

#WHYWECATCH

THERE'S A STORY BEHIND *EVERY* SUCCESSFUL PMP

Last year, Catchmaster launched its “Why We Catch” initiative to honor PMPs who embody the entrepreneurial spirit so critical to the success of the pest management industry. We received hundreds of submissions from industry professionals throughout North America, sharing many inspirational stories on our company’s Facebook page and website so everyone could benefit from their market insights and business experience. As a company currently writing a new chapter in its own history, moving into a new 200,000-square-foot headquarters building and manufacturing facility in Bayonne, N.J., AP&G is pleased to recognize each of these remarkable individuals, along with Catchmaster’s “Why We Catch” grand-prize winner, Lonnie Alonso, owner and president of Columbus Pest Control, Columbus, Ohio.

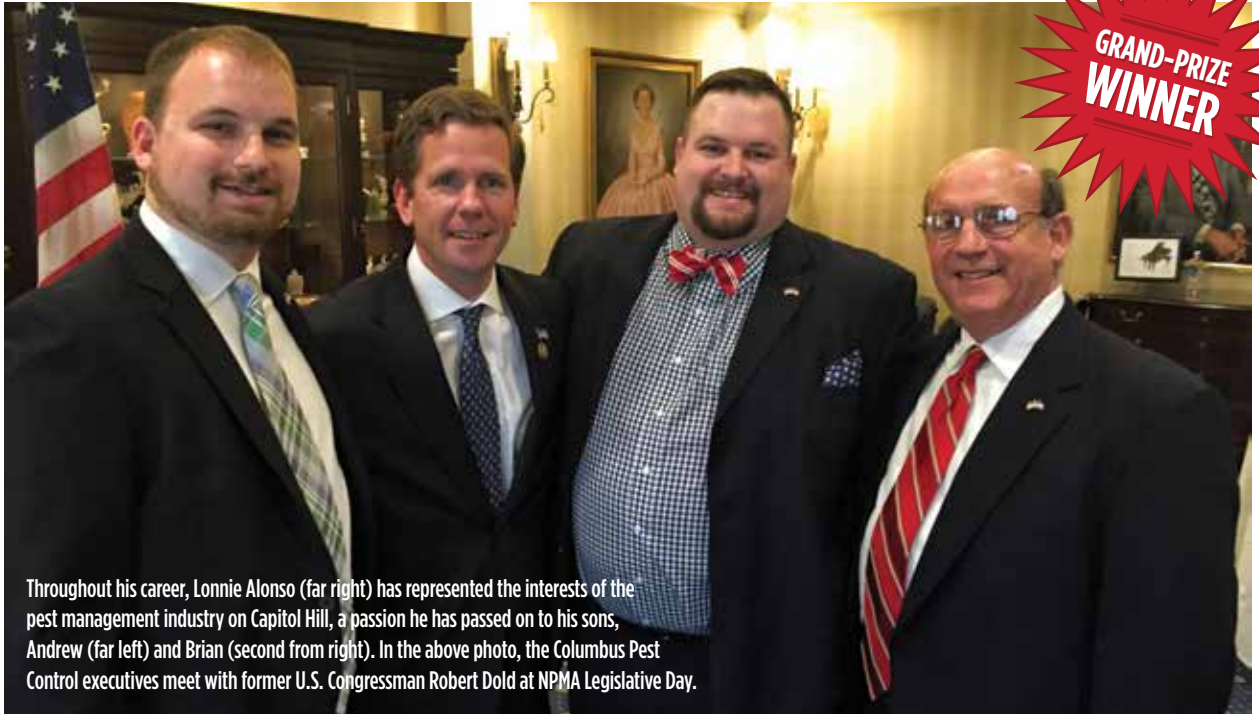
**CATCHMASTER
CONGRATULATES THEIR
GRAND-PRIZE WINNER!**

Lonnie Alonso

Owner & President
Columbus Pest Control
Columbus, Ohio



Lonnie Alonso is the second-generation owner of Columbus Pest Control and winner of the “Why We Catch” initiative from Catchmaster.



Throughout his career, Lonnie Alonso (far right) has represented the interests of the pest management industry on Capitol Hill, a passion he has passed on to his sons, Andrew (far left) and Brian (second from right). In the above photo, the Columbus Pest Control executives meet with former U.S. Congressman Robert Dold at NPMA Legislative Day.

COLUMBUS PEST CONTROL

Lonnie Alonso, whose family fled Cuba in the 1960s to begin a new life in America, understands the price of freedom.

As a 5-year-old boy sitting on his mother's lap in Havana Airport, Lonnie Alonso was too young to fully understand the significant turn of events his life was about to take. While his mother, Zuny, sat nervously waiting for the flight that would take them to a new life in the United States, young Lonnie whined and fidgeted. "It was early January and we had just celebrated Three Kings Day," Lonnie recalls. "I had to leave all of my toys at home and I didn't understand why. Like any child in that situation, I was very upset."

His mother, however, had more important things on her mind, for on the opposite side of the concourse sat her husband, Orlando, and daughter, Zuni, awaiting a second flight out of Havana three hours later. "I wasn't aware of the seriousness of the situation," Lonnie says. "All I knew was I couldn't play with my toys or talk to my dad. We had to act like we didn't know each other or the authorities might get suspicious."

This scene, which sounds like something out of a Hollywood movie, occurred on January 8, 1961, but the Alonsos – not

actors – were at the center of this real-life drama. Like many of their countrymen before them, they were fleeing the Marxist regime of Fidel Castro, who had come to power two years earlier. Those who opposed the revolution – including numerous small business owners like Orlando Alonso – knew it was just a matter of time before the government confiscated their property, or worse, imprisoned them. "It wasn't an easy decision to leave, but we had no choice," Lonnie recalls.

Fortunately, the story has a happy ending. While Lonnie's father passed away a number of years ago, their decision to flee Cuba, the country of their birth for the promise of America, ensured that future generations of the Alonso family would not bridle under the yolk of a dictatorship. Today, Lonnie Alonso, 61, is president of Columbus Pest Control, a company his father purchased from longtime friend Joe Mooney, who hired Orlando as a service technician after the family relocated to Columbus, Ohio, shortly after arriving in the United States.

As the owner of a modest-sized pest control business in America's heartland, "Joe couldn't afford to hire a manager at the time, but my father didn't care," Lonnie recalls. "He just wanted a job." So, from owning and operating one of the most successful pest control companies in all of Cuba, Orlando Alonso found himself back running a route.

"It was a difficult transition, but he didn't have any choice," Lonnie says, "and he never complained." Instead, just as he had built his own business – Fumigadora Nacional – Orlando concentrated on expanding Columbus Pest Control's share of market, eventually purchasing the business from Mooney's widow in 1971.

Today, Columbus Pest Control is one of the most respected companies in the Buckeye State, and Lonnie Alonso is one of the most respected PMPs in the entire country, a man not only devoted to his company, but also the industry. "As executive director of the Ohio Pest Management Association (OPMA), I work with Lonnie as past president of the organization and

as the chair of the Government Affairs Committee,” says Melinda Howells. “He is tireless in his efforts to represent OPMA and industry to the legislature, as well as the Ohio Department of Agriculture and other regulatory agencies.”

Longtime friend and competitor Ron Belknap, owner of Capital City Exterminating, says Lonnie is a servant leader and a “patriot” who works tirelessly on behalf of the industry. “He keeps a suit in his office so he can change out of his work clothes and go to meetings with legislators and congressmen,” observes Belknap. “In meetings, he’s always reminding people we’re part of a free country and how we need to address our congressmen and legislators like our founding fathers intended.”

Carl Hinderer, another longtime friend and employee of Univar, says Lonnie is responsible for his interest in the legislative process. “He has helped me and others appreciate the great country that we live in, and how to be certain that our interests and the good that the pest control industry does is known to our federal and state legislators,” Hinderer says. “When it comes to love of family and country, Lonnie is second-to-none,” a legacy he has passed on to his two sons – Andrew and Brian – who share Lonnie’s love of family, country and the governing principles established by our founding fathers.

That’s because as their own family’s story will attest, if those principles aren’t protected, the consequences can be devastating.

‘Why We Catch’ TOP 10 LIST

Last year, Catchmaster invited industry professionals to share their stories of success and inspiration through the company’s unique “Why We Catch” marketing campaign. The goal of the campaign was to honor the industry’s past, while at the same time provide a “roadmap” to success for future generations of PMPs, according to Jonathan Frisch, V-P of Global Sales & Marketing, AP&G. “The response to the campaign was both overwhelming and heartwarming,” he said. To read all of finalists’ stories, as well as the profile of Columbus Pest Control, visit <http://catchmasterpro.com/whywecatch/>.

- Lonnie Alonso**, Columbus Pest Control, Columbus, Ohio
- Brian Cook**, Cook’s Pest Control, Decatur, Ala.
- Gail Getty**, Domus Institute, La Crescenta, Calif.
- Steve Jackson/Brian Baird**, Arthropodcast, Omaha, Neb., and Valdosta, Ga.
- Chris Kalsbeek**, Advanced IPM, Shingle Springs, Calif.
- Arthur Katz**, Knockout Pest Control, Uniondale, N.Y.
- Galvin Murphy**, Yankee Pest Control, Malden, Mass.
- Chris Pestana**, JP Pest Services, Milford, N.H.
- Billy Schubert**, Action Pest Control, Memphis, Tenn.
- Jerry Schappert**, The Bug Doctor, Ocala, Fla.

“We are blessed to live in a country where freedom and the rule of law prevail,” Lonnie says, “and we need to be actively involved in the legislative process to ensure we protect those freedoms and the entrepreneurial spirit that makes this country so great.”

It’s a spirit Orlando and Zuny Alonso courageously embraced more than 55 years

ago, and it’s a spirit that flows through the veins of the Alonso family, embodied by the optimism and entrepreneurial enthusiasm personified by Lonnie’s sons to this day. 🐜

Note: This article was developed from interviews with Lonnie Alonso and others, along with previously published editorial content from PCT.



To read the complete story of Lonnie Alonso and Columbus Pest Control’s remarkable journey to becoming one of the most respected family-owned businesses in the United States, visit www.catchmasterpro.com/why-we-catch-lonnie-alonso/

The ‘BIG APPLE’ Beckons Winners of ‘Why We Catch’ Initiative

Fifty-six years ago, a young mother and her five-year-old son arrived at New York City’s Laguardia Airport with little more than the clothes on their back. They faced an uncertain future, having fled Cuba shortly after Fidel Castro’s Marxist regime came to power. That boy, Lonnie Alonso, will return to New York City this summer under starkly different circumstances. This time as an honored guest of AP&G, manufacturers of the Catchmaster line of innovative IPM solutions.

As the winner of Catchmaster’s “Why We Catch” initiative, Lonnie and wife Christy were awarded an all-expense-paid trip for two to New York City,

including airfare and two nights at the W Hotel in Times Square. They’ll also tour AP&G’s new manufacturing facility in Bayonne, N.J., and have dinner with the Catchmaster team. “I was shocked when I was told by our AP&G sales rep that we had won,” Alonso said. “My head is still spinning. My wife Christy has never been to New York City so it will be fun to share that experience with her. She’s very excited.”

When asked why he thought Columbus Pest Control was selected as the winning entry, Alonso said, “I would hope it’s because we’re so active in the industry. Shortly after joining Columbus Pest Control, my father got involved in the Ohio Pest Management Association, and I’ve tried to follow in his footsteps, as have our sons, Brian and A.J.

“I really believe that any company that isn’t active in association affairs is losing out,” Alonso added. “It’s important to get involved.”



Times Square will be a must-see stop for Lonnie and Christy Alonso.



AP&G EXPANSION USHERS IN NEW ERA

The Catchmaster brand of pest control products has successfully evolved over the years to better serve the rodent control needs and IPM solutions of the professional pest management industry, but AP&G, which manufactures the iconic brand, isn't resting on its laurels. Originally headquartered in Brooklyn, N.Y., for 64 years (from 1951-2016), AP&G recently expanded its operations, moving to a new 200,000-square-foot headquarters building and manufacturing facility located across the Hudson River in Bayonne, N.J. The expansion provides more space for storage and new machinery designed to increase productivity and enhance production capabilities. "We felt the move was necessary to properly position the company for the future," said AP&G V-P of Global Sales & Marketing Jonathan Frisch. "We needed additional space to meet the growing demand for our products, and our new manufacturing facility will allow us to meet that demand."



AP&G management team (left to right): Executive V-P of Global Sales & Marketing Jonathan Frisch; President & CEO Steve Frisch; and V-P of Operations Jeffrey Frisch.



Prepare for this rodent season with glue traps, Multi-Catch™ traps and snap traps from Catchmaster.

CATCHMASTERPRO.COM

Join the "Why We Catch" Conversation!



Catchmaster PRO
[#whywecatch](https://www.facebook.com/catchmasterpro)



@CatchmasterPRO
[#whywecatch](https://twitter.com/catchmasterpro)