

# Biography of Larry T Brakefield

Regional Director of Operations



**Larry T. Brakefield** has dedicated over two decades to elevating restaurant companies by holding critical executive positions and bringing extensive expertise to the hospitality and service industries. Throughout his career, he has been instrumental in driving the financial success of each organization he has been a part of, leveraging his deep knowledge of the

industry. Known for his strategic vision and impact, Brakefield has helped shape the course of notable brands and left a lasting legacy in each role.

## Opening Doors to Success

Over the years, Larry has played a pivotal role in launching more than 30 new restaurants for major national brands, including Hard Rock Cafe, TGI Fridays, Applebee's, and IHOP. His achievements have set him apart as a proactive business leader known for consistently achieving remarkable results. Beyond his operational roles, he is a respected public speaker, coach, and communicator, often sharing insights from his extensive experience. His leadership style has left a substantial mark on both the brands he worked with and the teams he guided.



## Leading at Sunshine Restaurants Partners (IHOP)

Currently, as the Regional Director of Operations at Sunshine Restaurants Partners (dba IHOP) in Florida, Brakefield oversees a staggering \$80 million in annual sales. His oversight ensures that each restaurant under his leadership not only meets but often exceeds industry standards, emphasizing quality and customer satisfaction. His role at IHOP has further solidified his reputation as a transformative figure in the industry, blending strategic oversight with hands-on leadership.

## From College to a Flourishing Career in Restaurants

After graduating from Buffalo State University in 1994 with a Bachelor's in Economics, Larry entered the restaurant industry at Pizzeria Uno Chicago Bar and Grill, where he remained until 2005. As Regional Director of Operations, he managed a \$40 million market, responsible for all

operational aspects of a region comprising numerous locations. Overseeing the development of dozens of managers, he built a strong foundation in team growth, financial oversight, and franchise support. During this period, he also earned his MBA from Niagara University, which enriched his expertise and prepared him for greater responsibilities in the industry.



## Making an Impact at Hard Rock International

In 2005, Larry T Brakefield took on a new challenge at Hard Rock International, where he served as Director of Operations for the Northeastern U.S. and Canada. His responsibility extended across multiple facets, including not only food and beverage services but also merchandising, event management, and marketing. Handling a \$50 million market, he was

responsible for significant budgets, sales accountability, and implementing marketing strategies that reinforced the Hard Rock brand. His strategic efforts laid a solid framework for Hard Rock's sustained growth in these regions.

## Taking Charge at TGI Fridays

Larry's expertise was further demonstrated at TGI Fridays, where, as Senior Director of Operations, he managed day-to-day operations across several profitable markets in the Northeast. Leading a team of multi-unit Directors of Operations, he oversaw 36 restaurant locations, generating \$130 million in revenue. His strategic input was crucial in defining the brand direction and enhancing customer service standards, and his contributions were recognized when he was awarded Senior Director of the Year.

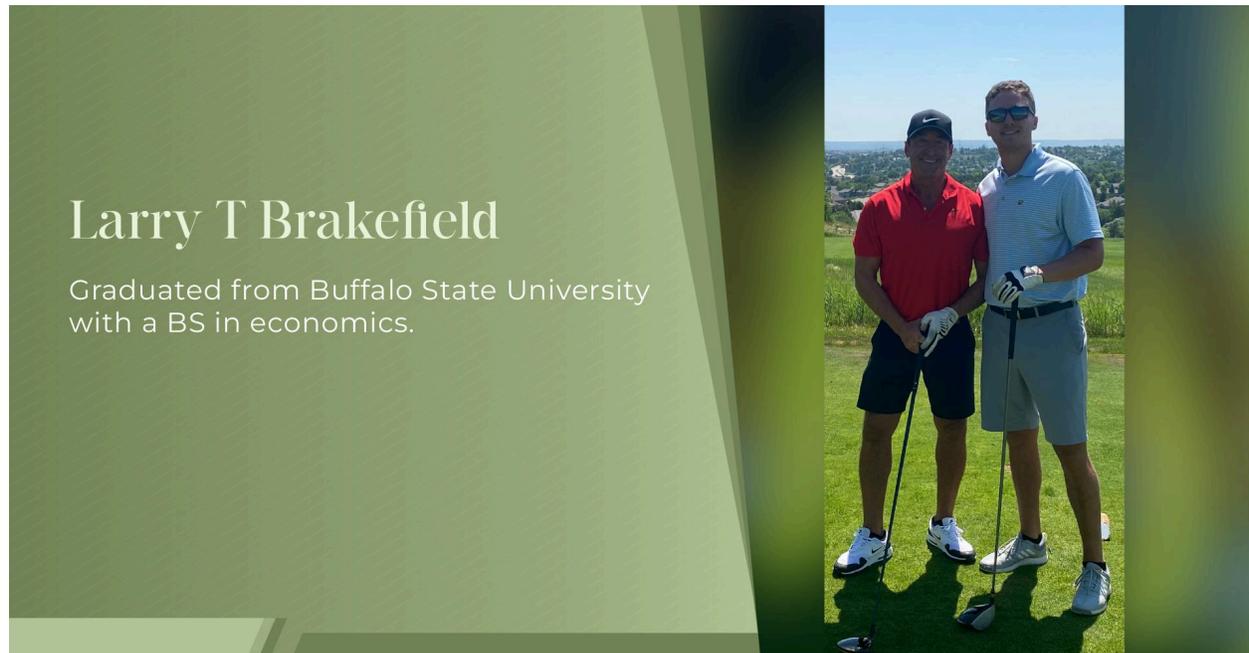


## Leadership at Applebee's

Before joining IHOP, Brakefield served as brand president at Apple Investor Group, overseeing 68 Applebee's restaurants, which generated \$150 million in annual revenue. His role demanded a broad set of skills as he directed everything from marketing strategy to operational execution. Working closely with Applebee's parent company, he ensured franchise standards were met while also spearheading remodeling projects and implementing new operational systems. His tenure at Applebee demonstrated his capacity for both strategic and operational leadership at an executive level.

## Giving Back Through Charity

Larry has been deeply involved in philanthropy, particularly with Sunshine Restaurants Partners' commitment to the Children's Miracle Networks. Supporting 170 children's hospitals, the organization has raised millions, funding critical treatments, equipment, and research. His commitment to charity work underscores his dedication to making a difference beyond the corporate world and giving back to the communities his organizations serve.



## Life in Florida

Now settled in St. Pete Beach, Florida, Larry T. Brakefield enjoys the coastal lifestyle with his wife and spends his leisure time golfing, boating, and enjoying the outdoors. The sport of golf, in particular, has become a cherished activity, one he first tried with his son and has since embraced. The tranquility of golf and the opportunity to constantly improve align with his approach to both life and work.

Brakefield's journey reflects his enduring dedication to the restaurant industry and his impact on those he has led. His legacy of strategic insight and community involvement inspires, and his career exemplifies what it means to lead with vision and purpose.