

## Senior Leadership: Founder Bios

### **BILL LATHAM**

PRESIDENT, EAT HERE Brands

In 1977, when he was only 26 years old, Latham purchased his first restaurant, Scrooge's Olde English Pub in Jackson, MS. At the time of purchase, though Scrooge's had been operating for five years, Latham was faced with low sales and exorbitant food and liquor costs. In only 10 months, Latham cut both food and liquor costs without sacrificing quality or service, and in turn, the restaurant's gross doubled. Latham opened the first Scrooge's franchise eight years later in Natchez, MS.

In 1982, Latham partnered with Chef Bernard Sarne to purchase and invigorate Sundancer Restaurant, an already popular establishment. Under their direction, Sundancer grew from popular to critically praised, touted by the epicurean press for its fresh seafood and continental and regional cuisine. And, thus, its reputation spread across the Southeast. In 1984, Sundancer was recognized as "Best in Service," "Best Wine List," and "Best Restaurant Rated" in Jackson – to name a few. After four years of unmatched excellence, Latham sold the restaurant in order to venture into American-Italian fare.

In 1987, he and his partner Al Roberts conceived Amerigo. The moderately priced restaurant quickly found a loyal following in Jackson. By 2000, the partners had added new locations in Nashville, Memphis and Brentwood, Tenn., as well as Atlanta. Also in 2000, Latham and Roberts introduced a Chicago-style steakhouse called Char that quickly took Jackson by storm.

In December of 2006, the partners sold both Amerigo and Char. They currently run Eat Here Brands, a restaurant holding company that owns Interim, a popular Memphis restaurant, the franchise rights for Five Guys Burgers and Fries for the state of Mississippi, Table 100 Restaurant, Bar and Banquet venue in Flowood, MS. and Babalu Tacos & Tapas -- locations in Jackson, MS, Memphis, TN and soon-to-open in Birmingham, AL.

Babalu was created and opened by Latham and Roberts in December of 2010. The first location was established in an old school building in the historic Fondren district of Jackson. This fun, hip, funky taco and tapas restaurant takes the dining experience to the next level. Every item on the menu, down to the masa blue corn tortillas, is made daily and the guacamole is prepared tableside. The bar carries the finest tequila, and all drinks served are prepared from scratch using the best and freshest ingredients – just like the food. Babalu is what Latham does best: having the best, freshest ingredients at the center of a unique and authentic dining experience.

In 2015 Eat Here Brands plans to open restaurants in Nashville and Knoxville, TN and Charlotte, NC.