

# Tobyhanna Earns Bronze Shingo Award for Radar System Efficiency

Anthony J. Ricchiazzi



**T**obyhanna Army Depot (TYAD) is the recipient of the 2006 Bronze Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing (Public Sector Award). The Shingo Prize recognizes private and public sector organizations that have successfully applied Lean Six Sigma (LSS) techniques to improve the quality and efficiency of their operations. TYAD was recognized for achieving a 31 percent reduction in repair cycle time and a 25 percent reduction in repair costs on the Air Force's primary Air Defense Radar System (AN/TPS-75). The AN/TPS-75 is a mobile, tactical radar system capable of providing long-range radar azimuth, range and height information along with identification, friend or foe (IFF) capability for operations and control of tactical aircraft. It provides "real-time" radar airspace pictures and data in support of the battle commander and the Ground Theater Air Control System.

TYAD Electronics Technican Tanya Chervenak installs electronics components into an AN/TPS-75 Mobile Tactical Radar System. TYAD personnel overhaul and test these systems for the U.S. Air Force. Through the implementation of Lean techniques, TYAD has reduced a system overhaul from 335 days to 204 days, a 39 percent reduction. System maintenance cost has been reduced from \$1.75 million to \$1.11 million, a 36 percent reduction. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of TYAD.)



TYAD Electronics Technician Steveland McAllister prepares a planned position indicator for mechanical inspection prior to testing and installation into an AN/TPS-75. The indicator is a visual interface between the system and the technician, allowing 360-degree surveillance of the sky. The radar system is a mobile, tactical radar system capable of providing long-range radar azimuth, range and height information along with IFF capability for operations and control of tactical aircraft. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of TYAD.)

During the awards ceremony on Sept. 26, 2006, the Shingo Prize was presented to TYAD Commander COL Ron Alberto by Robert Katulka, Director of Productivity Improvement and Innovation (PII), the lead organization for the TYAD LSS efforts. Frank Zardecki, Deputy Commander, opened the ceremony by thanking those involved in establishing LSS at TYAD. "We always stress the importance of our mission — TYAD is a very large business enterprise — well over \$600 million this year and each of us should never lose our focus in contributing to the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of our operations," he said. "Our application of LSS enhances support [to the warfighter] and today we celebrate one of our greatest LSS successes,

recognized not just here at TYAD, but throughout DOD and industry as a result of winning the Shingo Prize. Earlier this month, several members of the depot team were in Las Vegas, NV, to accept the Shingo Prize on behalf of the entire TYAD workforce."

Katulka, with several other TYAD employees, accepted the plaque in a ceremony in Las Vegas on Sept. 7, 2006. It was presented by members of the Shingo Prize organization. "It was my honor to represent TYAD along with three of our counterparts, Frank Frey, Keith Wheeler and Joe DiCindio," said Katulka. "We accepted the award on behalf of the depot, the employees, the management team and COL Alberto."

Katulka noted that the Army was well represented at the Shingo ceremony and that U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) leaders attended. "LTG [William] Mortenson, AMC Deputy Commanding General, spoke very highly of TYAD in general and the AN/TPS-75 specifically," he said. "Under Secretary of the Army for Business Transformation Michael Kirby, [also] spoke highly of TYAD."

Katulka said that TYAD employees come to work realizing that their efforts impact service members' lives. "That's why we're here," he continued, "because there's someone out there in the field who needs what we do. We don't do Lean, we don't do Six Sigma, and we don't do all the other things we



TYAD Electronics Technician Mark Dolph disassembles wave guides in an AN/TPS-75 radar antenna. This deployable/transportable radar system is capable of providing long-range radar data to support operations and control of tactical aircraft. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of TYAD.)

succeed without the involvement, commitment and dedication of all employees. “When you tell a co-worker elsewhere on the depot that Lean really works, there is no better endorsement,” he said. “By the time I leave here, I’d like to see several of these prizes all over the depot. I’d like to see some in silver, some in gold and maybe even some platinum awards. What you’ve achieved here shows we can do it and we can repeatedly do it.”

Alberto then presented the plaque to Gary Sherman, who was representing the PII Directorate, and Clark Ross, Brian Wesolowski and Keith Wheeler, representing the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate.

Rosemary Revels, the AN/TPS-75 Program Manager, also congratulated depot employees. She noted that the system is not easy to maintain, but that TYAD “stepped up to the plate” and did an outstanding job. “If the past 5 years are any indication of your tenacity, the next 5 to 10 are really going to put you to the test, because that’s how long this 25-year-old system

do in terms of continuous improvement and corporate philosophy to say we did them. We do them because we have a vital service to provide. And that’s our focus.”

After his remarks, Katulka presented the Shingo Prize plaque to Alberto. “I’m proud to accept this prize on behalf of the depot and in your behalf,” Alberto said. “You did all the work. Everyone here contributed to this award, you all should feel proud of that, and you should all feel that you had a part in it. I know it’s a small plaque, but it means a lot to our commitment to LSS, quality improvement, and, more importantly, to taking care of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines out there on the battlefield. The bottom line is that this is a major milestone and a tremendous achievement and it’s not just me who thinks that.”

Alberto read a letter of congratulations from Army Chief of Staff GEN Peter J. Schoomaker who noted that he couldn’t be more proud of TYAD.

“I noted in the Shingo package that we intend to drive down repair cycle

time even further,” Alberto said. “So we’ve already signed up to do an even better job at maintaining this system. Of course, we have to pass that on to other systems across the depot. All of you have done a great job and are doing a great job.”

Alberto said that although management can provide all the tools and training, it is the workforce as a whole that makes Lean work. LSS will not



An AN/TPS-75 Mobile Tactical Radar System is tested by TYAD technicians. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of TYAD.)



COL Ron Alberto (center), TYAD Commander, presents the 2006 Bronze Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing (Public Sector Award) to depot employees. From left: Clark Ross, Gary Sherman, Keith Wheeler and Brian Wesolowski. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of TYAD.)

is going to stay out there in the field,” she said. “So, it is up to you and the program office to keep it running because the bottom line is our support for the warfighter. On behalf of LTC [Ronald] Phipps [AN/TPS-75 System Support Manager] and Gary Hebert [AN/TPS-75 Deputy System Support Manager], we send you our heartfelt congratulations. And we know this team works and it will continue to work.”

“I believe that winning the Shingo Prize for the Depot is a prestigious accomplishment for everyone,” said Keith Wheeler, an electronics mechanic leader who directs work on the AN/TPS-75. He praised the technicians and the AN/TPS-75 mission leaders, saying the Shingo Prize is a prestigious accomplishment not only for them, but the entire depot. “It shows the majority of the employees

here achieved that goal, which in turn shows that the depot as a whole can and will take on any challenge it is given because of the dedication of its employees and our workmanship. Give us the work and we will succeed.”

Wheeler thanked the PII Directorate for its support, saying the directorate’s employees helped AN/TPS-75 employees to establish the necessary goals and direction. “With that we took off with it, certain areas had to be fine tuned and they helped us do so, therefore they were instrumental to the shop and the winning of the Shingo Prize.”

The Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing has been called the Nobel Prize for manufacturing by *BusinessWeek*. TYAD was one of nine government entities that achieved dramatic performance improvements to earn the 2006 Shingo Prize Public Sector Award. “The Shingo Prize recognizes the best in manufacturing,” said Shingo Prize Executive Director Dr. Ross Robson. “The 2006 recipients are not only saving American taxpayers’ money, but increasing the quality and availability of military weapons that protect Americans at home and Soldiers abroad.”

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The Shingo Award recipients are scored in:

- Cost improvement.
- Leadership.
- Empowerment.
- Vision and strategy.
- Innovation and development.
- Partnering practices with suppliers and customers.
- Environmental practices.
- Quality and results.
- Consistent improvement in each area.

TYAD is DOD’s largest center for the repair, overhaul and fabrication of a wide variety of electronics systems and components, from tactical field radios to the ground terminals for the defense satellite communications network. Located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania, more than 4,400 TYAD employees support all military branches. TYAD is part of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command (CELCMC). Headquartered at Fort Monmouth, NJ, CELCMC’s mission is to research, develop, acquire, field and sustain communications, command, control, computer, intelligence, electronic warfare and sensors capabilities for the U.S. military.

**ANTHONY J. RICCHIAZZI** is a TYAD Public Affairs Specialist and serves as Editor of *The Tobyhanna Reporter* newspaper. He has a B.A. in English from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, where he also minored in writing. Ricchiazzi has earned numerous awards throughout his career, including two Commander’s Awards for Civilian Service and two Achievement Medals for Civilian Service, as well as several Keith L. Ware Awards for journalism. Ricchiazzi is a member of the Executive Council of TYAD’s chapter of the Association of the United States Army.