

National Shipping Installs New Systems

BY CB STAFF

There is no question of the close relationship between shipping companies and the food and provisions industry in Puerto Rico. Shipping companies are the veritable lifelines for businesses in Puerto Rico that import the products that will eventually end up in the island's homes, as well as giving local businesses the opportunity to export their products.

Since 2007, National Shipping of America LLC has been one of these lifelines, a leader in connecting Puerto Rico to the world. In Puerto Rico, the satisfaction of those customers is the

responsibility of a shipping industry veteran, Roberto Lugo Jr., vice president & general manager of island operations. Over the past 40 years, Lugo has managed three of the four ocean carriers that serve the island's import and export trade.

"By operating out of the nation's largest Midwest port, National Shipping is taking the need for long-haul trucking from the East and West coasts out of the equation, significantly mitigating the environmental and safety issues associated with heavy and hazardous cargoes," Lugo pointed out. "These types of cargo tend to move more economically and safer via the ocean,



National Shipping of America's flagship, the National Glory

instead of over-congested highways."

Recently, National Shipping of America's flagship, the National Glory, has successfully completed its special five-year dry-dock maintenance checkup and passed with flying colors, according to Torey Presti, president of the ocean freight carrier, which has

been plying the waters between Houston and San Juan for nearly four years.

"We are now prepared for another five years of uninterrupted service," Presti said, noting that "during the dry dock, we installed new systems that will increase our performance within the tropical waters of our trade."

As the only carrier serving the trade between Houston and the Caribbean, National Shipping prides itself on providing a unique and valuable service for clients. "Our unique service is focused on delivering products that originate in the southern and western part of the U.S., particularly Texas," he pointed out.

The National Glory, which serves the trade, is a fully cellular container ship with an experienced crew of 19 U.S. American citizens, Presti explained. "In addition to dry containers, the vessel is equipped to handle up to 90 refrigerated containers for the trade's perishable business," he added. "Whether it is chilled or frozen cargoes, National provides the latest reefer equipment to meet your needs. Our trans-loading facility on dock at the Jacinto Terminal in Houston provides quick transfers of domestic cargoes originating on the [U.S.] West Coast; regardless of whether they are dry or reefer."

Another point of pride

for the carrier is its "small and flat organization," employing a core staff of 11 workers, who apply contract working specialists, as needed, for tasks, keeping client costs as low as possible. The company prides itself on being responsive to its customers' needs on a 24/7 basis. "We are proud to serve the island of Puerto Rico for the foreseeable future and remain grateful to our customer support," he emphasized.

"Sustainability is a critical component of our success," Presti said. "We are now in our fourth year of operations and occupy a small part of the market, but we provide an important service." ■

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