was recently promoted as Senior Director of Transportation for Frito-Lay, Inc.

For most of the past 10 years, she has been a volunteer NPTC

ers, and doing all of this under cost pressures of driver retention, safety performance, and outside carrier capacity."

Roberts says learning about optimization experiences of other NPTC members helps immensely. "A company of PepsiCo's size obviously has great resources, but it's not feasible to discover every innovation on our own. I have taken away some amazing ideas from CTP fleet managers in many different industries, some with as few as twenty trucks! The networking power of CTPs is just incredible."

"I was on a call recently with three CTPs from food companies—all of us dealing with a driver crisis like nothing we've ever seen before. At Frito-Lay, we struggle to continuously build capability with our management and dispatch teams and find enough drivers at some locations. We have had to get creative expanding from just OTR Drivers to non-CDL drivers and even cross train hourly warehouse employees to drive box trucks."

We all agreed the outdated 'general manager' model used by some companies may not always be the best model and can contribute to driver turnover. We concluded there is no substitute for professionally trained transportation specialists, preferably CTPs, with successful experience working directly with drivers.

"True transportation expertise," said Roberts, "now carries a higher premium within corporations because transportation itself demands greater priority and commands laser-like focus."

At the same time, Roberts adds, as is the case with many companies, "we are looking to continue to operate more efficiently and reduce overhead expense. And the work itself is changing with more complexity and ever-greater responsibilities."

Roberts says the CTP program has actually become even more relevant, valuable and critical than 10 years ago. "Fortunately, we have the support from our senior executives that understand the need for transportation expertise within our organization." Last year, Mari gave a presentation at a group meeting with Frito-Lay's CEO and later this year will share information about the NPTC partnership and the benchmarking survey data with both Finance and Supply Chain Senior Executives.

"Today, so much is going on simultaneously, it's hard to keep up without outside resources. My core CTP network helps me work smarter, find proven solutions at lower cost and in less time, and gives me capacity to take on additional responsibilities required in my job."

Frito-Lay's Mari Roberts says "transportation expertise now carries a higher premium within corporations... the CTP credential is more relevant, valuable, and critical than ever."



Board and Committee member; speaker; CTP Examination grader; mentor for hundreds of CTP candidates, and master of ceremonies for the CTP graduation ceremony. Under her leadership, 10 managers from Frito-Lay have earned their CTP designation.

Roberts is Chair of the NPTC Institute Board of Governors, a member of NPTC's Board of Directors, and, last year, was the recipient of one of NPTC's highest professional leadership awards, the Private Fleet Executive of the Year. In 2009, she attended the Private Fleet Management Institute as a student, gave her first general session speech at an NPTC event, and graduated with that year's Class of CTPs.

"When I first got involved, I knew NPTC and the CTP program were exactly the industry connection I needed because they focus on priorities fleets face every day, here and now. At Frito-Lay, optimization is a major priority. This means hauling more volume of products on our private fleet at a lower percentage of total transportation spend, not exceeding lanes better suited for outside carrier