

GFIA's Magic is Rooted in Relationships

By Kathy Kuzava, GFIA President

I am always amazed at the reaction of first-time attendees to GFIA's convention. "Welcoming... exciting...family friendly... terrific exposure for my company, one of a kind..."

It is hard to explain the magic that happens when GFIA members come together for our events, especially the annual convention. This year was no exception. More than 900 attendees experienced the GFIA family atmosphere, including several of Georgia's elected officials. The relationships made during our time together make a huge impact when we are at the state capitol represent-

ing our industry.

It takes a village of volunteers to pull off this event! Our members step up to assist at registration, raise money for the Foundation, load and unload the truck, donate prizes for the silent auction and wine pull, sponsor events, host cabanas, serve on panels, showcase their products and services during tradeshow, parties, wine tastings, or snack shack, and cheer on the best bagger contestants.

There were so many high-

lights of this year's event, it is hard to know where to start. This newsletter issue is packed with content that fills you in on our July convention and other news from the industry.



To our diamond sponsors, your support is humbling. We could never offer the exciting events we do without your generous support! Every year we add to the growing list of companies who support the GFIA – we had TRIPLE Diamond sponsorships from Georgia Crown and United Distributors.

This year, the Georgia Farm Bureau came to film our convention. They were so impressed with our event, they asked to be a diamond sponsor for next year! Check out GFIA's website for the coverage and interviews they conducted.

A special congratulations to Teross Young, Vice President of Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs for Ahold Delhaize USA, who won this year's distinguished GFIA Legacy Award. (see story on pages 8-9)

Thank you to both our board of directors and board of trustees who lead the association and support

GFIA's programs throughout the year. We appreciate the time and leadership our members devote to making us a strong and energized association.

A sincere thank you for your role in making this association so special! As I frequently say, it is truly my honor to represent this industry!

The GFIA is all about building relationships and connections. Board member Mike Coggins, present of Harvest Sherwood Foods, is hosting a fundraiser for Senator Tyler Harper, who is running to be Georgia's next Commissioner of Agriculture. Mark your calendar for September 20th, 5:00pm-7:30pm to enjoy a steak dinner cookout at Mike's house in Woodstock to support Tyler. Details are on page 10 - We hope to see you there!

JOIN US!

GFIA Board of Directors' Fall Golf Tournament

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

CHATEAU ELAN GOLF CLUB
Braselton, Georgia

NEW!

Priceless Bourbon Raffle
\$25 per ticket

Purchase \$10 raffle tickets for more chances to win fantastic prizes!



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Georgia eWIC is Here!

Georgia WIC is currently in the implementation phase of the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) mandate known as Georgia eWIC and is diligently working to complete the implementation by **October 31, 2022**. See the map on page 3 for the updated rollout schedule.

For retailers who have experience in other states with eWIC, this transition should be smooth. For other Georgia retailers, there are still questions. Most Georgia grocers will choose an integrated Transaction Process, but there are stand beside options as well.

A phased approach will be used to distribute the new eWIC cards. Participants can continue to use paper vouchers until they receive an eWIC card. Participants who received paper vouchers before eWIC rolls-out in their area will receive an eWIC card at the next scheduled appointment.

A participant can use an eWIC card unlimited times throughout the benefit period. Unlike SNAP benefits, any benefits not used by midnight on the last day of the benefit period will expire and will NOT roll over to the next month. The first and last date to use the benefits can be found on a customer's WIC shopping list or their last cash register receipt.

If a customer loses their last receipt, the remaining balance can be checked by calling WIC Customer Service, by visiting the cardholder website available at wicconnect.com, or by checking the balance at an authorized WIC retailer.

Here are some of the questions that retailers have asked:



How will my store be approved to accept eWIC transactions?

The State WIC Office will conduct Level III Certifications two weeks before your roll out dates. Your store must pass the Level III Certification in order to accept eWIC transactions.

The certification is a live in-store test by WIC staff to verify the proper installation and set-up of the store's cash register system. This involves successfully completing an eWIC balance inquiry, purchase and voiding an eWIC transaction.

If a Georgia retailer has stores in different rollout phases, will GA WIC authorize all stores to accept eWIC transactions at one time?

If one location of a retailer that has multiple authorized locations has successfully completed a Level III Certification and all other store locations are on the same integrated system, the retailer can go live in the other locations without an on-site certification. However, GA WIC is working with each organization individually concerning going live in other locations. There is the need to ensure cashiers are trained and every training schedule can differ.

How will the eWIC payments show up on my statement?

eWIC and SNAP payments may appear as a combined

EBT settlement on your monthly statement. This has caused confusion for some retailers. Contact your third party processor for details.

Will an item be rejected if the price in a retailer's system exceeds the maximum allowable price?

The item should scan in all cases. If it is a GA WIC approved item, the system should subtract the benefits from the eWIC card. The most a retailer will receive as reimbursement is the Not To Exceed (NTE) amount established for their peer group for the food item.

How are the items recognized?

An APL file of approved items is downloaded nightly to the retailer's register system. Items are scanned (no need to separate WIC items). The universal product codes (UPCs) and price look-up codes (PLUs) are verified against the APL file. Items are checked against the WIC family's benefit balance.

Items scanned are transmitted to Conduent's WIC Connect system for approval. WIC Connect responds with approval and remaining benefit balance. Once completed, if there are any non-WIC items remaining, the WIC family will be given the opportunity to pay the remaining balance with another form of tender.

What if an item is not on the APL file?

The vendor will be able to complete a UPC submission form and submit it to Georgia WIC for review. This form will eventually be posted on the Georgia WIC website.

Produce Mapping: What produce items need to be mapped? What happens if produce is not mapped/linked? Where do I search for PLU codes for items with a UPC code?

All WIC approved fresh fruit or vegetables must be mapped to an International Federation of Produce Standards (IFPS) approved PLU. If produce mapping is not completed, the WIC transaction will decline. This includes:

- produce items with a UPC bar code (example: pack of strawberries)
- Store- assigned items packaged at your store (example: cut pineapple processed and packaged at your store)

- Generic IFPS approved PLU (i.e. using a generic “any fruit” or “any vegetable” PLU instead of the specific IFPS PLU assigned such as 4011 for bananas)

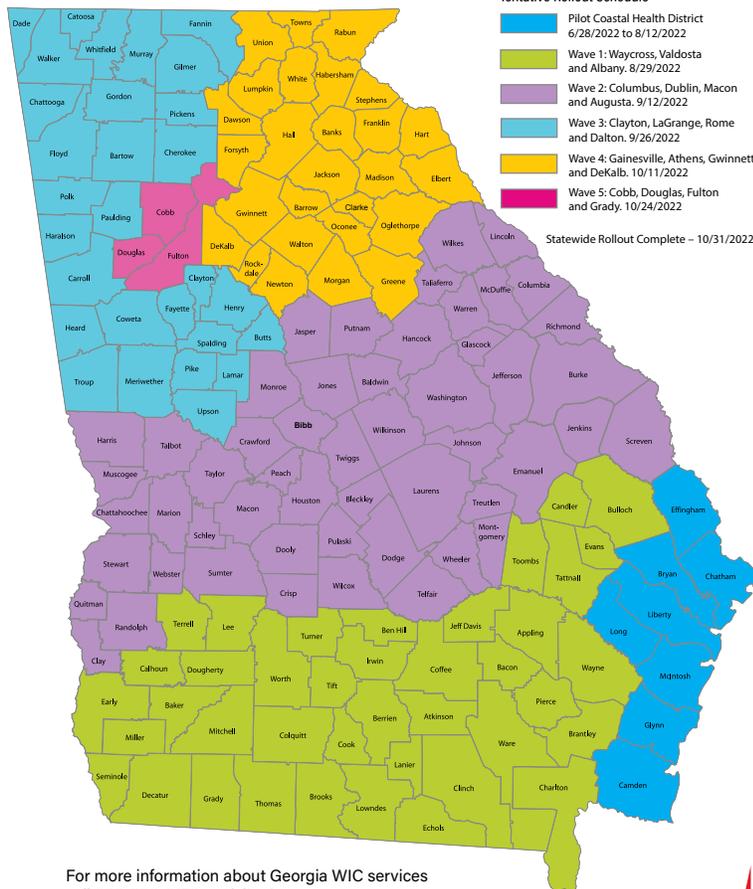
Items containing more than a single type of produce may be mapped to an IFPS-approved PLU of one of the produce items in the mix. For example, a container of cut-up melons (contains a mixture of cantaloupe, watermelon, and honeydew) can be mapped to 4049 for cantaloupe.

It is the store’s responsibility to map ALL required fresh fruits and vegetables. Mapping should be done prior to your go live date and maintained for new items on an on-going basis.

PLU codes can be found at
<https://www.ifpsglobal.com/PLU-Codes/PLU-codes-Search>

Updated eWIC Rollout Schedule

Georgia eWIC Rollout



For more information about Georgia WIC services call 800-228-9173 or visit wic.ga.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Healthy Checkout Mandate is Not Healthy for Savannah's Grocers

Would customers change their eating habits if retailers were mandated to offer more healthy options at the checkout areas?

Healthy Savannah, a non-profit organization led by Executive Director Paula Kreissler, believes that replacing some of the candy bars, chips and sugary drinks with healthy choices would give customers the options they are seeking. Kreissler referenced their 2021 focus groups that indicated almost all participants said if healthy options were available near the checkout, they would purchase them instead of less healthy food.

The group is dedicated to making Savannah a “healthier place to live, grow and play” and believes that their Healthy Checkout Initiative will “make the healthier choice the easier choice” for parents and children who are waiting in line to check out.

“GFIA members do not believe legislation or mandates are the answer to teaching customers how to eat healthy,” according to Georgia Food Industry Association’s President Kathy Kuzava. As customers change their demand for new products, the retailers respond to the demands of the customers. “Grocers in Savannah and across the state are proud of the selection of healthy options offered throughout their stores.”

Healthy Savannah received funding in 2020 for this initiative through a grant from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI). Funding for the Healthy Checkout Initiative includes attempting to pass an ordinance that would mandate the removal of some of the candy, chips and soft drinks currently offered at the front end of most registers.

The Savannah ordinance was originally scheduled to be introduced in June with an effective date of January 1, 2023. Penalties and enforcement would have begun no sooner than June 1, 2023. After listening to GFIA’s concerns, Kreissler agreed to postpone any action until after meeting with the grocers to understand the impact of the mandate. (Ordinance is still in draft form.)

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ORDINANCE?

The original draft of the ordinance mandates that each large retail store shall require 50 percent of foods and beverages sold in all checkout areas to be in the following categories: chewing gum and mints with no added sugars, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, yogurt or cheese and whole grains.

1. Beverages must have no added sugars and no artificial sweeteners. (The GFIA has been told that the ban on artificial flavor language will be taken out of the bill before it is introduced.)

2. Food items must have no more than 5 grams of added sugars and 200 milligrams of sodium per labeled serving.

The draft ordinance defines the “checkout area” as any area that is accessible to a customer of the large retailer store that is either:

1. Within a 3-foot distance of any register; or
2. Designated primarily or used primarily by customers to wait

in line to make a purchase at a register, up to and including the checkout endcap.

WHICH STORES WILL BE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THE ORDINANCE?

Although Healthy Savannah says the ordinance would only affect grocery stores over 2,500 square feet, the draft ordinance would include many more businesses. According to the draft language, a “large retail store” is defined as a commercial establishment selling goods to the public with a total floor area over 2,500 square feet and selling 25 linear feet or more of food.

The draft ordinance says that city staff will provide technical assistance for implementation. Bi-annual review of qualifying food and beverage categories will be done by the Coastal Health District. There will be 120-day phase in period if any changes are made.

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

If Savannah passes the ordinance, what cities will be next? Healthy Savannah calls this “a partnership with the City of Savannah and local grocery stores to pass an ordinance that will incorporate healthier food options in checkout aisles”.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) also funded an ordinance in the City of Berkely, CA which passed the nation’s first mandate on “healthy” checkout aisles. CSPI encourages cities and counties “to adopt healthy-checkout ordinances to ensure that the prime real estate of checkout is not used to undermine customers’ diets.” That is exactly why GFIA’s president Kathy Kuzava is concerned. The GFIA is opposed to any mandate that dictates how retailers merchandise their stores.

Healthy Savannah introduced their initiative in December of 2021 with a press event at Jones Red and White, an independent retailer in Savannah. President Mike Jones told GFIA he believed this was a campaign to encourage customers to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Over the last few months, the GFIA team has met with retailers and Kreissler in Savannah and Atlanta to share the concerns that retailers have with the ordinance. Meetings were held in Savannah with Jones Red and White, Food Lion and Walmart. Atlanta visits included Kroger and Publix. In every meeting, retailers took Kreissler through their produce departments, highlighting the healthy choices that are currently available to customers. We walked the front end and explained the challenges and costs to retailers if they would be mandated to change their merchandising mix.

Mike Jones told Kreissler how he believed education is the key to changing customers’ eating habits. He shared how the much the bottled water category has exploded over the years. He mentioned that years ago he would buy bottled water for the Savannah St. Patrick’s parade, and it would take him months to sell the excess product. Now he has a huge section stocked with bottled water. He also highlighted the growing popularity of his cut fruit and vegetable section, something that didn’t exist years ago.

Kreissler also learned:

- How decisions are made concerning the placement of products at stores. (The team originally thought the local store manager could make merchandising decisions.)
- How mandating a “healthy checkout” would cost retailers in potential extra refrigeration costs, shrink, loss of vendor revenue, increased labor, etc.
- How each retailer is currently offering healthy options for customers throughout the store. Retailers differed, but healthy options included salad bars, more cut fruit and vegetables, fruit samples in the produce department, adhering to healthier standards for private label products and labeling to highlight “better for you” foods.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS INITIATIVE?

The GFIA is continuing conversations with Healthy Savannah’s Executive Director Paula Kreissler and the City of Savannah. We are telling the story of the incredible job grocers do to offer fresh produce and other healthy options to the communities they serve. We are working on an issue paper to share healthy initiatives currently offered.

After meeting with five of the affected retailers and working with the GFIA, Kreissler is taking the original ordinance back to her lobbying team for review. We will keep you updated on the latest language and will continue to oppose any mandate for retailers.

If you hear of any discussion on a healthy checkout initiative in your community, please contact the GFIA staff immediately.

For a copy of the full draft ordinance, visit www.GFIA.org, or contact Kathy Kuzava kkuzava@GFIA.org or Kim Peterson kpeterson@GFIA.org.

An Economist's Predictions for the Supermarket Industry

John Dunham, president of John Dunham and Associates, shared his research on the current economic situation and the implications to our industry at the GFIA convention.



John Dunham
Dunham & Associates

According to Dunham, the economy has improved significantly since the COVID-19 government-imposed shutdowns in 2020; however, as of mid-July:

- GDP is still \$47.2 billion below trend, and is falling
- Annual inflation has risen from 2.5 percent to 8.5 percent
- Federal government debt has risen from an already high 108 percent of GDP to nearly 125 percent.
- The US month trade deficit has more than doubled from about \$40 billion to nearly \$90 billion
- Real wages are down by about 1.6 percent and are falling
- Shipping costs are falling but are still 272 percent higher than the pre-COVID average
- Labor productivity falling at fastest sustained levels since 1982

Major Concerns midway through 2022

- The Economy is Entering a Period of Stagflation
- Prices/costs are rising while the economy is shrinking
- Has happened in the past and signals difficult economic times

The Labor Force is Shrinking:

- Declining population of working age people
- Falling labor force participation rates
- Collapse in the number of young people working

Implications for the Food and Beverage Industry

According to Dunham, the industry should be prepared for:

- Some relief in the logistics situation. Costs, capacity constraints, and delays will continue to plague the ocean freight, rail, and trucking industries.
- It is likely that 6 percent inflation will be the new normal. There will continue to be product rationing (shortages) at least through the end of the year.
- Lack of investment and malinvestment has reduced supply side of the economy while the demand for goods has soared.
- Retail sales will soften as the effects of stimulus continue to wane. Off premise food purchases will remain stable (overall food is very inelastic to price and income).
- Consumers will continue to see their real incomes fall as wage increases do not keep up with inflation.
- Labor shortages will continue but start to moderate as the recession takes hold. There will continue to be pressure on employee costs both through insurance premiums (as they make up for COVID losses) and through regulatory benefits like paid sick leave requirements.
- Higher interest rates.

If you would like a copy of the full presentation made by Dunham, please email Kim Peterson at kpeterson@gfia.org.

The Nutty Journey to Revive a 3rd Generation Business

Stephanie Stuckey, CEO of Stuckey's Corporation, treated GFIA convention attendees with a trip down memory lane as she told the story of how she purchased the company started by her grandfather and is turning the business around to become profitable. Stuckey is a masterful storyteller and shared her journey to revive a third-generation business.

Stuckey knows how to use social media to tell her story, and it is working. She knew she was striking a chord with people when The Today Show and The New York Times featured her nostalgic road trip story. (The website crashed when 100K visitors were on the site after her Today Show interview!)

Stuckey shared the history of the company, the myth of the girl boss, and the company's challenges during her grandfather's days when air travel became affordable and the gas shortages of the 70's.

"Too often female CEOs are portrayed as having it all – smarts, ambition, super polished look, and ninja like multitasking abilities. I say more power to those women, if they actually exist.

Multitasking for me means reading financial reports while waiting in the carpool line at my daughter's school, squeezing in a webinar on how to format excel spreadsheets while doing the laundry, and the list goes on.



"I'm often travelling for work – not business class on Delta hanging out in the Sky Club Lounge – but driving a used hybrid to visit our stores, warehouse, and candy plant. I count inventory at our warehouse during our annual inventory count. And I work trade shows along with the rest of our small but mighty team – pushing to sell pecan log rolls and turn this scrappy company around, one new retail account at a time."

Stuckey's lessons from an 87 year-old start up

- Learn from the past, but don't live in it
- Be resilient; learn to bounce back better
- Find the healthy business inside the failing one
- Don't be afraid to pivot
- Build a team, both internally & externally

Attracting Employees and Developing Future Leaders

How do grocers attract employees and future leaders to the supermarket industry? That was the question posed to a panel of independent and chain retailers during GFIA's annual convention in July.

GFIA's president Kathy Kuzava moderated the panel that included Ruben Fernandez, Vice President of Merchandising for the Atlanta Division of The Kroger Company; Randy Gentry, President/CEO of RBG Foods, an owner/operator of five Piggly Wiggly stores based in Tallapoosa, Georgia; Kris Jonczyk, Vice President of the Atlanta Division of Publix Super Markets and Darrell Wiley, President/CEO, J & J Foods in Gainesville, Georgia.

The inspiration for the panel came from a presentation at an NGA board meeting. Kuzava listened to economist John Dunham discuss the low participation rate of workers, especially among young people. "Since so many leaders in the supermarket industry start out as teenagers, I realized this is going to be a long-term problem for our industry," she said.

Every panelist started with their company at a young age. They never imagined themselves in their current role, but they developed a love for the industry.

With a tough labor market, how do they attract and keep employees?

Fernandez said offering a flexible schedule is key. He also believes it is important to communicate the potential growth opportunities and benefits the company offers. "We want employees to understand how far they can go with the company."

Jonczyk said he believes Publix's best advertising is its current associates. Publix has been on Fortune's 100 Best Places to Work in America for 25 years and has been in business for 92 years without a layoff. "Publix has a great avenue to grow," he said, adding that the CEO started as a bagger. "That's the American dream."

As an independent store operator, Wiley said it's all about finding and developing relationships with people in the community. He said he's always looking for talent and may ask a friend for a referral.

According to Wiley, "Growing up early in my career, we didn't talk about salaries at all". "Today we don't hesitate to let employees know how much money a department manager or store manager can earn. Suddenly, the light bulb goes on and they realize there may be a career for them in the grocery industry or at J&J Foods," Wiley said.

Gentry asks for employee referrals and uses the store PA to announce employment opportunities. He talks with school counselors, which also has worked well over the years. He said being competitive with pay is important and that means knowing what others in the community, such as fast-food restaurants, are paying.

How is hiring different today than in the past?

Fernandez believes that sincerely connecting with employees is critical. "People don't leave companies, they leave bosses. You've really got to connect with your associates and show you care about them. Find out about their family history and their hobbies," he said.

Jonczyk agrees. "Associates in our store probably don't know the CEO. They're working for their department manager and for the store manager. They know how they're treated, how they're respected."

Jonczyk mentioned the old style of leadership is gone. "Today's associates want to connect and share values with the companies they work for," he said. "Publix has focused on three things to connect with people: great communication/getting to know people, great recognition and ongoing training and investment."

Wiley said that for him it's a matter of adapting and getting to know his employees. For example, during recent store renovations he discovered

that one of his managers has strong mechanical skills and another has IT skills. Wiley said it's important to find out what your employees' skills and interests are and tap into those and encourage them. "The goal is to keep them on our team as long as we can," he said.



Panelists (L-R) Fernandez, Gentry, Kuzava, Jonczyk, Wiley

Gentry said a lot of the cashiers hired today have never spent much time in the grocery store. He believes in cross training his cashiers and having them work in different departments. "It teaches them a lot more about how the store operates."

A career that young people may never have considered is working as a meat cutter. Gentry said his company is offering a training program, with goals set for the trainees to meet in order to move up. They have tests and specific pay raises for them as they achieve those goals.

How do you develop leaders?

Jonczyk believes "The best example is our own example. Great leadership inspires others to want to be a part of that team. We have a culture that in every store, you are creating leaders at every level."

Fernandez said that leaders in the stores are challenged to become mentors. When he first became a department manager, his district manager took notice, and recommended him for the management training program. Fernandez also stressed that understanding the importance of diversity is essential. "Companies that are committed to diversity and inclusion will thrive."

Gentry added that a commitment to cross training will bring out leadership in current employees.

Wiley encouraged the audience to pay close attention to their current employees who go above and beyond to find signs of a future leader. "These are the people you want to place into leadership, even if they've never seen it in themselves."

Mayor Teross Young Wins GFIA Legacy Award

What do you call a man who devotes time to his family, serves as his town's mayor and is active in leadership roles for several industry associations? The Georgia Food Industry Association calls this gentleman the perfect choice for GFIA's 2022 Legacy Award!

This distinguished award is presented each year to honor an individual who has made a measurable difference in his or her community and to the food industry. This year's recipient is Teross Young, Vice President of Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs for Ahold Delhaize USA and GFIA board member.

Fellow board member Skip Vaughan, PepsiCo Beverages North America, introduced our winner at the annual convention, saying "It is an honor to present this distinguished award to someone who dedicates his time to making his community a better place."

Teross represents his company and the supermarket industry on federal, state, and local levels. He serves on several national and state-level business boards across the east coast, as well as volunteering time to his church, fraternity, and community.

Born in the small town of Troutman, North Carolina where he still lives today, Teross was destined to be a leader. While in college at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Teross was employed by the Charlotte mayor's office. He developed a youth employment program and worked with the head of Food Lion's Human Resources Department. Teross was recruited by Food Lion, and his career in the grocery business began.

While in college, Teross met his future bride. Renee and Teross just celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary. They are the proud parents of son Tyler, who grew up playing soccer and hopes to play professionally. Tyler is now a senior at Campbell University, and last year was named Offensive Player of the Year for the Big South Conference, and 1st Team All-Conference.



In 2013, Teross was the first African American elected to serve on Troutman's Town Council. He had no idea that in less than three years the mayor would step down and Teross would be named as interim mayor. Since then, he has been re-elected twice. Teross said, "It was never my goal to make history, just to offer my time and talents for the residents of Troutman."

Teross loves Troutman and living near Lake Norman. In his "spare" time, he enjoys spending time on the lake fishing and kayaking. He also loves cooking and would even like to open a food truck one day if he could ever fit it into his schedule!

Even with his busy schedule, Teross continues to make time for our association. "The GFIA represents the grocery industry in the public policy arena. This is an industry that I care so much for, and the association's continued growth and development is important," says Teross.

"Teross brings a wealth of knowledge to our board, and we are lucky to have his insight", says fellow board member Tom Coogle, President of Reynolds Foodliner.

As Food Lion expanded from a Southern grocery store chain to a global company, Teross's influence in the industry also increased. "Teross is the consummate professional and is respected across the country," says GFIA President Kathy Kuzava.



Jennifer Hatcher, Chief Policy Officer and Senior Vice President of Government Relations for FMI says, “It is rare that you find someone who has a global perspective of what is on the horizon and well as an acute on the ground political perspective that you get from being a mayor of a growing small town.”

Hatcher adds, “Teross is definitely at the top of my phone-a-friend list when I have to make a critical decision and need a global, yet real-world local perspective He is one of a kind.”

Glen Wilkins, Director of Public Affairs and State and Local Government for Walmart says that Teross is “an extremely effective lobbyist and a good friend. Working together to pass Sunday sales in Georgia will always be a favorite memory.”

Mike Coggins, President of Harvest Sherwood Foods, who serves on GFIA’s board, calls Teross “humble and a true servant leader.”

Renee Young also describes Teross as humble. “I usually learn about an award or recognition when I read an article in the newspaper or hear about it from someone else!”

Renee knew Teross would be incredibly honored to receive the recognition from an organization he loves so much. In fact, Teross was completely speechless when he found out he was chosen by his peers to win this distinguished award. You know he was surprised when an elected leader is rendered speechless!

“I was shocked. It’s astonishing to know that others in this industry recognize and appreciate you. I enjoy working with GFIA and its members so much but it’s not for recognition,” according to Teross. “I truly treasure the many friendships that we have built over the years.”

While Renee was busy getting pictures for the surprise Legacy Award, Teross was busy with a secret of his own. He and Renee planned a summer trip to Los Cabos, Mexico and he arranged a surprise ceremony to renew their wedding vows. Well done, Mr. Mayor!

Congratulations to Teross Young! We appreciate all you do for the GFIA!

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Join GFIA for a Steak Dinner Supporting

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 FOR AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

5:00 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.

Dinner will be served at 6:00 P.M.

Mike Coggins' "Garage"

3134 Trickum Road • Woodstock, GA 30188

Friend: \$250 • Sponsor: \$500 • Chair: \$1,000

Kindly RSVP by contacting Kathy Kuzava
 at kkuzava@gfia.org.

Contributions can be made payable and mailed to:

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FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER RAISES MONEY FOR CHARITY

Supply chain issues and labor shortages made executing last year's "Supermarket Sweep" package difficult. Kroger had committed to providing \$2,000 worth of groceries toward the Sweep, so Super Raffle winner Scott Blackwell suggested that the money be given to his favorite charity, Camp Twin Lakes. Kroger agreed, and Blackwell donated \$1,000 of his own money. Kroger's Corporate Affairs Manager, Felix Turner, said that they were so impressed with Scott's generosity that they agreed to match another \$2,000.



So, Camp Twin Lakes was ultimately the biggest winner as the recipient of a \$5,000 donation!

Camp Twin Lakes provides year-round camp experiences to children with serious illnesses, disabilities, and other life challenges. Learn more about them at www.CampTwinLakes.org

MARK YOUR
 CALENDAR FOR
 GFIA'S FUTURE
 CONVENTION DATES



July 12-16, 2023

Sawgrass Marriott Resort
 Ponte Verdra Beach, FL

July 10-14, 2024

OMNI Orlando Resort at
 Championsgate
 Orlando, FL

NEW FOUNDATION TRUSTEES ELECTED

Please join us in welcoming our newest Education Foundation trustees. Each of these GFIA members have taken the time to get involved with our association and have attended and volunteered their time at GFIA events. If you are interested in joining this group of industry leaders, give us a call and we can help you get started!



Chuck Caricofe, Northeast Sales

Chuck has spent 26 of his 33 years in the industry at Northeast Sales. He held many positions over the years, before assuming his current role as General Sales Manager. His 24 year old son also works at Northeast Sales. He is an outdoorsman, enjoying golf, hunting, fishing and concerts.



Dave Fricke, Savannah Distributing Co.

Dave has 32 years of experience in the food industry. He currently serves as a Chain Account Manager with Savannah Distributing Company. Dave is a hotrod enthusiast and loves to restore Chevy C10 trucks. He also enjoys skateboarding and surfing in his free time.



Rolanda Holman, Bimbo Bakeries USA

Rolanda has been employed with Bimbo Bakeries for 18 years and currently works as a Zone Sales Leader, supporting Bimbo's retail sales business in Georgia. Rolanda volunteers in her spare time and enjoys yoga. She also loves travelling internationally with her daughter.



Kristen West, Flowers Foods

Kristen has been employed with Flowers Foods for 7 1/2 years, having grown up with Flowers Foods as a legacy employee. She has held several roles before assuming her current position as Key Accounts Director.

Please join us in congratulating Joe Hartman with PepsiCo Beverages North America on his much-deserved retirement! Joe has been a dedicated supporter and friend to the GFIA for over 20 years. Joe has served GFIA in countless ways ... and the Foundation is losing one heck of a raffle ticket seller! Although we will all miss Joe's enthusiasm, we wish him well on his new journey!

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2022 CAREER PATH SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Recognizing students who have a passion for our industry and plan to make it a long-term career is the primary goal of the Career Path Scholarships. The Foundation funds three Career Path Scholarships. These awards require the applicant to be employed by a GFIA member. In addition to standard judging criteria, an essay is required explaining the job the student currently holds and why they want to pursue a career in the food industry. This year, 32 essays were submitted.

Our judges score the applications and essays without knowing the candidate's name or employer name. Congratulations to these outstanding winners!

\$4,000 CAREER PATH AWARD WINNER - Shanell Gipson, The Kroger Company



- Front End Manager, Full-Time Employee
- Employed since 2008
- Strayer University

I am currently a Front-End Department Manager at The Kroger Company and I have been in this job position for eight years. I absolutely love what I do. I manager over thirty associates a day as well as being involved with our lovely customers. I also handle customer disputes and occasionally I work at customer service. Engaging with customers daily and making sure they leave the store satisfied and willing

to return [for] exceptional service is the goal. With my role as a manager, I have associates under me that I coach and train ... Working in retail has taught me to be patient and understanding as well as having a sense of urgency to help people, whether it is fellow associates or customers ... It's surprising how many young adults need guidance and someone to talk to ... Ultimately, I want to pursue my career within the grocery business as a manager... Our purpose here at Kroger is to feed the human spirit and be friendly and caring and improve each and every day.

\$3,000 CAREER PATH AWARD WINNER - Anaiiah Fleury, The Kroger Company



- Customer Service Attendant / Cashier
- Employed since 2017
- Clemson University

The grocery industry career I would like to pursue would be management and/or accounting ... I would like to work in the accounting department mainly because I'll be able to use my undergraduate degree in accounting ... I also would like to go into management because I've learned a lot throughout my almost five years in this industry and there are things I want to change and better ... Through my experience I want to teach others how to effectively deal with

customers because the customers are what make this industry very profitable ... I have a lot of experience I can share because I've been a bagger, cashier, self-checkout attendant, guest services attendant, fuel center attendant, and I have had to supervise on occasion ... An ideal management position would be for the front end of the grocery store, due to the fact that I've done almost all of the positions and I'll be able to share the things that worked for me with new hires ... There is a lot that I love about this industry ... and I feel through my experiences and management skills I can teach others.

\$2,000 CAREER PATH AWARD WINNER - Parker Dunagan, J & J Foods

(Pictured with J & J President, Darrell Wiley and Store Manager, Richard Tyner)



- Customer Care Leader / Office Clerk, Full Time Employee
- Employed since 2016
- University of North Georgia

I am interested in pursuing a career in the grocery industry in the department of Human Resources. Many people do not think of Human Resources as a career in the field of Psychology, but it most certainly is. In fact, our own HR Director at J&J has a degree in Psy-

chology, which I was surprised to learn when I first started over five years ago. After studying Psychology for several years now I understand how important the field is. Classes such as Industrial/Organizational and Social Psych have been very beneficial in a potential career in Human Resources. It goes without saying that my five years at J&J have been invaluable for a future career in Human Resources in the grocery industry.

Sibling Rivalry Pays Off!

Over the years, we have had a few siblings win awards but not in the same award year. This year we had 2 sets of siblings win! Pushing each other in academics and extra curriculars literally paid off for these outstanding sibling sets!



Jacob and Joshua Yeomans, Satilla Grocery Company

Jacob, winner of a \$1500 GFIA Scholarship and Joshua, winner of a \$1,000 Zuma Richardson Memorial Scholarship



Kameron and Kennedy Austin, Publix Super Markets

Kameron, winner of a \$1,000 Blue Bell Creameries Scholarship and Kennedy, winner of a \$500 Publix Super Markets Scholarship

Congratulations to the 2022 Foundation Scholarship Winners!

Congratulations to the 123 students selected as winners of the 2022 scholarship program! The continued support of GFIA members allows the Education Foundation to make a difference in the lives of so many students.

Below are just a few excerpts from the thank you notes received.



Erica Bayne, Reynolds Foodliner
Winner of a \$1,000 Reynolds Foodliner Scholarship
 I was elated to learn of my selection for this honor and deeply appreciate the support. I am currently finishing my spring semester at UMG, completing media communications and in my final weeks of business law. This scholarship helps bring the momentum for me to go into my summer semester. My sincerest thank you.



Cailee Jackson, Publix Super Markets
Winner of a \$500 Publix Super Markets Scholarship
 Thank you! Education has always been a major part of my life with my parents being the first and second in their families to go to college. Finding ways to pay for college has been difficult, but with this award, I will be able to focus more on continuing my academic excellence and contributing to my community through service and mentorship.



Joshua Taylor, Wayfield Foods
Winner of a \$1,500 Wayfield Foods Scholarship
 I want to thank the sponsor for allowing me to receive this award for college. My family, especially my grandmother, will love to see me graduate from college and exceed my expectations. This fall I was not able to afford any college tuition, but this award made it possible. Thank you so much!



Madeline Wentworth, RBG Foods
Winner of a \$1,000 RBG Foods Scholarship
 My family hasn't always been set financially so as a young girl, I knew I had to work hard to get college paid for. This scholarship helps bridge the gap between filing for a loan and having to pick up extra shifts. I am blessed and honored to be able to receive this scholarship!



Whitman Shepard, Local Grocery
Winner of a \$2,000 Barron Thorpe Memorial Scholarship
 Thank you so much for this scholarship. My sister received this award last year and it paid for her unpaid tuition, books, and other materials both semesters. I am so appreciative of the help this will be to my education and my family financially.



Megan Harris, Coca-Cola Bottling Co. UNITED
Winner of a \$1,500 GFIA Scholarship
 I would like to thank everyone who made this opportunity possible for me. I am beyond grateful to be a recipient of this amazing scholarship. With this scholarship, I am one step closer to being able to accomplish all my dreams. Again, thank you so much!



Caspar Primke, Matador Distributing Co.
Winner of a \$1,000 Larry Buckles Legacy Scholarship
 Thank you so much for awarding me this scholarship. It will help me so much in school with my financial needs and other sources.



Tarris Bivins, Dixie Discount / Piggly Wiggly Cuthbert
Winner of a \$1,500 GFIA Scholarship
 I am very thankful to be the recipient of this award. I was extremely happy when I received the email notifying me of this honor. This monetary gift will help me with my fees in college. It's very rewarding to work hard in high school and receive scholarships based on my academic achievements.



Bryan Turberville, Piggly Wiggly Alabama Dist. Co.
Winner of a \$1,000 Tommy Milligan Scholarship funded by Piggly Wiggly Alabama Dist. Co.
 Thank you so much for this scholarship. This will help me further my education without dealing with the burden of debt after graduation.



Jesutosin Awodele, The Kroger Company
Winner of a \$1,000 GFIA Scholarship
 Thank you! This scholarship was almost like a sign for me, especially coming out of my first year of college and just feeling burnt out and like there was no way for me to find the extra funds for college. Thank you for gifting me with something that may be small to you but means the world to me!



Garreth Fulcher, Food Lion
Winner of a \$500 Food Lion Scholarship
 Thank you so much for this wonderful scholarship. It means a lot and will definitely help with expenses in the coming year.



A RECORD-BREAKING SCHOLARSHIP YEAR! 123 AWARDS PRESENTED WORTH \$162,300!



We seem to say it every year, “another record-breaking scholarship year,” and 2022 is no different!

The 2022 scholarship program winners were selected in May. Congratulations to the following GFIA member companies whose employees or children of employees won scholarships this year. Many companies had multiple winners! All GFIA member companies are eligible for these awards and are encouraged to promote the annual scholarship program to their employees. If your company name is not on the list below ... it can be next year!

The 2023 Scholarship Program will Open January 4, 2023!

Associated Wholesale Grocers	Food Lion	Nam Dae Mun Farmers Market
Bargain Barn	Foothills IGA Market	PepsiCo Beverages North America
Bryce Emory / Freshway Market	Georgia Crown Distributing Co.	Piggly Wiggly Alabama Distributing Co.
Bulldog Gaming	Hemrick Grocery	Postec, Inc.
Campbell Snacks	J & J Foods	Publix Super Markets, Inc.
Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED	JTM Corporation	Quality Foods, Inc.
Diaz Foods	The Kroger Company	RBG Foods
Dixie Discount	Local Grocery	Republic National Distributing Co.
Eagle Rock Distributing	Matador Distributing	Reynolds Foodliner, Inc.
Empire Distributors, Inc.	Milkco, Inc.	Satilla Grocery
Food Depot	Molson Coors Beverage Co.	Wayfield Foods, Inc.

Funding the Foundation

Funding for scholarship awards is made possible each year through the generous donations of participating member companies and annual fundraisers such as the auctions, raffle ticket sales and the spring golf tournament. The Foundation also receives generous funding through supporting programs and grants. Please join us in thanking our 2022 donors for their support.



Publix Super Markets Charities



Georgia Crown with The Kroger Company and Publix Super Markets for a joint promotional effort



Walmart Foundation

Funding Scholarships: A GREAT Employee Benefit!

This year, scholarships worth over \$100,000 were funded by GFIA members through the Piggyback program of the Education Foundation. These companies “piggyback” on the established program so they can award scholarships specifically to their employees. As a Piggyback funder, you are only responsible for funding the awards; the Foundation judges and performs all administrative tasks.

It is wonderful to see GFIA members recognize their winners! Acknowledging winners is a terrific way to build excitement for the program and increase interest for next year!



J & J Foods annually awards four (4) \$2,500 Johnnie Wiley Memorial Scholarships to their employees. J & J President Darrell Wiley (right) presents a \$2,500 scholarship to employee Viridiana Garcia with store manager, Richard Tyner (left)



Ashley Kaleta, Human Resources Manager for J & J Foods, presents a \$2,500 scholarship to Beatriz Granados

FOUNDATION TRUSTEES WERE IN IT TO WIN IT



Our convention fundraisers brought in over \$50,000 for the Foundation this year! We are so thankful to each of you who donated items to sell, bought tickets, volunteered your time, and shopped at our auction. All proceeds from the Super Raffle, Cash Raffle, Wine Pull and Silent Auction benefit not only our scholarship program but also fund many educational and training programs for the food industry.

SILENT AUCTION

We are so thankful to our auction donors this year! They really stepped up to bring over 160 high value and popular items to the silent auction. We sold coolers, airPods, electronics, beach gear, event tickets, theme park tickets, sports memorabilia, designer purses, and outdoor entertainment items. Thanks to all the “In It To Win It” bidders, we brought in big money for the Foundation!



Rich Flaherty, The Kroger Company & Beth Governale, Inmar Intelligence

SUPER RAFFLE PACKAGES

Last year’s Super Raffle was such a success that we decided to continue this fundraiser every year. Check out the list below to see who won all the great prizes! We can’t wait to see what exciting packages our trustees will come up with next year! Let us know if you have an idea or items to donate.

<p>PRO GRILLING PACKAGE Sponsored by Reynolds Foodliner Winner Nichole Newman, Republic National Distributing Company</p>	<p>GA/FL GAME PACKAGE Sponsored by Quality Foods Winner Dave Fricke, Savannah Distributing Company</p>	<p>BACKYARD MOVIE NIGHT Sponsored by Koch & Associates, Anheuser-Busch & China Doll / Dixie Lily Winner Jim Linderman, Georgia Lottery Corporation</p>	<p>STOCK THE BAR Sponsored by Republic National Distributing Co. Winner Ricky Purcell, United Distributors, Inc.</p>	<p>LUCKY LOTTERY PACKAGE Sponsored by Georgia Lottery, Foothills IGA Market & UNFI Winner Joan Kimbrell, Quality Foods</p>
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CASH RAFFLE

Traditional cash raffle tickets were sold by trustees before and during the convention. Our three lucky winners were

- \$500** - Skip Vaughan, PepsiCo Beverages North America
- \$1,000** - Brittany Futral, Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED
- \$1,500** - Mike Whelan, UNFI



WINE PULL

Thanks to the efforts of our distributors and their wine vendors, we had over 200 bottles of wine this year and sold every one of them – our members love a good bottle of wine!



IN IT TO WIN IT!

GFIA members were "All In" at this year's convention in Orlando. Over 900 attendees enjoyed sampling sponsor products and spending time with customers and industry peers during the four-day event.



Laura Ritcey, Lou Brown and Joan Kimbrell of Quality Foods keep the registration area running smoothly.

Our sponsors were definitely "In It To Win It" this year with our first ever TRIPLE DIAMOND level unlocked by Georgia Crown and United Distributors.

There is a great deal of volunteer work that happens behind the scenes, and companies that donate their resources in support of the convention. We truly could not have a convention without them!

Harvest Sherwood Foods provides a commercial truck and driver to haul our convention supplies to Orlando and back again. Our trustees and volunteers load the truck before convention, and this year the Reformation Brewery folks helped us to unload at GFIA afterwards.



GFIA TRADE SHOW WINNERS

Trade show judges turned in a tie score for Coca-Cola and Pepsi's booths in the multi-booth category. One of our newest members, Pure Intentions Coffee, won first place in the single booth category. Exhibitors were judged based on theme, crowd interaction and how well they showcased their product.



Pure Intentions Coffee took top honors in the single booth category with their golf theme and interactive games.



The PepsiCo Beverages North America "card sharks" won big accolades from our judges with their Vegas-themed booth.



The Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED team hit a home run with their baseball themed booth - and the bear was a big hit!

PUBLIX WINS BEST BAGGER CONTEST

Our Thursday night opening party was full of cheering fans, waving posters and even a giant pig as a record number of best bagger contestants competed for the Georgia state bagging title. Competitors were judged on speed, proper technique, weight distribution and style.

Publix Super Markets bagger Brennan Davenport beat a talented group of competitors and will go on to represent Georgia at the NGA national competition in Las Vegas.



Best bagger contestants from Food City, Foothills IGA Market, The Kroger Company, Publix Super Markets, Quality Foods, RBG Foods, Reynolds Foodliner and Wayfield Foods.



Best Bagger Winner Brennan Davenport, Publix Super Markets (center) with 2nd place winner Chloe Marchman, Quality Foods (R) and 3rd place winner Kirk Dotson, Foothills IGA Market (L)

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Piggly Wiggly Alabama Dist. Co.

Republic National Distributing Company

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ZEN WTR

UNFI

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Boston Beer Company
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SweetWater Brewing Co.

United Distributors, Inc.

Constellation Wines
Ste. Michelle Wine Estates
Uptime Energy
WX Brands

United Distributors, Inc.

DIAGEO Beer Company
mike's hard lemonade
Sierra Nevada
Warsteiner

UTZ Quality Foods

Wise Foods

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Greg & Cindi Edenfield, Terri & Kerry Hitchcock, Wayfield Foods



Liz & Mark Deno, Atlanta Hard Cider; Daniel Buchanan, Empire Distributors, Inc.



D.J. Turner, Graphic Media Solutions, Lou & Warren Brown, Quality Foods, Inc.



Lou Barbato & Joe Schoeneck, The Wine Group



Robb Finkey, Eagle Rock Distributing; Eid Sarua & Tom Horstman, Langer Juice Company



AJ Governale, Foley Family Wines; Clayton Enlow, The Kroger Co.; Josh Chapin, Bogle Vineyards



Ed & Barbara DellaPiana, Warsteiner



Jeff Bolas, Bunzl Distribution; Kevin Bryant, Brittany Futral, Sandee Cosper, Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED; Lee Streetman, Sparkling Ice; Robb Finkey, Eagle Rock Dist.; Jim Adams, Southern Eagle



Dwight Witherow, Lewis Bakeries; Tim Dawson, Benestar Brands; Carlton M. Golden III, Campbell Snacks



Steve, Allison & Kim Freeman, Dutch Farms; Grant Freeman, Sunset Farm Foods; Glen & Nicole Wilkins, Walmart



Dave Logue & Lee Bowers, MDI; Jeff Downing, Foothills IGA



The Don Francisco's Coffee team serve coffee to convention attendees



Sarah & Chad Ross, Atlanta Beverage Co.; Alicia & Clint Wood, Monday Night Brewing; Kyle & Ashley Mickelson, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.



Wesley Heine, UTZ Quality Foods; Wade & Judy Batten, Benestar Brands; Nathan Wise, Tosca



Jose & Charis Nunez, Dan Klemencic, E & J Gallo Winery



Jonathan Riffle & Amanda Collins, Durty Gurl Cocktail Mixers



Darrell Wiley, J & J Foods; Mike Coggins, Harvest Sherwood Foods; Mark & Ashly Lord, Flowers Foods



Baruc Navarro, Marco Achirica, Osvaldo Cattellanos, Zamigos Distribution



Rich Flaherty, The Kroger Co.; Daniel Jackson, Georgia Crown Distributing Co.; Kathryn Pruett, Mass. Bay Brewing Co.; Dan Kelly & Mike Rivers, Georgia Crown Distributing Co.



GFIA attendees always look forward to hearing from GA elected officials



Kevin Schneider, Michele Butler, Eric Wehrle, Deutsch Family Wine & Spirits



Nichole Newman, RNDC; Tim Waite, Constellation Brands; Christine & Jeremy Vester; John & Shannon Bishop, RNDC



John Snipes, MDI; Michael Gay, Foodfresh; Brian George, Alex Lee



Ross Kooden, Constellation Brands; Daniel King, United Distributors; Tim Waite, Constellation Brands



Tony McNair, Vernon Price & Brad Vickery, UNFI



Laura Moss, Bobby Goodrich Ste. Michelle Wine Estates



Julio Bayona, The Ricky Joy Co.; Mike Coggins, Harvest Sherwood Foods; Jamey Leseueur, Food Depot, Lydia & Commissioner Gary Black, Dept of Agriculture



Tracy Dilworth, Dill's Food City; Cindy & Larry Higdon, Ira Higdon Grocery Company



David Jones, United Distributors; Joe Pearson, mike's hard lemonade; Kevin Smith, Northeast Sales; Sandy O'Neil, Heineken USA



Hope you enjoyed some wine from the Concha Y Toro US



Stan Seganic, Anna Beatty, Joe Keebler & Samuel Beatty, Essentia Water



Board of Director Skip Vaughan, PepsiCo Beverages North America with GA legislative speakers



Mike Cinnella, Savannah Dist. Co.; Kyle Boyer, J Lohr Wine; Jason Miller, BIOLYTE



Doug Matuszak, Martin Merritt, Chase Loyd & Katie Nye, Delicato Family Vineyards



Babs Paine, Leon Farmer & Co.; Courtney Larry, SONIC HARD SELTZER



Erin Karga, First Growth Brands



Chris Ritchie, Moet Hennessy USA pours wine for the wine tasting



Jamey Leseueur, Food Depot; Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black & wife Lydia; Danny Dunbar & Jimmy Piloto, Stratus Group Duo



Chad Ledbetter, Wendy & Jeff McNally, BeatBox Beverages



Jay Fulwider, Josh Cope, Michael Giordano, Uptime Energy



Tim Brown, Angie Mitchell, Rich Flaherty, The Kroger Co.; Rebecca Johnson, Frito-Lay; Ruben Fernandez, Clayton & Melissa Enlow, The Kroger Co.



The Mayfield Ice Cream station was a popular stop on the way to the registration desk



Daniel Buchanan, Empire Distributors, Inc.; Michael Smith, Copper Cane; Eleanor Russo, Benjamin & Beth Nowak, Copper Cane; Marshall Steed, Sovereign Brands



Mike Rivers & Dan Kelly, Georgia Crown Dist. Co.; Keith Aikman, O'Neill Vintners & Distillers; Andrew Perez, Molson Coors; Rich Flaherty, The Kroger Co.



Bimbo Bakeries USA team serves their products at the Legislative breakfast



Tai Lynch, Edgar Moreno, Patrick Hofherr, Jorge Castaneda & Jeanne Fuda-Harness of Ole Mexican Foods; Lindsay Koch, Koch & Associates Food Brokerage

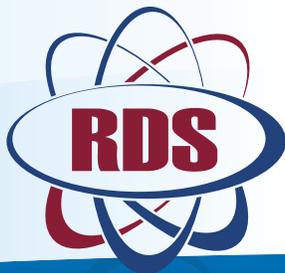


Skip Vaughan, PepsiCo Beverages North America; Tom Coogle, Reynolds Foodliner



Debby & David Jones, United Distributors; Eric Dennis, Sweetwater Brewing, Courtney Goldstein & Ricky Purcell, United Distributors





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