

## CRFP Spotlight

Name: Curtis Dukes, CRFP -Title: Manager, Facility & Fuel Support -  
Company/Brand: Pilot Travel Centers

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I'd have to say the team I work with. We are a very fast-paced department, supporting more than 600 facilities, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our team rocks at whatever we do. They're truly the reason I'm able to finish the workday with a big smile.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? I am a fuel guy by trade. I grew up in the propane industry and traveled the Southeast performing tank testing and meter calibrations for some of the major distributors. After that, I spent a little time supporting pump controllers for the Trans-Alaska pipeline before starting my career with Pilot Flying J more than 10 years ago. I began supporting fuel equipment and POS systems, but for the past seven years, I have been managing the team responsible for all facility repairs.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world? The number of critical issues that can happen at one location. If one little thing fails, it can impact your entire operation. That's why it's important to have a reactive model that limits any downtime.

What is your all-time favorite movie? I'm not much of a movie buff, but I have thoroughly enjoyed some of the great Disney movies. My all-time favorite would have to be "The Lion King." I can attribute my enjoyment to the all-star narrators or the fantastic plot, but in reality, the music rocks, and I love Rafiki the baboon.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? The April 27, 2011, super outbreak of tornadoes. My position requires me to be heavily involved with our emergency preparation and response. We had been under tornado warnings from the previous day and were prepared for more storm activity in Alabama and Mississippi. I had been in contact with all of our stores and QSRs that were impacted that day, until I left to go home because of the local warnings. Later that evening, as we were still holding high-level conference calls on the incurred damage and forecasted paths, a tornado formed just down the road from my house. I was able to get my family to the basement and cover them up with a futon mattress. I continued to conduct the response calls from there. In hindsight, I should have discontinued the calls due to all of the background noise. My family and I were OK but our house sustained moderate damage. Our facilities had minimal impact as well. Three weeks later however, we took a major hit from tornados at one of our Joplin, Mo., locations, resulting in a full remodel.

What is your favorite work-related app?

The Starbucks app. I can't get the workday started without it. While traveling, I rely heavily on our internal myPilot app to locate the closest Pilot or Flying J location,

along with their food offerings. I also use Google Drive for document collaboration and Evernote for all of my note-taking needs.

What is the best advice you ever received?

At one of our annual managers' meetings, where we had invited several members of our Board of Directors to share some leadership principles, one of our Board Members, former CEO of the world's largest retailer, said that there would be times when we would have to work and couldn't go home, but when we can go home, we should go.

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? My sister, Stephenie. She's been a role model of mine since I was a kid. She has the most kind and sincere heart of any person I've ever met. No matter the circumstances, she's always positive and smiling. This past November, she was diagnosed with leukemia. Throughout the past three months, she's maintained the most inspirational attitude — still wanting to care and do for others. (Stephenie had a bone marrow transplant on March 16, 2016.)

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? I attribute all of my successes, both personally and professionally, to God's grace. "But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me—and not without results. For I have worked harder than any of the other apostles; yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace." 1 Corinthians 15:10 NLT

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? I certainly would. The preparation for the exam opened my eyes to some areas that I had not worked in before. As a manager, it also exposed me to some of the challenges my team was facing on a daily basis. Since taking it, I've recommended one of my team leads to complete it and will be doing the same with others over time.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Almost all of my spare time is spent with my wife of 16 years and our three children. We like to spend most summer weekends on the lake with family and friends. I'm an avid firearms collector and shooter, and I also try to play golf a few times throughout the year. I just read this to my 13-year-old, and she requested I add "and I like chocolate" (which is VERY true).