

# LEADING WITH heart & hustle

HOW TOMEKA WILLIAMS '07  
ROSE TO LEAD GLOBAL BRANDS  
WHILE STAYING GROUNDED IN  
PURPOSE AND COMMUNITY.

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TOMEKA WILLIAMS '07  
Vice President of Global  
Brand Design, P&G



The lessons Tomeka Williams '07 learned at the Bryan School of Business and Economics have shaped her as a senior leader at one of the most influential companies in the world. Today, as vice president of global brand design for Procter & Gamble (P&G), she focuses on creating value for her family, her team members, and the community around her.

"I get energy from making things better for people, for brands, and for communities," Williams says. "I've always been drawn to impact and service, and I love making a difference."

And that's just what she's done.

After receiving her business administration degree from the Bryan School, Williams went to work in beauty and product sales for P&G. Over the last 18 years, she has grown in her career to become vice president for North America hair care sales, leading 125 people and overseeing sales strategy and implementation for a multi-billion-dollar product line including Pantene, Head & Shoulders, and Mielle. This year, Williams transitioned into a new role, leading new brand creation for P&G's beauty portfolio.

Having relocated five times with P&G, she now lives in Cincinnati with her husband and three children while staying connected with her alma mater. She was recently appointed to the Bryan School's Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality and Tourism (MEHT) Advisory Board, bringing her journey full circle.

"It's powerful to return to the place that shaped me," she says. "UNC Greensboro didn't just teach me business – it taught me how to lead with heart and hustle. That's what I carry into every boardroom I walk into."

## A Foundation for Growth

From the time Williams enrolled at UNCG, she immersed herself in the school's offerings, balancing 18 credit hours with multiple leadership roles, including serving as a resident assistant, a member of the Student Government Association, and a leader in the Black Business Students Association. She also worked in the Bryan School's Department of Economics and participated in Alternative Spring Break, volunteering with organizations in Washington, D.C., that supported people experiencing homelessness and children who were underserved.

"It wasn't a vacation, but it was transformational," she says. "That experience grounded me in empathy and reminded me why leadership isn't just about success – it's about service."

She recalls benefiting from the diversity of the campus.

"I got an opportunity to meet people from other cultures and international students while also discovering cohorts on the campus where I felt safe and seen," she says. "I felt very much at home at UNCG."

Her work in the classroom confirmed her interest in business strategy and leading teams. During a marketing course, Williams and her classmates gained valuable experience through an internship at a local Chevrolet dealership. Her accounting professor illustrated points through real-life examples. "She taught us how to apply concepts in

both the corporate setting and in our own lives as college students," Williams says. "Having limited financial literacy at the time, that really resonated with me. Now I use these skills in business every day and teach them to my own kids."

These lessons – along with multiple summer internships that Williams secured through the national nonprofit INROADS – gave her early insight into corporate America and the confidence to thrive in it.

## Purpose in Action

Along the way, Williams has kept service at the forefront.

Back in her home community of Northampton County, she provides scholarships to select high school seniors every year. She calls them TAP scholarships, with TAP standing for "Turn and Pull."

While at P&G, she worked with the company's scientists to support STEM programming for thousands of minority girls. She also co-founded The Community Cohesion Project – a partnership between her company, Walmart, the Northwest Arkansas Council, and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art – to improve understanding of cultural differences while encouraging and celebrating diversity.

Beyond her corporate work, Williams created Justbe City, a children's book series that celebrates authenticity and inclusion. Her own children served as her co-designers and editors for the series, which has been shared in homes, classrooms, and military bases globally.

"Being able to do what I love in my career while inspiring children with stories that reflect them is a dream come true," she says.

Looking back, Williams has some advice for those just starting out or working to further their career. Learn how to learn. Prioritize wellness. And remember: "Other people's fears aren't yours to carry. Define your own vision and find the way to make it real." ■

## WHERE EXCELLENCE MEETS IMPACT

Throughout her career, Tomeka Williams has received honors and accolades, including:

- The 2023 Women's Wear Daily Category Builder of the Year team award
- The 2020 Drug Store News Rising Star Award, which honors top female leaders in the industry
- Speaking engagements at CES, NextUp, Essence Festival, Culture Con, Sistas in Sales, and CurlFest

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