



KPMG Young Alumni on the Rise

**Ashley McFarland, Director of Corporate Development,
Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated**



Ashley McFarland's career at KPMG began as a senior associate in 2009 when she joined the firm to help launch the Charlotte Valuation practice. During her four-year tenure, she became very close with colleagues, only five at the onset, as they worked to build the market's business. Ashley recalls how rewarding it was to watch the group grow. "Reflecting on the high-pressure engagements and the volume of work accomplished, I'm not sure how we got through it, but we did and are better for it," she shares. The team expanded three-fold as they realized tremendous growth and Ashley was promoted to manager. "This was an incredible learning experience for me. It taught me how to solve problems quickly while still meeting the high standard that KPMG set," Ashley noted. Ashley also shared how she most valued the relationships she developed at KPMG during the expansion of the Charlotte Valuation practice. "I learned a lot about myself, being a professional, and my ability to problem solve in any situation," Ashley explained. Ashley credits her success today to the many challenges she faced at KPMG preparing her to "be up for anything in the corporate workforce."

As a young alumna on the rise, Ashley now serves as the director of corporate development at Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated and credits many of the skills she uses every day to her time at KPMG. She encourages young people to capitalize on their professional environments by staying open to learning experiences, building relationships, and establishing a foundation of skills to truly launch their careers. "I put my time in, learned a tremendous amount,

and polished my skills through hard work. It is because of my experience in the workplace that people trust my leadership," she added.

Navigating change

In her current role, Ashley is helping the company navigate through a very exciting time. A few years ago, The Coca-Cola Company (headquartered in Atlanta) began refranchising their distribution and production rights of Coca-Cola cold-fill product by selling their approximately 79 percent share to local bottlers. As the largest independent bottler in the United States, Ashley's company received the largest share. As Coca-Cola Bottling embarks on this journey of change, Ashley supports her executive leadership team by helping to negotiate the financial aspects of these deals, including valuation and financial modeling. "I particularly use the valuation skills that were polished at KPMG as we negotiate and close each deal. The way I think about problems and attack issues from different angles comes from my experience at the firm," Ashley comments.

Embracing the KPMG Legacy

Ashley reflects on the high-pressure engagements she managed at KPMG as a catalyst for elevating her expertise and guiding her to become a stronger professional and team player. "The last four years I have spent at Coca-Cola have been fantastic personally and professionally, and I feel like my hard work at KPMG was a springboard for my success today."

Ashley stays connected to KPMG and her former colleagues even today and remains proud of her KPMG legacy. "I appreciate the quality of work that KPMG stands for and I certainly value and trust the firm's work as an emerging leader in the marketplace and an alumna."



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