

# Instructors

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**Charles Quinto—Course Lead**  
*Blommer Chocolate Company*  
cquinto@blommer.com

Charles Quinto is the director of R&D at Blommer Chocolate and has been with the company for about seven years. He is a passionate food scientist with more than 11 years of product development and commercialization experience across multiple brands focused on consumer packaged goods, food service and ingredient supply. Charles earned his bachelor's degree in molecular biology at the University of California, San Diego and his master's degree in food science at Chapman University. Combining his technical background with his desire to educate the community, Charles taught Food Chemistry and Food Safety and Current Issues at Cal Poly Pomona in addition to Introduction to Food Science at Chapman University. Outside of work Charles enjoys experimenting in the kitchen, trying new foods, traveling and outdoor activities!



**Brian Baker**  
*The Hershey Company*  
bbaker@hersheys.com

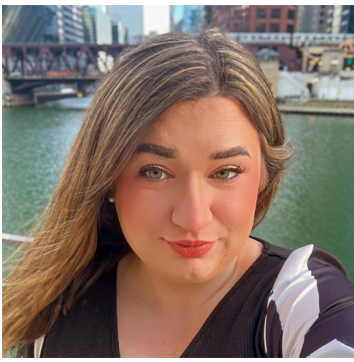
Brian Baker is a fellow at The Hershey Company where he is responsible for executing higher complex projects and mentoring junior scientists. Brian received a B.S. in agricultural engineering and an M.S. in food science from The Pennsylvania State University, where his research focused on chocolate rheology using vane rheometry. During his 39 years at Hershey, Brian has developed several new chocolates for new products including retired Hershey's Bliss and Hershey's Gold products.

Brian enjoys spending time with family and outdoor activities, especially clamming and crabbing for blue claws in Ocean City, NJ. He is a big fan of PA sports teams – Penn State, Phillies and Eagles.



**Madeline Bills**  
*ofi*  
madeline.bills@ofi.com

Madeline is an innovation manager at ofi (Olam Food Ingredients) and has been with the company for more than seven years. She focuses on the cocoa ingredients division and understanding the range of products and how they perform in applications. She works at ofi's Customer Solution Center (CSC) in Chicago and manages customer projects. At the CSC, Madeline focuses on leveraging the ofi ingredient platforms (cocoa, coffee, nuts, spices and dairy) and creating custom solutions for customers. Prior to ofi, she received her undergraduate degree in food science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



**Margaret Crance**  
*Blommer Chocolate Company*  
mcrance@blommer.com

Margaret is the research and development manager for Blommer Chocolate Company where she leads cross-functional innovation and drives strategic product development across key customer accounts. Her journey in the confectionery industry began with hands-on experience as an R&D intern and she's grown through the ranks at Blommer thanks to her collaborative spirit, leadership and commitment to excellence. Currently she is pursuing her Master of Science in food science at Kansas State University where she is a proud

member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in food science and management from Delaware Valley University, where she was recognized for both academic achievement and leadership. Outside of work, Margie enjoys trying new restaurants with her "Taste Buds" group, hiking at waterfalls, biking and spending time with her family and friends.



**Zachary Freed**  
*Blommer Chocolate Company*  
zfreed@blommer.com

My name is Zachary Freed, and I am a product development manager for Blommer Chocolate. Prior to this role, I was a product development and innovation manager at ofi, senior application specialist for confections with AAK USA, and innovations project manager at Barry Callebaut, totaling just over 15 years in the confections industry. Before starting my professional career, I received my bachelor's degree in food science and management from Delaware Valley College.



**Rebecca Kuehn**  
*Guittard Chocolate Company*  
rkuehn@Guittard.com

Rebecca Kuehn is the R&D director at Guittard Chocolate Company where she is responsible for realizing innovations and managing technical matters in chocolate products and processing. Over the years, she has led and contributed to new product launches, product and process improvements and production line startups, both domestically and internationally.

As an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Rebecca was introduced to the fascinating world of chocolate. She continued her education, earning her M.S. in food science and technology from University of California, Davis, where her research contributed to the fundamentals of chocolate bloom and oil migration. Rebecca's professional roles at Nestle USA, Olam Cocoa and Guittard have helped build her industry experience and to be named to the PMCA Board of Directors, PMCA West Region Committee Chair and honored as part of the National Confectioners Association (NCA) Future Leaders Program. Rebecca has had various speaking and educational engagements at the American Association of Candy Technologists, Retail Confectioners International, PMCA Annual Production Conference, University of California, Davis, Utah State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Candy School. Rebecca lives in the San Francisco Bay Area where she is an avid trail runner, taking in the scenic views of the Pacific and surrounding mountains.

# Host Facility Manager

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**Monica Caparosa**  
*Blommer Chocolate Company*  
mcaparosa@blommer.com

Monica Caparosa graduated from The Pennsylvania State University with a B.S. in food science and a minor in international agriculture from the College of Agriculture Sciences. She continued her studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she earned her M.S. in food science under Rich Hartel for her research studying lecithin interactions in chocolate. Monica joined Blommer in 2024 and manages the Blommer R&D Center, located in Chicago, IL.

During her time at UW-Madison, Monica facilitated Candy School operations for two years and supported many other short courses. She has also had the opportunity to intern at several confectionery companies supporting product development, quality and operations teams. Prior to joining Blommer in 2024, Monica worked for Ferrero on their iconic American chocolate brands and for Ferrara Candy Company on the cookies, cones and crust products.

Monica attended three PMCA conferences with the partnership of the Student Outreach Program and continues to serve on the Student Outreach Committee and as a student mentor when she attends PMCA.