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## **Footwear Innovation Foundation Appoints SHOE SHOW's Chase Tucker to Board of Directors**

*Retail merchandising executive brings consumer, product, and retail operations expertise to industry-led innovation organization*

**Reston, VA (June 24, 2026)** — The Footwear Innovation Foundation (FIF), the footwear industry's innovation engine & think tank, today announced the appointment of **Chase Tucker, Senior Vice President of Merchandising at SHOE SHOW, INC.** to its Board of Directors.

Established in 2023 by footwear industry leaders, the Footwear Innovation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to advancing inventive solutions to industry-wide challenges. The Foundation serves as a platform for innovators, entrepreneurs, academics, and industry leaders to explore transformative ideas, accelerate breakthrough technologies, and build the future of footwear. It is currently conducting its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Footwear Launchpad program to find new talent and build dynamic ideas to reality in support of footwear companies and consumers.

Tucker joins a distinguished board representing expertise across retail, sustainability, manufacturing, sourcing, workforce development, government affairs, and footwear operations. His deep experience in merchandising, product strategy, retail operations, and consumer engagement will strengthen the Foundation's ability to identify and support innovations that improve how footwear companies serve consumers and operate in an increasingly dynamic marketplace.

"Chase brings an invaluable perspective to the Foundation," said **Andy Gilbert, Chairman of the Footwear Innovation Foundation and former President of Genesco Brands Group.**

"As we evaluate emerging technologies, new business models, and breakthrough ideas, it is critical that we consider how innovation impacts both retail operations and the consumer experience. Chase's leadership and understanding of product and merchandising strategy will help ensure the innovations we support deliver meaningful value throughout the footwear ecosystem."

The Footwear Innovation Foundation was created in response to a growing challenge facing the industry: footwear companies are increasingly focused on addressing immediate business pressures, leaving limited time and resources to explore transformative ideas and long-term opportunities. FIF fills that gap by bringing together industry leaders to support research,

entrepreneurship, workforce development, and innovation programs designed to shape the next generation of footwear.

“The footwear industry has always evolved through innovation, whether in product design, materials, sourcing, retail, or consumer engagement,” said **Chase Tucker, Senior Vice President of Merchandising at SHOE SHOW, INC.** “The Footwear Innovation Foundation is creating a unique platform where the industry can come together to invest in new ideas and help innovators succeed. I’m honored to join the Board and contribute my experience in retail, product strategy, and consumer insights as we work to build the future of footwear.”

FIF’s industry-led model ensures that innovation priorities are guided by those who understand the challenges and opportunities facing footwear companies every day. Through initiatives focused on entrepreneurship, scientific research, workforce development, sustainability, artificial intelligence, manufacturing, and emerging technologies, the Foundation is helping prepare the industry for the future.

“One of the things that makes FIF unique is that it is run by the industry, for the industry,” said **Andy Polk, Executive Director of the Footwear Innovation Foundation and Senior Vice President of FDRA.** “Our board brings together leaders with diverse expertise across every corner of the footwear business. Chase’s experience at the intersection of product, retail operations, and consumer behavior adds an important voice to our discussions and strengthens our ability to identify innovations that will drive industry growth.”

The Footwear Innovation Foundation Board of Directors includes:

- Andy Gilbert, Chairman, Former President, Genesco Brands Group
- Andy Polk, Executive Director, Footwear Innovation Foundation; Senior Vice President, FDRA
- Brooke Beshai, Vice President, Sustainability and Compliance, Deckers Brands
- Andee Burton, Director, Product and Sourcing Sustainability, Caleres
- D’Wayne Edwards, President, PLC Detroit
- Sara Irvani, Board Director, Oka Brands
- Matt Priest, President & CEO, FDRA
- Chase Tucker, Senior Vice President of Merchandising, SHOE SHOW, INC.
- Jung Yoon, SVP Global Production & Sourcing – Accessories, Apparel, Footwear, Michael Kors

### **About the Footwear Innovation Foundation**

The Footwear Innovation Foundation (FIF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific research organization established by footwear industry leaders in 2023. FIF serves as the industry’s hub for ideation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, championing inventive solutions to industry-wide challenges. Through research, entrepreneurship, workforce development, and innovation programs, FIF empowers innovators, entrepreneurs, and academics with the guidance and resources needed to advance the future of footwear.

For more information, visit [footwearinnovationfoundation.org](https://footwearinnovationfoundation.org)