



**Mike Lester, CFE**

President, The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc.

As President of The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc., Mike Lester is responsible for the overall operations of The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc. franchise system with more than 125 restaurants in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates from the company's Restaurant Support Center in Tampa, Florida. In addition to his current role with The Melting Pot, Lester also helps to oversee franchise management company Front Burner.

Lester joined The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc., in July 2006 as vice president of restaurant operations. He was promoted to senior vice president of operations in June 2009 and to his current position in June 2011.

As President of The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc., Lester presides over The Melting Pot's overall operations including culinary development, training, purchasing and distribution, construction and design, franchising, finance and accounting. He also oversees the company's strategic growth, the franchise Strategic Partnership Committee and franchise business consultants. As The Melting Pot pursues international growth with more than 15 international locations open, signed or in development worldwide, Lester's responsibilities also include traveling to potential international markets and recruitment. The company is currently targeting Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan for further international expansion opportunities.

Previously, Lester developed and operated 15 Outback Steakhouse locations as a joint venture partner from August 1993 to July 2006. He expanded, trained and recruited managers and managing partners, developed and executed marketing strategies, executed community relations projects and events, supervised customer and employee relations, enforced strict health department and restaurant compliance standards, managed financial aspects including business development and implementation, effective cost controls and financial analysis as well as negotiated and managed vendor contracts and internal audits.

Lester studied microbiology at the University of Kentucky. He received his Certified Franchise Executive (CFE) certification from the International Franchise Association (IFA) Institute of Certified Franchise Executives. His professional development skills include employee and workplace legalities, communications, P&L workshops, sexual harassment,

team building, meeting facilitation, concentrated service and food meetings, ServSafe certifications, responsible alcohol vending and more.

Lester and his wife, Susan, have two children, twins Lauren and Graham.