

# Robert Blalock

**Chief Information Officer (CIO), Benebay Inc.**

**Entrepreneur – Restaurateur**

Robert Blalock is a solution-focused Senior Executive, Entrepreneur, and Advisor. He received his Bachelors of Science degree from Tennessee State University in Computer Science and during his tenure he pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Alpha Theta Chapter. He went on to achieve his Master's Degree from Illinois State University in Software Engineering and currently resides in Tampa, Fl. However, he's originally from Joliet, IL a Chicago area suburb and is a sports advocate for his hometown teams.

Robert brings to the TSU Foundation his experience and expertise in technology development, operations management, process improvement, vendor relations, and digital transformation. He is a speaker in the Information Technology circuit and restaurant industry for different conferences and forums.

In his restaurant entrepreneurial role, Robert is a franchise owner of two Zaxby's restaurants in the Tampa Area and a cofounder of a new restaurant concept called Smashin Crab located in Hendersonville, TN and San Antonio, TX. Along with other TSU graduates, Robert developed the Smashin Crab franchise concept under the parent company Pot Belly Stove LLC where he serves as the Chief Operating Officer. He oversees strategic priorities by directing activities supporting the company's growth through restaurant development including sales of additional franchises.

In his professional role, Robert has 25 years of success across information technology in health insurance and telecom industries. He holds a key leadership position as Chief Information Officer (CIO) at Benebay Inc. His responsibilities include overseeing expansions into new markets as well as managing internal technological advancements while sustaining a culturally engaging environment. Formerly, Robert served as the Vice President of Product Management at HealthPlan Services which is the nation's largest independent provider of sales, benefits administration, healthcare reform, and technology solutions to the insurance and managed care industries.

Robert is married to his lovely wife Michelle Ragland Blalock and they have two wonderful children- Robert Blalock III (Robbie) and daughter Blaylin Blalock (BB). Robert is an avid contributor to the Tampa Bay community. He thoroughly enjoys mentoring the young minds of today on the importance of career success along with the importance of the pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavors. He and his wife Michelle hold the honor of 2015 Power Couple of the year.