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Wild Wing Cafe Names Tom Lewison Chief Executive Officer



Wild Wing Cafe, a leading restaurant brand best known for food and musical entertainment, announced the appointment of Tom Lewison to the role of chief executive officer.

“After a thorough search, Tom emerged as the natural choice to lead Wild Wing Cafe,” says Edna Morris, the company’s interim CEO and managing director of Axum Capital Partners, the private-equity firm that owns Wild Wing Cafe. “Tom is the high-caliber leader we need to take our brand to the next level. His vast industry knowledge combined with his extensive experiences in company leadership, operations, and restaurant franchise ownership will be key assets as we extend our reach across the country.”

In his new role as CEO and president, Lewison will be responsible for leading operations and the brand’s well-crafted franchise plans, which include adding nearly 70 new restaurants during the next five years. The company projects reaching 100 units by 2018, with a focus on opening in select U.S. markets adjacent to current southeastern U.S. operations.

Prior to joining Wild Wing Cafe, Lewison served as president and COO of Bojangles’ Restaurants Inc. where he played an instrumental role in the strategic growth of the concept. Following his tenure with Bojangles’, Lewison founded Stone Mountain Grill, a Charlotte, North Carolina–based casual-dining concept. Additionally, Lewison also owns and operates 22 Wendy’s restaurants, 15 Qdoba Mexican Grill locations, and has been involved in a number of other restaurant industry ventures.

“The opportunity to work with Wild Wing Cafe is one I couldn’t pass up,” says Lewison, who has nearly 40 years of restaurant leadership and hands-on operating experience, starting his career as an hourly team member with Carl’s Jr. “I’m humbled to take the baton as CEO of Wild Wing Cafe. I look forward to working closely with the Wild Wing team and franchise partners to leverage our collective talent.”

The addition of Tom Lewison comes amid Wild Wing Cafe’s aggressive franchise growth initiative. The brand anticipates opening three new Wild Wing Cafe restaurants in the second half of 2014 in Tennessee and Georgia. The forthcoming restaurants being built will reflect an innovative, new restaurant prototype.

The growth strategy focused on awarding development agreements to seasoned restaurant franchise ownership and operator groups has the full support of Axum Capital Partners and its leadership team, which, among others, includes former NFL star Muhsin Muhammad, and Edna Morris, a 30-year restaurant industry veteran who held top posts at Red Lobster and Quincy’s Family Steakhouse. Axum acquired Wild Wing Cafe in early-2012, quickly assembling the talented leadership group that will now be working closely with Lewison at the brand’s home office in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.