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# **Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory CEO Rob Sarlls Completes “50 Visits In 50 Weeks” Listening Tour With Company Franchisees and Begins Second Tour**

## **COMPANY ESTABLISHES TWO NEW POSITIONS TO ENHANCE FRANCHISE SUCCESS AND BRAND STANDARDS ADHERENCE**

DURANGO, Colo., May 22, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Inc. (NASDAQ: RMCF) (the "Company," "we" or "RMCF"), an international franchiser and manufacturer of gourmet chocolates and other confectionary products, today announced that Chief Executive Officer Rob Sarlls has completed his "50 Visits in 50 Weeks" listening tour early and has commenced Year Two of his tour. Between now and April 30, 2024, he will visit with at least another 50 of the Company's franchisees. He began this year's effort in early May in Tilton, NH, the Company's most distantly located U.S. store from its headquarters in Durango.

The Company also announced it has established two new management positions to enhance franchisee development and adherence to brand standards. Lisa Taylor was named Senior Director, Franchise Success. Fred Sabatini was named Director, Brand Standards.

“My face-to-face discussions with franchise owners and their staffs, and personal observation of on-site conditions of the stores, have not only contributed to a strengthened working relationship with the store operators, but also helped to identify new practices and procedures that can and will benefit the Company and all who promote our products,” Sarlls said.

Sarlls formulated the “50/50” concept in late May 2022, shortly after assuming the role of CEO. He began his year-long commitment with stops in the central and southern U.S. as he traveled en route to Company headquarters in Colorado. He completed the final leg of the listening tour in late April 2023 in Seattle, following stops at six RMCF airport locations across the country.

“We like to think it’s all about the chocolate,” said Sarlls, “but in the end it’s truly about being superior in delivering for our franchisees – essentially Business as a Service (“BAAS”). By improving our execution for and with our franchisees, we create wealth both for them and RMCF stockholders. Working more closely together, we can continue to identify areas for improvement, and provide customized solutions to help them succeed.”

Sarlls added that the “50/50” outreach has sparked a number of mutually important changes

for both the Company and its franchisees over the course of the past year.

“The Franchisee Advisory Council (FAC), formed in January 2023, has fostered timely, consistent and transparent dialogue among franchisees and the Company,” he noted. “As we continue to evolve and execute on our strategic transformation, their collaboration and participation in the changes brought to the business are critical for helping the rest of the RMCF network understand and adopt the changes.”

The objectives of the two newly created management positions are to enhance the franchisee network's profitability and effectiveness, including assisting with pending changes. “These new roles are a direct result of insights gained during the course of our many discussions with franchisees. Adding these functions reflects the evolutionary progress of our business transformation and reaffirms the value franchisees contribute to the Company's success and competitive position.”

#### **SENIOR DIRECTOR, FRANCHISE SUCCESS LISA TAYLOR**

Lisa Taylor serves as a trusted advisor to our franchise business owners, providing insights and strategies to drive store business and performance. In this new role, reporting to CEO Rob Sarlls, she will focus her efforts on developing, sharing and co-executing on proven strategies to help franchisees optimize sales and store level profitability. Taylor began her career with Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory in 1994 as a clerk when her family opened two franchise locations at Denver International Airport. She joined the corporate office in 1999 working directly with franchise owners as a Field Consultant, Regional Manager, and then Director prior to assuming her current role. She is a graduate of Arizona State University with degrees in Journalism and Political Science and a minor in business.

#### **DIRECTOR, BRAND STANDARDS FRED SABATINI**

Fred Sabatini has been appointed to oversee brand standards adherence for the RMCF family of stores. Reporting to CFO Allen Arroyo, he consults with franchise partners to ensure compliance with brand mandates and initiatives, playing a key role in developing and supporting operational tools, administering operational reports, and setting goals and standards of the franchising system. Sabatini previously held senior responsibility for the Company's recently sold frozen yogurt business, with prior experience in supply chain, compliance, and field operations support throughout the RMCF system. He is a graduate of Western Colorado University.

#### **About Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Inc.**

Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Inc., (the "Company"), ranked number one on Newsweek's list of "America's Best Retailers 2022" in the chocolate and candy stores category, is headquartered in Durango, Colorado. The Company is a leading international franchiser of gourmet chocolate and confection, manufacturing an extensive line of premium chocolates and other confectionery products. The Company, its subsidiaries, franchisees and licensees currently operate over 270 Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory stores across the United States, the Republic of Panama, and the Republic of the Philippines. The Company's common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "RMCF."

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Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory CEO Rob Sarlls (far left) in Tilton, NH on May 4, 2023, during first stop of year two of his "50 Visits in 50 Weeks" listening tour with Company franchisees. Between now and April 30, 2024, he will visit with at least another 50 of the Company's franchisees. Joining Sarlls (from right to left) are owners Stacie and Jim Aman, and store manager Lyssa Nielsen.



Lisa Taylor, newly named Senior Director, Franchisee Success  
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory



Fred Sabatini, newly named Director, Brand Standards  
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory



Source: Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Inc.