

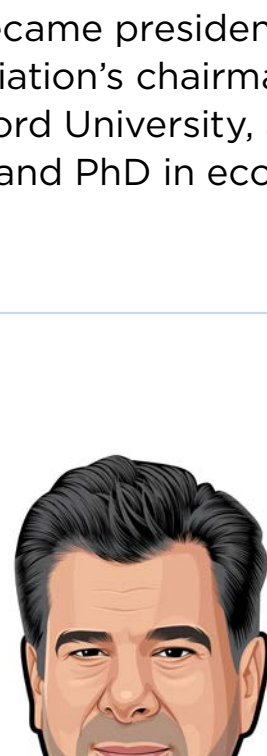
Featured Speakers

Jump to:

[Henry Armour](#)
[Joseph Bona](#)
[Tom Brennan](#)
[John Eichberger](#)
[Dr. Jay Ellingson, Ph.D.](#)

[Brian Hannasch](#)
[Chef Jeff Henderson](#)
[Joey Hobson](#)
[Mark Jordan](#)
[Farley Kaiser](#)

[Jason Liebig](#)
[David Portaltatin](#)
[Philip Santini](#)
[Art Sebastian](#)
[Jessica Williams](#)



HENRY ARMOUR

CEO and President, NACS

Henry Armour is the president and CEO of NACS. He grew up working in his family's retail businesses, Armour Oil Company, rising to the position of vice president and COO in 1977. In 1980, he joined The Standard Oil Company of Ohio, where he served as manager of development strategies. He later founded West Star Corporation, which grew to include 59 NOW! convenience stores, truck stops and quick-service restaurants in the Pacific Northwest until he sold the company in 2004. In 1988, Armour founded Epoch Corporation, which operated retail enterprises in California.

He became president and CEO of NACS in July 2005, having also served as the association's chairman in 2002 and 2003. Armour earned a BA in economics from Stanford University, an MSc in economics from the London School of Economics, and an MBA and PhD in economics from Stanford University.

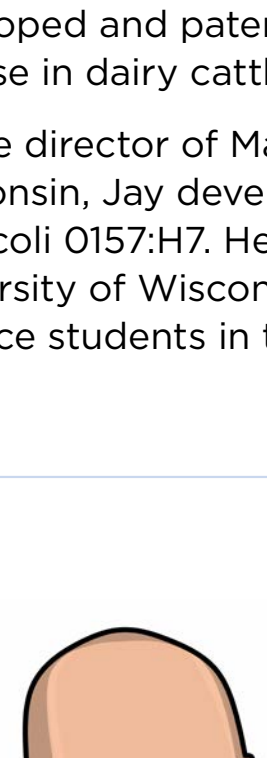


JOSEPH BONA

President, Bona Design Lab

Joseph is a highly respected and internationally recognized branding and design leader in the global convenience and fuels industry. With over 30 years of industry knowledge and experience along with a proven track record, he has developed leading edge solutions for may global organizations by bringing the right elements of their business into focus to drive growth and increase performance. His approach extends beyond achieving good-looking design, he begins with a deep understanding of consumer insights, benchmarking against leading competitors and developing sound business strategies and operational fundamentals that drive the creative vision and bringing to life real-world solutions that integrate the science of retail with the art of design.

Prior to establishing BONA DESIGN LAB in 2016, Joseph was co-founder and President of GroupRed which was he started in 2001 and later merged with CBX in 2005. During his career, he has personally directed and guided a wide range of initiatives for such companies as Shell, Topaz, PetroChina, Oxxo, MOL, AMPM, Wawa, Duane Reade and Sak's Fifth Avenue to name a few. His extensive experience spans six continents providing him a unique perspective on global trends, as well as practical knowledge of how to adapt and respond to local markets. Joseph is a frequent speaker at NACS, NRF, Convenience Summit Europe & also was a featured expert on the History Channel's, Modern Marvels series bringing his expertise to television.

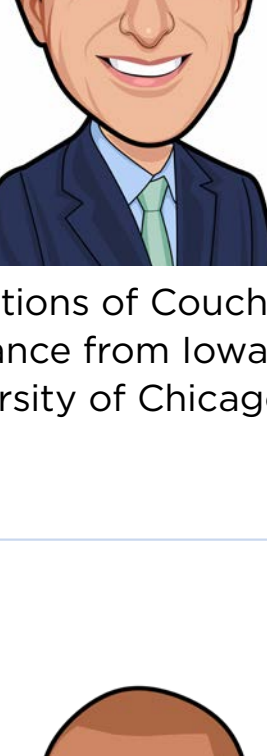


TOM BRENNAN

Chief Merchandising Officer, Casey's General Stores, Inc.

Tom is the Chief Merchandising Officer of Casey's and he has been in the role since the end of October 2019. He is responsible for reinventing the guest experience in stores and for the brand. Tom leads an amazing team of merchandising, food service, marketing, advertising, and guest insights

professionals who work every day to bring relevant, engaging, and convenient offerings along with delicious food to Casey's guests. He joined Casey's from CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc., the parent of Carl's Jr. and Hardee's, where he was Chief Operating Officer responsible for the operations and support of over 3,000 restaurants across the United States. Prior to CKE, Tom spent 11 years at 7-Eleven in a variety of leadership roles in merchandising, category management, store development and operations. Before 7-Eleven, he worked in the financial planning and analysis group at Target Corporation and he also served six years active duty as an Armor Officer in the U.S. Army. He holds a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point

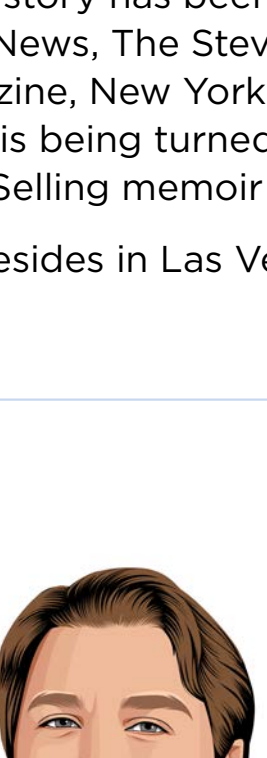


DR. JAY ELLINGSON, PH.D.

Chief Scientific Officer, Kwik Trip Inc.

Jay Ellingson, Ph.D., is the Chief Scientific Officer at Kwik Trip Inc. in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and leads the food safety sciences behind the company's food protection system. In 1995, he received his Ph.D. in molecular microbiology from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He did his postdoctoral fellowship training was with the USDA, Agriculture Research Service, National Animal Disease Center in Ames, Iowa, where he developed and patented a molecular diagnostic method for the detection of John's disease in dairy cattle.

As the director of Marshfield Clinic Laboratories–Food Safety Services in Marshfield, Wisconsin, Jay developed and patented a molecular diagnostic method for detection of E. coli O157:H7. He is an adjunct professor in the Microbiology Department of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and has mentored and graduated several Masters of Science students in the Microbiology program.



JOHN EICHBERGER

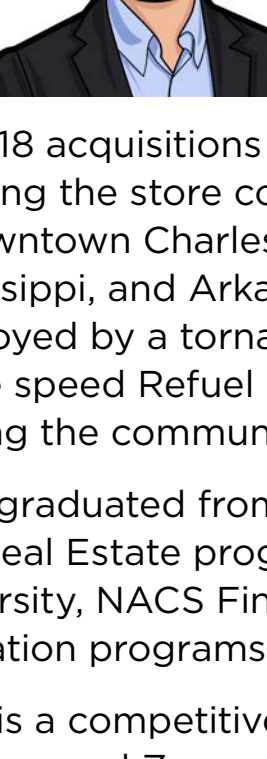
Executive Director, Transportation Energy Institute

John Eichberger is Executive Director of the Transportation Energy Institute. Founded by NACS in 2013 as the Fuels Institute, the Transportation Energy Institute is a non-profit social welfare organization that publishes fact-based research designed to answer relevant market questions, not advocate

for any specific outcome. Led by a diverse Board of transportation experts, the Institute is an objective and collaborative research organization that does not advocate. Its peer-reviewed reports are geared toward all industry stakeholders and, because of its non-advocacy approach, it has become the most diverse organization in the transportation sector.

Previously, Eichberger served more than 14 years at NACS representing the convenience and fuel retailing industry before the media and federal government.

With more than 25 years of related experience, Eichberger is a recognized expert on the transportation energy market.

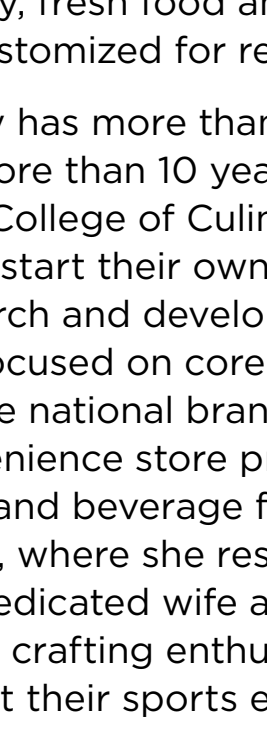


BRIAN HANNASCH

Special Advisor and Former President and CEO, Alimentation Couche-Tard

Brian worked for BP-Amoco for 12 years before joining Couche-Tard in 2001. He was named COO in 2010 and appointed president and CEO in 2014, with oversight for the global operations of the company. Over the last 20 years he has been involved in leading the business strategy and

operations of Couche-Tard together with the Executive Committee. Brian earned a B.A. in finance from Iowa State University and an M.B.A. in marketing and finance from the University of Chicago.



CHEF JEFF HENDERSON

Award Winning Chef New York Times Best-Selling Author Entrepreneur & Motivational Speaker

From humble beginnings in South Central Los Angeles to imprisoned drug dealer, and now an award-winning celebrity chef and best-selling author, Chef Jeff is a role model for anyone who needs the encouragement to reinvent their lives.

Since he discovered his passion and gift for cooking in the unlikelyst of places –prison –Jeff has completely turned his life around, and today serves as a popular and powerful voice for self-transformation. Jeff started his professional culinary career as a cook for Chef Robert Gadsby in Los Angeles. His first chef position was at the Coronado Island Marriott. He went on to work at Ritz-Carlton, Hotel Bel-Air and L'Ermitage (currently Viceroy L'Ermitage Beverly Hills).

In 2000 Jeff left Los Angeles to take a chef position at Caesars Palace where he made history as the first African American Executive Chef. A few years later, he accepted a position at Bellagio and made history once again. Jeff is the creator and star of the Food Network's reality series, The Chef Jeff Project, former host of Family Style with Chef Jeff, and the star of Flip My Food. In his latest book If You Can See It You Can Be It (Smiley Books/Hay House), he reveals his hard-knock, yet transformative, life lessons to help others realize their potential, discover their hidden business aptitudes, make life-changing decisions, and gain a new foothold on the ladder to success.

Jeff's story has been featured on Oprah's Life Class, Good Morning America, Today, CNN, ABC News, The Steve Harvey Show and in major publications such as USA Today, People Magazine, New York Times, Newsweek, the Washington Post, and many others. His life story is being turned into a feature film by Sony Pictures based on his New York Times Best-Selling memoir Cooked (HarperCollins).

Jeff resides in Las Vegas with his wife Stacy and their five children.



JOEY HOBSON

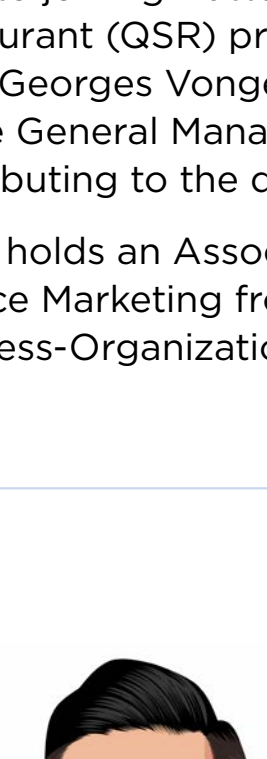
Chief Marketing Officer, Maverik, Inc.

Joey Hobson is the CMO- at Maverik—with in-store P&L accountability including everything from Foodservice/Beer/CSD/Candy to Cigarettes, Snacks and Dispensed Beverage. He oversees the Merchandising, Foodservice, Category Management and Marketing teams.

Joey joined Maverik in 2011 and has loved nearly every minute of it. Prior to joining Maverik, Joey worked in the consumer-packaged goods industry at Kimberly Clark, working on Huggies, Scott and Cottonelle brands in various Brand Marketing and Shopper Marketing roles. He spent two years in Bentonville calling on Walmart before he decided he loved his wife and life much more than work and decided to move on to work in the last great frontier of retail, the Convenience Channel.

Joey graduated with an MBA from Brigham Young University with an emphasis in marketing. He earned his BS in Global Trade at Brigham Young University.

Joey, his wife and four kids live in Farmington, UT. His favorite adventures include mountain biking, wake surfing and traveling with his wife. He loves BYU athletics which has been a lifelong frustration with some highs and more lows, but at least BYU beat Utah last time they played.



MARK JORDAN

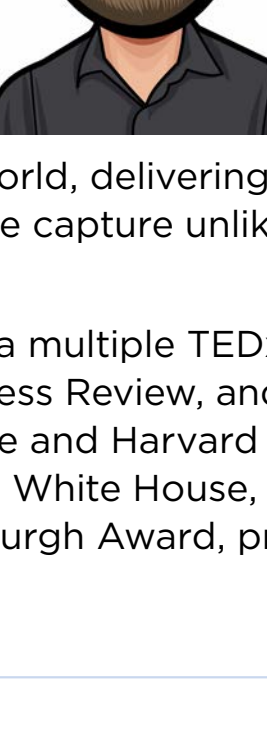
CEO, Refuel Operating Company

Refuel was founded in Charleston, SC, in 2008 by Mark Jordan, following the successful creation of an earlier C-store company, which Mark sold to The Pantry in 2005. Following that, Mark improved his earlier thoughts on convenience, design, and execution. Refuel was launched with the intention of being the best in class. Forming a partnership with private equity sponsor First Reserve in 2019, there have

been 18 acquisitions over five years and 24 new additional builds over the same period, bringing the store count to 230 stores today. With one convenience/food-only location in downtown Charleston, their stores now span South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Recently, Refuel rebuilt a store in Rolling Fork, MS, which was destroyed by a tornado in 2023. This rebuild was a proud moment for the company due to the speed Refuel (DoubleQuick in Mississippi) was able to mobilize, rebuild, and begin serving the community again.

Mark graduated from The Citadel in 1993 and has completed the Urban Economics and Real Estate program at The University of Wisconsin, Value Investing at Columbia University, NACS Financial Leadership at Wharton, among many other continuing education programs.

Mark is a competitive sailor and loves to travel. He has four children: Caroline, Graham, Thomas, and Zoe.



FARLEY KAISER

Senior Director of Food and Beverage, McLane Company, Inc.

Chef Farley Kaiser is Senior Director of Food and Beverage for McLane Company, one of the largest distributors in America serving convenience stores, mass merchants, and chain restaurants. Farley leads a team focused on developing innovative programs for quality food service in convenience

stores. Her strategic vision and culinary skills have been instrumental in reshaping the c-store food landscape, most recently through launches of McLane Fresh and McLane's Innovation Kitchen –McLane's innovative retail foodservice program featuring high-quality, fresh food and beverage brands with on-trend products for all departments that can be customized for retailers of any size.

Farley has more than 25 years of experience in the culinary industry. As a chef educator for more than 10 years, including a role as Culinary Department Chair at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, she mentored aspiring chefs and played a role in helping them start their own journey into the culinary industry. Farley jumped into the world of research and development as the corporate executive chef for Buffalo Wild Wings where she focused on core menu item optimization as well as innovative LTO development for the national brand. She then joined the team at Wawa where she was introduced to convenience store processes launching many menu items over the years. After managing food and beverage for GetGo she then headed to McLane's headquarters in central Texas, where she resides with her family. Outside of her professional achievements, Farley is a dedicated wife and mother of three, a passionate chef, teacher, and speaker. She's also a crafting enthusiast and an avid lover of the outdoors, often found cheering on her kids at their sports events.

Farley's commitment to culinary excellence and innovation has made her a respected figure in the industry, driving the evolution of the culinary industry in the U.S.

JASON LIEBIG

Star and Lead Storyteller for the History Channel's hit television series, "The Food That Built America" and "The Mega-Brands That Built America"

Jason Liebig is a current star and lead storyteller for History Channel's hit television series, "The Food That Built America" and "The Mega-Brands That Built America".

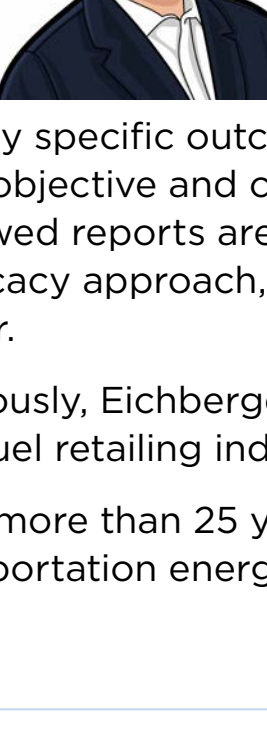
With career origins in marketing and story creation for DC Comics' Superman/Batman and Marvel Comics' X-Men respectively, his early lens into consumer fandom served him as he built his reputation and established his status as a unique voice in the realms of CPG brand history and innovation.

Having consulted on ideation, innovation and design for brands such as Oreos and Skittles, he notably oversaw Big League Chew's successful first female mascot rollout, and more recently brought his singular continuity of innovation knowledge to Ferrara's Nerds brand, which has seen unprecedented success since 2021, growing from \$50 million to a \$500 million brand today.

Behind the scenes, he has drawn from his unusual archive and collection of vintage consumer brand packaging of over 100,000 pieces to consult for hit period television shows including Mad Men, Stranger Things, Young Sheldon, and The Goldbergs.

As a business speaker, he has a reputation for using his passionate storytelling and knowledge of brand history along with his innovation and consumer insight to provide inspirational and entertaining tales that offer not only applicable lessons but also promise to change the way his audience approaches the challenges and opportunities they're facing.

At heart, Jason considers himself a dreamer who has successfully achieved so many of his own aspirations and wants to offer the encouragement and tools for those looking to achieve their own.



DAVID PORTALATIN

Senior Vice President and Industry Advisor Food and Foodservice, Circana

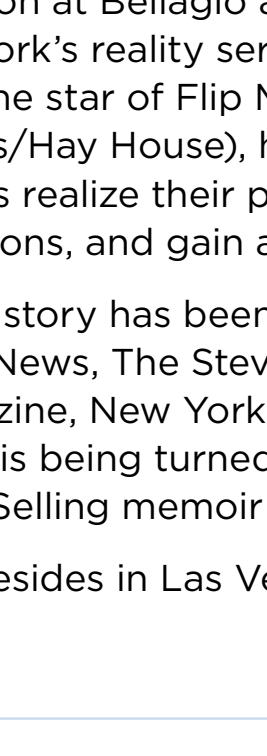
David Portaltatin is a trusted industry advisor who works closely with leading food manufacturers and retailers as well as foodservice distributors, manufacturers, and operators. He shares data and deep expertise on how U.S. consumers eat and drink, their attitudes and motivations, their personal

characteristics, and their use of restaurants and other foodservice outlets. Portaltatin is also the author of Circana's Annual Report on Eating Patterns in America, a compilation of food and foodservice research.

Previously, Portaltatin was Circana's analyst in the convenience retailing, automotive aftermarket, and motor fuels industries. Before joining the company in 1999, he held various positions in foodservice wholesale distribution and convenience retailing.

Portaltatin is a frequent speaker at food and foodservice industry events, corporate conferences, and executive meetings.

A recognized industry thought leader, his comments have appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, and many other national media outlets.



PHILIP SANTINI

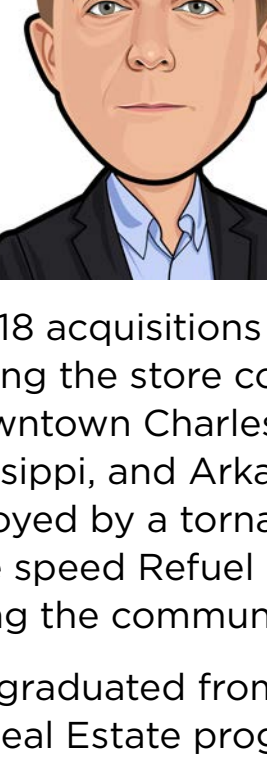
Sr. Director of Advertising & Food Service, The Rutter's Companies

Originally from New Jersey and having worked professionally in NYC for 11 years, Philip made his way to Lancaster, PA, where he has been part of the Rutter's team since August of 2023. In his position, he oversees Rutter's Award-Winning food service program, as well as their advertising

department. With an impressive background in the culinary and marketing fields, Philip brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this exciting role.

Prior to joining Rutter's, Philip played a pivotal role in launching the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) program at the Tin Building in NYC, working with world-renowned Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten and the Howard Hughes Corporation. Additionally, he served as the General Manager for Eatly, overseeing operations across nine locations and contributing to the development of QSR concepts.

Philip holds an Associate's degree in Culinary Arts and a Bachelor's degree in Food Service Marketing from Johnson & Wales University, along with an MBA in Global Business-Organizational Leadership.



ART SEBASTIAN

CEO, NexChapter, Inc.

Art Sebastian stands at the helm of NexChapter, Inc. as its visionary leader and CEO, spearheading a growth advisory firm dedicated to propelling the convenience retail industry forward. With an extensive background spanning over twenty-five years in retail and consumer packaged goods, Art brings a wealth of expertise to empower clients across retail, brands, and technology.

In his previous role at Casey's, Art spent five transformative years steering the ship of Digital Transformation and establishing the Omni-channel Marketing Organization. During this tenure, he orchestrated the implementation of a world-class technology ecosystem, setting the stage for the successful launch of Casey's leading loyalty program, e-commerce business, digital marketing initiatives, and retail media network.

Before Casey's, Art served as the VP of Digital Shopping and E-Commerce, leading the Digital Transformation at Meijer. His leadership journey also includes a stint as the Vice President of Category Leadership at Kraft Foods.

Beyond his role at NexChapter, Inc., Art extends his influence as an advisor to technology startups and as a valued member of the Shoptalk Advisory Board. Most recently, Art was appointed as Chairman of the C-StoreTEC Advisory Board, a new platform introduced by CSP.



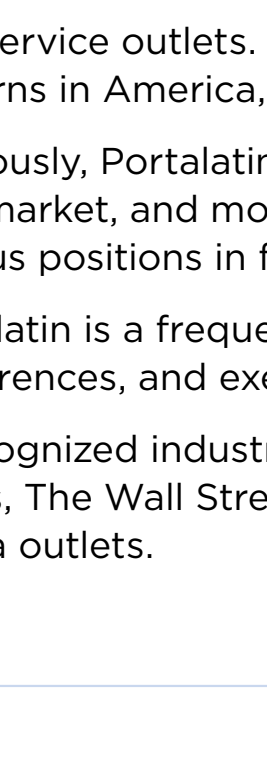
DUNCAN WARDLE

Founder, id8 & innov8 Former Head of Innovation & Creativity at Disney

As Head of Innovation & Creativity at Disney, Duncan helped teams at Disney Parks, Lucasfilm, Marvel, Pixar, Imagineering and Animation to innovate, creating magical new storylines and amazing experiences for consumers around the globe.

He now brings his Disney experience to audiences around the world, delivering a series of keynotes, masterclasses and ideation forums, that help people capture unlikely connections, leading to both disruptive thinking and revolutionary ideas.

He is a multiple TEDx speaker and frequent contributor to Fast Company, Harvard Business Review, and Forbes, and he teaches Innovation and Creativity Masterclasses at Yale and Harvard Universities. Duncan holds the American Citizen Award presented at the White House, an Honorary Doctorate from Edinburgh University, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award, presented by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth



JESSICA WILLIAMS

Founder & CEO, Food Forward Thinking

Jessica Williams founded foodservice consultancy Food Forward Thinking in 2017. Her company partners with travel centers, truck stops, convenience, restaurants, and groceries to bring ideas to life.

Williams supports retailers by designing profitable new menus, planning new product pipelines, reinventing menu items, selecting equipment and planning back of house design, calculating nutrition facts, and training new products. Extensive international travel, multi-unit scaling and commercialization, and product launches on global, national, regional, and start-up scales provide an unmatched perspective to product development in the convenience industry.

Williams enjoys working with teams across the country to create new menus, teach product development, and troubleshoot the unique challenges faced by the convenience industry. Her ultimate goal is to create enjoyable jobs that provide delicious food and drinks to hungry travelers.

Williams formerly led new product development at Yum! Restaurants, International where her roles included food and equipment innovation for global applications for Kentucky Fried Chicken, an international assignment in Dubai to launch new products and platforms in the Middle East, and leading the reinvention of the nostalgic Chicken Littles sandwich for KFC in the United States with Yum! Brands. Williams also led fresh food innovation for Thorntons convenience chain where she was responsible for overseeing quality, and creating and launching dozens of products. Williams has a degree in food science and resides on her family's farm in beautiful Central Kentucky.