



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Athlete's Foot Announces Matt LaFone as  
New President and General Manager of Americas**

*Veteran retail executive to oversee the global athletic streetwear brand's operations  
across North, South and Central America*

**ATLANTA – (September 8, 2021) - The Athlete's Foot (TAF)** has officially announced **Matt LaFone** as the new president and general manager of Americas. The veteran retail executive will start immediately, managing operations in North, South and Central America, and will report directly to the company's new owner and global executive chairman, **Param Singh**.

As president and general manager, LaFone will be responsible for providing leadership, strategic and operational guidance to the Americas team with the goals of driving profitable growth, building brand equity, and enhancing customer satisfaction.

This in support of the company's new strategic vision set by Singh that builds on the success the brand has experienced in recent years. Globally, TAF retail sales are on target to hit \$500M in 2021 and have seen robust growth above 40% in the first six months of 2021 vs 2020 and 14% above sales in 2019.

**An industry veteran with proven track record of success**

LaFone comes to The Athlete's Foot with strong experience across branding, retail, merchandising, marketing and franchising. Prior to The Athlete's Foot, LaFone was chief operating officer for Payless ShoeSource where he oversaw design, development, supply chain, marketing and franchising for its 750 international stores.

Prior to Payless, LaFone held the role of vice president of sport style with Puma where he was responsible for driving wholesale revenue leading sales, planning, marketing and merchandising strategies.

"Matt is well known in the industry as a fantastic leader, execution focused operator and transparent communicator. He's also perfectly aligned with the values of our organization and firmly committed to the future success of the company." **said Singh**, whose company, Arklyz Group, acquired The Athlete's Foot in July after a long-term partnership with TAF's previous

parent company, Intersport.

**Singh adds:** “While The Athlete’s Foot is without a doubt a global company, the U.S. and the Americas are critical to our foundation and our future, and I am confident that with Matt’s leadership we can continue to grow this well-respected legacy brand into a global powerhouse.”

Lafone joins The Athlete’s Foot as it prepares to mark the company’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which will be celebrated globally beginning this September, highlighted by commemorative product launches, events and a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary documentary.

TAF USA, now known as TAF Americas, also recently launched the StAART program, which stands for the Strategic African American Retail Track, an initiative aimed to grow diversity and representation in the sneaker industry through franchising.

To learn more about The Athlete’s Foot, visit [www.theathletesfoot.com](http://www.theathletesfoot.com).

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**About The Athlete’s Foot (TAF) - [www.theathletesfoot.com](http://www.theathletesfoot.com)**

The Athlete’s Foot, sneaker & streetwear chain, has 564 stores and e-commerce shops in 32 countries which generated sales of USD 400 million in 2020.

**About Arklyz – Arklyz Group AG – [www.arklyz.com](http://www.arklyz.com)**

Arklyz is a fast-growing powerhouse in the arena of sports, athleisure and workwear. Arklyz covers a vertically connected set of activities with a special focus on brand management, distribution, retail & ecommerce and manufacturing.

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