

Meet the Instructors



Mark Heim, Course Lead

Retired, R Mark Heim Confectionery Consulting

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Mark has spent the last 48 years with a passion to study and understand confectionery systems. He is a retired industry consultant after 10 years at R. Mark Heim Confectionery Consulting.

Before that, he retired from Hershey as a Hershey Fellow in R&D after 38 years of product development, studying the art and technology of traditional and contemporary sugar and chocolate confections. He has been formally trained as a chemist and attended ZDS in Solingen, Germany.

Mark is active on the PMCA Education and Learning Committee and has been an instructor for courses such as Caramel, Fudge and Toffee and Premium Chocolate Centers. He has also taught courses to confectionery and pharmaceutical companies on high boilings, fondants and cremes, hard/soft/chocolate panning, gums and jellies, aerated confections and bean-to-bar chocolate.



Brian Donaghy

Tomric Systems, Inc.

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Brian Donaghy is currently the corporate chocolatier and innovation center manager for Tomric Systems, Inc. of Buffalo, NY. At Tomric he is responsible for training and customer support of all Tomric products but spends most of his time coaching and training on Selmi chocolate handling equipment in Buffalo and throughout North America. His passport includes numerous stamps from cacao origin countries and has been in more chocolate plants than he remembers.

Prior to his time with Tomric, Brian worked for a Swiss chocolate import company, The Ritz-Carlton and was a culinary instructor. When not working with, eating or cleaning up chocolate, you will find him on adventures with his family or on a squash court.



Randy Hofberger

R&D Candy Consultants

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Randy has more than 35 years of experience in the confectionery industry, with many years at Nestlé Confections starting in the QA department and eventually into technical applications. He started R&D Candy Consulting in 2008 to help people with their confectionery challenges.

Randy is involved with RCI, AACT and PMCA and has assisted with lectures and technical courses. He is the recipient of the Henry Bornhofft and Stroud Jordan awards and has contributed technical articles to Candy Industry, Manufacturing Confectioner Magazine, AIB and co-authored chapters to several books. Recently, he has assisted with the book *Confectionery Science and Technology*.

Randy's personal interests include candy making, hiking, cooking, traveling, biking and kayaking.



Joe Sofia
Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate
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Joe Sofia graduated from Cornell University with a degree in chemical engineering and spent 10 years working for Nestlé USA in engineering, R&D and manufacturing. In 1995, Joe moved to the Peter's Chocolate division of Nestle as a sales manager, focusing on confectionery customers. The Peter's brand was acquired by Cargill in 2002, where Joe has been working ever since. He is currently senior technical advisor for Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate and works primarily with Cargill's confectionery customers who buy their Peter's, Wilbur and Merckens brands. Joe is working on his thirty-eighth year in the confectionery industry. He's been an instructor for Cargill's Chocolatier's Workshops, has hosted seminars and demonstrations at the Philadelphia Candy Show and Sweets & Snacks Expo and serves on instruction teams for the RCI Chocolate Boot Camp and PMCA chocolate and compound courses. Among other hobbies, "Cocoa Joe" enjoys making chocolates in his spare time in his home candy kitchen.

Course Assistant



Hanna Riesner
Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

Hannah graduated from the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities with a degree in food science in 2016. During college and directly after graduating, Hannah explored the world of food micro before moving into a R&D role with Gehl Foods working on nutritional and shelf-stable beverages. From there, Hannah joined Cargill in 2017 as a food technologist working in their Cocoa & Chocolate division. After a few years in the lab she transitioned into her current role of product development lab manager where she oversees all cocoa and chocolate related R&D lab projects in North America for Cargill.

Hannah is a member of the IFT, AACT, RCI and PMCA communities where she aims to strengthen her chocolate industry knowledge. In her free time you can find her exploring new breweries and restaurants around Milwaukee and cheering for her favorite sports teams!