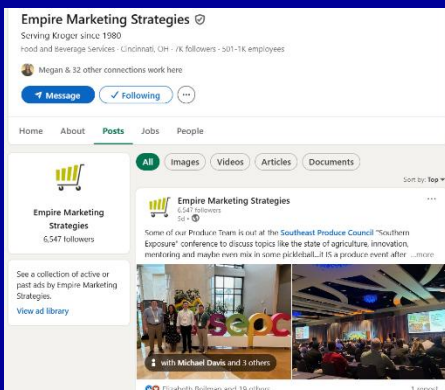




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Kroger to Acquire Giant Eagle for \$1.65B

Giant Eagle store divestitures expected in order to obtain regulatory clearance

Progressive Grocer
Marian Zboraj

July 1, 2026

[The Kroger Co.](#) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire [Giant Eagle, Inc.](#), a family-owned food and pharmacy retailer with approximately \$9 billion in annual sales and 197 supermarkets and 11 stand-alone pharmacies across northern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland and Indiana. The transaction has been unanimously approved by Kroger's board of directors.

The national grocer will pay \$1.65 billion, comprising \$1.25 billion in cash consideration and the assumption of approximately \$400 million in outstanding liabilities.

News of the Giant Eagle acquisition comes after an underwhelming [first quarter](#) for Kroger. The company's leadership said that the deal is a strategic fit: "Giant Eagle is a well-run, high-quality regional grocer with a strong reputation for fresh products, pharmacy, private label and customer loyalty," said Greg Foran, CEO of Kroger. "We evaluated the opportunity carefully, and the strategic fit is clear. Giant Eagle expands our reach into attractive adjacent markets, allowing us to do what we do best: Run outstanding stores, deliver fresh foods and convenient meal solutions at affordable prices, and take care of our customers and associates every single day."

Following its [failed acquisition of Albertsons Cos.](#) in December 2024, Kroger will once again seek regulatory approval for a major grocery deal. Kroger and Giant Eagle expect to make limited Giant Eagle store divestitures to obtain regulatory clearance.

"Today's announcement marks an exciting next chapter for our team members, customers, vendors and community partners," noted Bill Artman, CEO of Giant Eagle. "Together with Kroger, we will be well positioned to advance our strategy and deliver better quality and service, better everyday value and a better shopping experience for our customers, while providing greater growth opportunities for our dedicated team members."

[Read Full Article Here](#)

Kroger Exec Named Top Women in Grocery's 2026 Retail Trailblazer

The now-retired SVP of retail divisions, Valerie Jabbar, gives parting advice for young professionals

Progressive Grocer
Emily Crowe

July 13, 2026

Progressive Grocer: What led you to food retail, and how has your career played out over the past several decades?

Valerie Jabbar: I started in food retail in 1987 as a clerk in Fry's, and at the time, I don't think I fully understood that I was beginning a lifelong career. What drew me in was the people. Grocery is such a personal business. You are part of people's everyday lives – their family dinners, holidays, celebrations, hard seasons and ordinary routines.

Over time, one opportunity led to another. I worked in stores, merchandising, district leadership, division leadership and eventually senior executive roles. I led multiple divisions and worked with thousands of associates. My career is really a story of learning, staying curious, working hard and having people believe in me along the way.

PG: How did managing different customer bases and regional operations shape your leadership style?

VJ: Moving across markets taught me that leadership cannot be one size fits all. Customers in Arizona, California, the Mid-Atlantic, Cincinnati, Texas or the Southeast all have different expectations, traditions and shopping habits. The same is true of associates and communities.

Those experiences taught me to listen first. The best leaders respect local knowledge, ask good questions and empower the people closest to the customer. I became a more adaptable, humble and people-centered leader because every market taught me something different.

PG: What must companies do next to keep the pipeline strong for future female executives?

VJ: Companies have to be intentional. It is not enough to hire talented women; organizations have to sponsor them, give them stretch assignments, advocate for them in rooms they are not in and make sure compensation and opportunity are equitable.

Women need access to operating roles, P&L responsibility, merchandising, stores, supply chain and strategic assignments that prepare them for senior leadership. Representation matters, but accountability matters even more. The next generation of female executives will grow where leaders are measured by how well they develop diverse talent

PG: What boundaries or mindsets helped you maintain work-life balance?

VJ: I learned that balance is not perfect every day. Some seasons required more from my career, and some seasons required more from my family. What mattered most was being present, knowing my priorities and not apologizing for having a full life outside of work.

[Read Full Article Here](#)

Award-Winning Kroger Executive

Valerie Jabbar

Store and Leadership Updates



Store 142



Store 747



Beverly McCormick

011 Atlanta
Store 657 Marietta GA
Re-Grand Opening 7/10

011 Atlanta
Store 670 Dawsonville GA
Re-Grand Opening 6/26

035 Dallas
Store 576 Dallas TX
Re-Grand Opening 7/10

035 Dallas
Store 572 Dallas TX
Re-Grand Opening 6/24

011 Atlanta
Store 712 Savannah GA
Re-Grand Opening 6/26

024 Louisville
Store 747 Elizabethtown KY
Grand Opening 7/9

034 Houston
Store 344 Houston TX
Re-Grand Opening 7/10

620 King Soopers
Store 142 Louisville CO
Grand Opening 6/24

Beverly McCormick Rains Promoted to Division Vice President, Fred Meyer Jewelers

Beverly McCormick Rains has been promoted to Division Vice President of Fred Meyer Jewelers.

In this role, Beverly will leverage her experience to support teams more broadly, strengthen a people-first culture, and collaborate on strategies that elevate brand awareness, drive revenue growth and advance the company vision.

Beverly's career spans over 36 years, starting as a Sales Associate and continuing as a store, district, and division leader. Over the years, she has grown through roles of increasing responsibility, each one shaping her leadership style and reinforcing her passion for the business. Throughout her journey, Beverly is most proud of the opportunity to work with incredible people — building strong teams, investing in training and development, and partnering closely with store teams to drive results and grow the business together. The energy, commitment, and talent across the organization continue to inspire her every day.

Beverly holds an MBA with a concentration in Marketing and has three professional HR certifications. Outside of work, she enjoys visiting the beach, spending time in her garden and reading.

Leadership Updates Continued**Role Changes****Sam Mintos****Sam Mintos Promoted to Sr. Director of Produce-Fruit**

Sam Mintos, previously berry category manager, has been promoted to senior director of Produce-Fruit. He will report to Miles Bocock, vice president, Produce & Floral.

In this role, Sam will lead the strategic direction of the fruit business, with responsibility for driving sales, margin and market share while ensuring strong execution across merchandising, sourcing and supply chain. He will also focus on building and developing high-performing teams, collaborating across functions, and making impactful decisions that enhance the customer experience.

Sam most recently served as Berry category manager, where he led the category end-to-end, owning assortment, financial performance and overall strategy. Through data-driven decision-making and strong cross-functional partnerships, he delivered results that met customer needs and drove both sales and margin, while strengthening supplier relationships and execution across stores and digital channels. He also partnered closely with merchandising, sourcing, and supply chain teams to execute plans and ensure strong performance across the business.

Throughout his 14-year career with Kroger, Sam has held a variety of roles across the business, including Tomato and Hot House Vegetable category manager, Produce field merchandiser and store leader in the Columbus Division across several high-volume stores. His diverse experience has given him a strong operational foundation and deep understanding of the produce business from store to strategy.

Sam holds a bachelor's degree in food business management from The Ohio State University and has completed the International Fresh Produce Executive Leadership Certificate from Cornell University.

Traci Adams Promoted to Director of Home

Traci Adams, most recently department merchandising manager, GM Entertainment, has been promoted to director of Home. She will report to Brooke Chambers, interim general merchandise leader.

In this role, Traci will lead the strategy and financial performance of the Home business, setting assortment direction and driving sales, margin and inventory outcomes. She will partner across merchandising, planning, sourcing and operations to align initiatives to customer-led growth priorities and seasonal moments, while building compelling in-store and digital experiences and delivering against business targets.

Traci most recently served as merchant coordinator, where she oversaw Toys, Sporting Goods, School & Office and Photo Electronics. In this role, she supported category execution and coordinated cross-functional efforts to deliver strong assortment and performance outcomes.

Prior to that, Traci was responsible for Women's Apparel, Accessories and Footwear, and spent several years in both Home and Apparel planning. Throughout her 25-year career with Kroger, Traci has built deep expertise across general merchandise categories, contributing to business growth and team success. She also serves as an executive advisor for the Multicultural ARG on the Portland campus, board member for the Wilsonville Booster Club and Chi Omega Housing Corporation. Traci holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and merchandising from Oregon State University and was selected to attend Kroger's Great People Review Day.

**Traci Adams**

Leadership Updates Continued**Role Changes****Calethia Brunson****Calethia Brunson Promoted to Director of Health and Baby**

Calethia Brunson, previously category manager, Personal Care and Beauty Care, has been promoted to director of Health and Baby. She will report to Becky Diaz, vice president, health and beauty care.

In this role, Calethia will lead strategic direction and growth of the Health and Baby business, shaping the future of the portfolio through innovation and disciplined execution. She will lead cross-functional collaboration across merchandising, marketing, digital, supply chain, finance, store operations, insights, and strategic supplier partners to accelerate growth—strengthening category fundamentals, advancing innovation, and delivering a best-in-class omnichannel customer experience.

Calethia most recently served as category manager, Personal Care and Beauty Care, where she drove category growth through strategic assortment planning, pricing, promotions and vendor partnerships. She has held a variety of roles in her 28 years at the company store and district leadership, and division, regional and enterprise marketing and promotional planning.

Calethia holds a bachelor's degree in marketing.

Ashley Carrico to Lead 84.51° and Kroger eCommerce Finance

Ashley Carrico, previously vice president, 84.51° Enterprise Operations, is taking on an expanded role as vice president, 84.51° and Kroger eCommerce Finance, reporting to David Kennerley, executive vice president and chief financial officer. This transition will bring greater alignment, continuity and financial rigor across two areas that are increasingly intertwined in how we drive value for the enterprise.

In this role, Ashley will lead finance for Kroger's eCommerce business, 84.51° and Alternative Profit portfolio, overseeing the financial strategies and plans that support growth, profitability and long-term value creation. She will partner across the enterprise as a key strategic advisor to senior leaders and her peers, guiding forecasting, long-range planning, capital allocation and investment decisions for several of Kroger's most critical growth businesses.

Ashley has been with 84.51°/dunnhumbyUSA for 14 years, joining in finance and growing into leadership roles across finance, strategy and operations. Over her career, she has driven commercial model innovation and developed go-to-market strategies that opened new paths to profitable growth, introduced portfolio management discipline to maximize ROI on enterprise investment decisions and supported mergers and key partnerships. She led the redefinition of 84.51°'s strategy and the enabling operating model, driving connectivity across strategy, long-range planning and portfolio and program management.

Most recently she served as the VP, 84.51° Enterprise Operations leading a broad span of functions—84.51° Finance and Accounting, Strategy, Program Management, Marketing, Internal Communications and Facilities—to align strategy, financial planning, development programs and go-to-market amplification.

Ashley holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Kentucky and a master's degree in business administration from Xavier University. Ashley was named a 2025 Top Women in Grocery (Senior Level Executive) and is a Certified Public Accountant.

**Ashley Carrico**

Leadership Updates Continued**Role Changes****Stacy Rodarte****Stacy Rodarte Promoted to Director, 84.51° Strategy Office**

Stacy Rodarte, previously senior manager of Commercial Strategy and Execution for 84.51° and Kroger Precision Marketing (KPM), has been promoted to director of the 84.51° Strategy Office reporting to Milen Mahadevan, president of 84.51°, effective July 13. In this role, Stacy will lead the 84.51° Strategy Office, connecting enterprise strategy to execution through strategic planning, portfolio and project management, governance and operating rhythms that drive accountability, alignment and results. She will partner across 84.51° to help accelerate execution of key strategic priorities and ensure business objectives are translated into measurable outcomes.

During her 13-year career with dunnhumby USA and 84.51°, Stacy has demonstrated a consistent track record of strategic leadership, operational excellence and enterprise partnership. She began her career as an associate director of Client Insights before advancing into leadership roles across Insights and Activation, Customer Communications and Media and Personalization and Loyalty Strategy.

Most recently, Stacy led Commercial Strategy and Execution for KPM, where she helped establish the operating model, governance structure and portfolio management processes supporting the unified Commercial and Technology organization. She has also played a key leadership role in enterprise transformation efforts, serving as a Transformation Management Office (TMO) workstream leader across 84.51°, Alternative Profit and Personalization and Loyalty initiatives.

Stacy holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Ohio University.

Kirk Storer Promoted to Director, 84.51° Software Engineering

Kirk Storer, previously senior manager, 84.51° Software Engineering, has been promoted to director, 84.51° Software Engineering, reporting to Kristin Foster, vice president, Data Science/AI and Technology. In his new role, Kirk will provide strategic leadership for 84.51° Kroger Model Engineering teams, driving the vision, execution and evolution of engineering capabilities to support technology priorities and deliver business outcomes. He will also assume ownership of the relationship with key third party partners that support 84.51° Kroger Model teams.

In his more than ten years with 84.51°, Kirk has held a variety of engineering leadership roles, consistently delivering results and helping teams navigate complex challenges. Most recently, Kirk has served as an engineering leader supporting the Kroger Intelligence and Customer Knowledge and Supply Chain, Retail Ops and Forecasting teams under Allison Unkraut, 84.51° vice president, Merchandising Analytics. Kirk has been instrumental in developing talent, driving technical excellence and supporting key business initiatives. This includes scaling science-based solutions to the enterprise and evolving our third-party relationships to accelerate the value generated for the business.

Kirk holds a master's degree in business administration with a concentration in business intelligence from Xavier University and a bachelor's of science degree in management information systems from Miami University.

**Kirk Storer**

Leadership Updates Continued**Role Changes****Emilee De Martino****Emilee De Martino named Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer**

Kroger announced Emilee De Martino has been named Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer, starting July 6. Emilee will succeed Tim Massa, who recently announced his retirement on September 18. Emilee plans to spend her first several months meeting associates in our stores, distribution centers, manufacturing facilities and offices. Tim and Emilee will work closely to ensure a smooth transition.

Emilee joins Kroger from McDonald's Corporation, where she most recently served as Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer for International Operated Markets. In that role, Emilee led people strategy across 19 countries and a workforce of more than 750,000 employees, partnering with business leaders to drive growth, transformation and an elevated employee experience.

During her eight years at McDonald's, Emilee held various senior leadership roles and made significant contributions to the company, including:

- Shaping and embedding People Brand Standards across the global system
- Working closely with business leaders to drive enterprise transformation to fuel sustainable growth
- Leading the redefinition of McDonald's Values and aligning them with the company's strategy
- Advancing the company's Inclusion strategy and serving as U.S. Co-Vice Chair of the Global Women's Leadership Network
- Fostering a high-performing, people-first culture, contributing to record levels of restaurant crew retention across the International Operated Markets

"Emilee is the right leader to guide our people work into our next chapter," said Greg Foran, CEO of Kroger. "She brings deep experience leading people strategy at scale, a strong track record of driving transformation and a genuine passion for developing talent. We are confident in Emilee's ability to build on our strong foundation to continue advancing Kroger's position as an employer of choice."

Prior to McDonald's, Emilee served as Vice President of Change and Culture at CNA Financial Corporation, where she led a portfolio of organizational transformation initiatives, including a CEO transition, organizational redesign, multiple system transformations and modernization efforts throughout the company. During her tenure, Emilee played a critical role in harnessing culture, talent and leadership development to drive performance. Earlier in her career, she worked in management consulting for Accenture and Mercer, advising global organizations on human capital strategy, change management and large-scale transformation.

Emilee is known for her deep passion for developing talent and investing in others. A Certified Professional Co-Active Coach, she built her career around helping leaders grow, teams perform and cultures thrive.

"Few companies touch as many lives as Kroger, through the associates who work here and the customers and communities they serve every day," said Emilee. "I am honored to join this well-respected company and look forward to working alongside Kroger's associates to shape what comes next."

Emilee holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration & Management from Fort Hays State University and a Master of Business Administration from Kansas State University. She also completed Columbia University's *Creating & Executing Breakthrough Strategies* executive program.

Kroger launches in-store wine shops to tap into consumer demand for premium options

The grocer has identified nearly 150 locations that it believes would benefit from the concept, which will debut at 14 stores.

Grocery Dive
Catherine Douglas Moran

July 14, 2026

With the new in-store experience, Kroger is looking to highlight the quality, variety and affordability of its wines, tapping into the alcohol category to better appeal to shoppers.

The Wine Shop will launch in 14 Kroger stores in its Cincinnati/Dayton Division, and the grocery company said it will determine if it wants to expand the concept based on shoppers' responses. The first Wine Shop debuted Thursday at a Kroger store in Newport, Kentucky, according to a Cincinnati Enquirer report.

Last fall, Kroger began identifying stores where customers were seeking out a more robust and premium wine selection, ultimately determining that nearly 150 locations across its banners could benefit from new offerings, the grocer said. For the Wine Shop, Kroger curated a selection of more than 130 wines, with many imported from regions like Chablis and Sancerre in France as well as Sicily and Northern Italy. Kroger also said it is directly sourcing wines from Burgundy and Bordeaux to tap into heightened consumer interest in French wines.

"Customers will notice a more curated shopping experience featuring expanded premium and imported selections, improved navigation by varietal and region, and wine-pairing inspiration throughout the department," the grocer said in a statement.

Greg Foran, Kroger's new CEO, has highlighted in recent months the competitive advantages that the grocer can [tap into with its store fleet](#). He has also noted that the company has work to do to improve its store operations as well as enhance the in-store experience at some of its locations.

Kroger Introduces New In-Store Wine Experience



Kroger Partners with TikTok



Kroger links with TikTok on targeted ads

The grocer's retail media unit is offering a self-service tool that lets advertisers deliver messages to Kroger customers on the social media platform.

Grocery Dive
Sam Silverstein

June 24, 2026

Kroger's arrangement with TikTok reflects the rapidly growing role that social media content produced by influencers is playing in driving product discovery, according to Kroger Precision Marketing, which uses data about Kroger loyalty members' in-store and online purchases to connect marketers with shoppers.

The supermarket chain said it found that households it serves that engage with social media content spend twice as much as the average Kroger customer. In addition, more than two-thirds of Kroger shoppers surveyed by the grocer's data science and analytics arm said social media led them to buy at least one grocery, household or personal care product over the past six months.

Identifying Kroger shoppers on TikTok will let advertisers influence them from the time they discover a product until they decide whether to buy it, Kroger said. The retailer added that the new capabilities it is offering with TikTok will help brands keep shoppers from forgetting about products they come across on social media.

"Brands want to use retail audiences to amplify messages that are timely and relevant, but they also need the flexibility of self-service management in the platforms they already use," Christine Foster, group vice president of Kroger Precision Marketing, said in a statement. "By enabling our audiences in the TikTok advertising platform, we are reducing the complexity and friction in media buying."

Last week, Kroger Precision Marketing rolled out several self-service tools to better help advertisers measure the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. The new features permit advertisers to set up ad programs on a single webpage and adjust daily spending based on site traffic over a two-week period.

Kroger announced its deal with TikTok just ahead of Walmart's disclosure on Tuesday that it has [agreed to acquire](#) self-service connected TV ad platform [Vibe.co](#). Walmart said the deal, which is expected to close in 2027, reflects its goal of making it easier for brands to employ retail media data to reach consumers.