

Hall of Fame Inductees April 10, 2026



Congratulations!

to this year's inductees for your years of dedicated
service & commitment to our industry.
-Friends at NETSA



In recognition of their outstanding
Leadership & Contributions
to the Tire & Service Industry in New England



Tony DeSimone

Tony DeSimone was born in Buffalo, New York in 1949. He was educated in Catholic Schools, attending Annunciation Elementary School, Bishop Fallon High School, and Niagara University, earning a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Management. Tony also earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Christian Brothers University in Memphis Tennessee.

Tony was introduced to the Tire Industry in 1972 when he accepted a position with Goodyear Tire and Rubber's Adjustment Department in Buffalo, New York. It was here that Tony learned all about tires and began a fifty-plus year career in the Tire Industry. Tony's long career encompassed all three segments of the Tire Industry, retail, wholesale, and commercial tire sales. Throughout that time, he was employed by major tire companies, as well as independent tire companies, and with every experience, he gained valuable tire and industry knowledge. He managed tire centers, sold retail and commercial tires in stores and on the road. He also managed the Customer Service Department for TBC Corporation in Memphis, Tennessee.

Tony became a member of NETSA in 1983, when a promotion to Store Manager for the B.F. Goodrich Tire Center Springfield, Massachusetts location brought him and his family to New England. He recognized the true value of belonging to an organization

that had so much to offer to its membership. Over the years he became a more active member of NETSA. He was elected to the Board of Directors in 2009 and became the Board Secretary that same year. In 2017 he was elected Board President, and in 2018 he was hired by the Board of Directors to serve as Executive Director. Tony served as Executive Director of NETSA until his retirement in 2023. During his time in that position, Tony was awarded the TIA Industry Achievement Award twice, in 2018 and 2021. He also earned the TIA Excellence in Association Leadership Award in 2023. Throughout his time as Director, he oversaw successful Trade Shows, Golf Tournaments, issues of the Road Runner, the awarding of numerous scholarships, and he managed NETSA through the Covid Epidemic. Tony was also very active in legislative issues affecting the Tire Industry in New England, attending legislative sessions in Hartford, Connecticut and Concord, New Hampshire. Of all his responsibilities as Executive Director, the one that was the most rewarding for him was delivering scholarship checks each summer to the talented young people around New England with ties to NETSA.

Tony is blessed with a very supportive family who are extremely proud of all that he has accomplished throughout his long and remarkable career. Tony and his wife Betty have been married for fifty-seven years and live in New Hampshire. Their two children along with their spouses, two grandsons, and two great grandchildren loved attending the NETSA Trade Shows. It became an annual DeSimone Family event.

Tony treasures the business associations and numerous friendships developed over the last fifty-plus years, and he is honored to become a 2026 inductee into the NETSA Hall of Fame.



Bob Kraft

He started in the tire business in 1961 working as an adjuster for Dunlop tire. After working on his way into a sales position, he took a regional sales rep position with Cooper Tire where he became the top sales producer during his 10 plus years he was there. He also worked for Kelly Springfield Tire.

Looking for a new challenge, he took a Wholesale Sales position for W.A. Schlott Tire. After a short time there he and a sales rep from Merchant Tire, Robert Perras saw there was an untapped market for "shot-gun" deliveries to an underserved market of small gas stations and repair shops. In 1981 they started B&B Wholesale Tire. They used Robert Perras' barn in Dunstable, MA as a warehouse and negotiated a \$25,000 consignment of Remington tires from Stratham Tire in NH. They built their business from 0 customers to about 40 in 2 years covering a territory as far North as Dracut, as far South as Hopkinton and as far east as Wayland, MA. They also opened multiple small consignments in some of their biggest customers.

Bob realized early on that the real opportunity for increasing profits was in retail tire sales and general auto repair. In 1983 he bought land in Marlborough and built a building with 4 service bays. He opened Kraft Tire & Auto Center in early 1984 with 3 technicians doing tires, alignments, brakes,

exhaust and other general auto repairs. Eventually he built another service bay and a tire warehouse. To continue growing the wholesale tire sales while Kraft Tire was still building it's retail business, he hired a sales manager to handle wholesale operations.

By 1999, both his sons were involved, learning all aspects of the business in preparation for a seamless transition to the next generation. Bob remained with the business until December 2024, retiring at the age of 91 though he still makes an appearance from time to time.

After over 60 years in the tire business, he is most thankful that he had the opportunity to start up and operate a successful business, one that he was able to spend time with and pass on to his sons.