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[Home](#) » [Fall 2011](#) » [Alumni Profiles](#) » James and the giant juice

Alumni Profile

James and the giant juice

Having held important positions at gigantic corporations such as Gillette, Nestlé-Purina and Coca-Cola, James White has helped craft the recipe for success in large batches. Now he's extracting the essence for [Jamba Juice](#).

White, BS BA '83, is chairman, president and CEO of the popular national smoothie chain based in Emeryville, Calif. The company began as a single Juice Club created by an avid cyclist in San Luis Obispo, Calif., 20-plus years ago. The name became Jamba Juice in 1995. White joined the team in December 2008, and the business has undergone significant changes.

"We've moved from a smoothie shop to a healthy, active-lifestyle brand," White says. "We added oatmeal and grab-and-go food items. We also have an energy drink on the way made with all-natural ingredients. The source of the sugar is stevia, and the caffeine comes from coffee beans."

Jamba Juice has also opened stores in nontraditional locations such as college campuses and airports. The company's business model based on healthy living has even directed White's focus toward the Mizzou Advantage initiative, Food for the Future.

"MU has a clear opportunity to leverage strong agriculture, education, business, and health and human services departments to address obesity, a need for healthier food solutions, and more nutrition and wellness education," White says.

The 50-year-old from St. Louis credits the Trulaske College of Business for teaching him to think through real-life business cases in a capstone marketing class. And he credits the






CEO James White, BS BA '83, leads the national smoothie chain Jamba Juice. Photo courtesy of Jamba Juice

University of Missouri for introducing him to his wife of 24 years, Lisa Oler-White, BJ '86.

“That’s clearly the highlight of my time in Columbia,” White says. — *Marcus Wilkins*

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