

**Nicolette R. Leiby**(913)708-4768 | [Nrlm7d@mail.missouri.edu](mailto:Nrlm7d@mail.missouri.edu) | [nrleiby25@gmail.com](mailto:nrleiby25@gmail.com)[Linkedin.com/in/nicoletteleiby](https://www.linkedin.com/in/nicoletteleiby)**EDUCATION**

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University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri

*M.S., Textile and Apparel Management*

May 2021

Thesis title: *Cross-functional Skills of the Fashion Industry Professional: T-shaped Fashion Professional Framework*

Committee: Jung Ha-Brookshire (Chair), Li Zhao, Anthony Castro

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois

*B.S., Marketing of Textile and Apparel*

May 1991

**ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE**

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**University of Missouri*****Instructor***

Case Study in the Fashion Industry

June 2020-August 2020

***Graduate Teaching Assistant***

August 2019 – Present

Digital Merchandising

Global Consumers

Moral and Ethical Issues in the Global Fashion Supply Chain

Softgoods Retailing

Writing Intensive: 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Western Dress

Writing Intensive: Social Appearance in Space and Time

***Research Assistant***

November 2020

Quality Assurance Along the Cotton Supply Chain

**INDUSTRY/PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Hallmark Cards, Inc.*****Retail Merchandise Director***

May 2018 – June 2019

Oversaw the long-term growth and retail planning for omni-channel retailer, with focus on shopper needs and experience through marketing, localization, and innovation. Led a team of direct reports responsible for seasonal, local, and licensed product buying, marketing collaboration and store space planning.

- Developed strategies, product stories and sales plans to align shopper behaviors to retail display periods, to include products, promotions, and marketing.
- Fiscally responsible for a planned 40% increase in Hallmark branded and non-branded sales and profitability for seasonal store and Hallmark.com assortments.
- Strategically position national retail chain as “Local Hallmark stores”, resulting in 43% increase in sales in 2018 and 2% contribution to total RSI chain growth.
- Accountable for new processes and business opportunities to align all retail and wholesale functions across Hallmark Gold Crown resulting in a harmonized Hallmark

shopper experience.

- Retail leader for innovation testing and commercialization and speed-to-market capabilities, resulting in digital personalization and short-run manufacturing.

***Senior Retail Merchandise Manager***

December 2013 – May 2018

Senior retail merchant for specialty gifts, to include hard goods, soft goods, and consumables. Accountable for insight-driven category strategy, product development, assortment planning, financial planning, and vendor negotiations for high volume product category, to include brick and mortar retail, ecommerce, and wholesale businesses.

- Achieved retail sales and margin growth in Hallmark Gold Crown's highest volume hard goods category for five consecutive years, outpacing total store results. Exceeded 2018 comp store sales by +14% with 13% of total store sales which resulted in sales, gross margin and inventory turn surpassing 2018 plan.
- Retail lead in delivering a wholesale assortment planning and life cycle management process for Hallmark Gold Crown. Process resulted in significant wholesale savings and overall P&L improvement.
- Task force and execution leader for localization transformation for Hallmark Gold Crown Retail corporate stores to drive shopper relevance, long-term RSI, and chain growth through customized product programs by store and store clusters.

***Merchandise Manager***

July 2006 – November 2013

Buyer lead for seasonal and everyday product category development and management. Collaborated with cross functional teams and vendors to develop branded and non-branded product programs for brick and mortar and ecommerce. Planned, managed, and analyzed financial metrics for retail and wholesale P&L.

- Partnered with third party vendor to develop and wholesale Hallmark branded consumable products to Gold Crown stores.
- Developed direct import sourcing capabilities and process for private label seasonal product to grow brand market share in independent retailers with high margin sales opportunities.
- Merchant lead for product development process improvement which resulted in more efficient wholesale development and selling, and significant cost savings.

***Merchandise Planner and Allocation Strategist***

April 2005 – July 2006

Planned, managed, and reported on all financial metrics such as Open-To-Buy, price changes, inventory receipts, levels and turn, sales, and gross margin. Provided sales and inventory analysis for product teams to include assortment plans for wholesale product development, retail product transition, business opportunities and risks.

***Buyer, Halls Department Store***

June 2001 – April 2005

Responsible for all aspects of buying dinnerware, table linens, kitchenworks, gourmet food and Christmas Shoppe for Hallmark-owned luxury department store. Core responsibilities included financial planning, vendor negotiations, domestic and foreign product development, marketing, visual merchandising, retail customer service and event planning.

**Payless ShoeSource, Inc., Topeka, Kansas*****Assistant Buyer/Merchandise Planner***

June 1999 – June 2001

Planned all business components of \$90 million retail sales category for 270-store chain.

Negotiated with domestic and foreign agents to develop specifications, pricing, and deliveries for imported merchandise.

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**INDUSTRY SKILLS AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

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Consumer and product strategy

Assortment planning

Merchandise planning and allocation

Product development

Retail planning

Marketing

International product sourcing

Google Analytics

Data management

- Microsoft Office Suite
- Microstrategy
- PLM

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**AWARDS AND HONORS**

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Adeline M. Hoffman Award in Human Environmental Sciences	February 2021
Sara Douglas Fellowship for Professional Promise, ITAA	August 2020
Kitty G. Dickerson Graduate Fellowship of Academic Excellence Award	May 2020
Volunteer of the Month, Tiger Pantry, University of Missouri	February 2020

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**PEER-REVIEWED ABSTRACTS AND PRESENTATIONS (PRESENTER UNDERLINED)**

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Leiby, N.L. & Ha-Brookshire, J., (2020) - Cross-functional Skills: Defining Its Meaning. *ITAA Conference*, Denver, CO.

Leiby, N.L. & Zhao, Li., (2020) - T-shaped Person for the Textile and Apparel Industry? Analysis of Cross-functional Skills. *ITAA Conference*, Denver, CO.

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**PUBLICATIONS**

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Leiby N. & Ha-Brookshire J. E., (2020) Cross-functional Skills: Defining Its Meaning, *International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference Proceedings* 77(1). doi: <https://doi.org/10.31274/itaa.12059>

Leiby N. & Zhao L., (2020) T-Shaped Person for the Textile and Apparel Industry? Analysis of Cross-functional Skills, *International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference Proceedings* 77(1). doi: <https://doi.org/10.31274/itaa.12057>

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATIONS

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University of Missouri Ask Listen Refer Suicide Prevention Training Cert.	February 2021
University of Missouri Teaching Assistant Writing Intensive Workshop	January 2021
University of Missouri Teaching Renewal Week	January 2021
International Textile and Apparel Association Conference	November 2020
University of Missouri Online Teaching Certification Seminar	August 2020
University of Missouri Graduate Assistant Training Orientation	August 2020
University of Missouri Teaching Assistant Writing Intensive Workshop	August 2020
University of Missouri Graduate and Professional Student Leaders Retreat	April 2020
University of Missouri Teaching Renewal Week	January 2020
CITI IRB Certification	September 2019
University of Missouri Graduate Assistant Training Orientation	August 2019

## PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

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Pres., University of Missouri Textile and Apparel Advisory Board,	January 2020 - Present
Member, University of Missouri Textile and Apparel Advisory Board,	January 2017 – Present
Member, Graduate Student Assoc. Textile and Apparel Mgmt	August 2019 – Present
Member, International Textile and Apparel Association	September 2019 – Present
VP. Graduate Student Assoc. Textile and Apparel Mgmt.	January 2020 – January 2021
Boone Country Election Judge	November 2020
Tiger Pantry and Truman’s Closet, University of Missouri	January 2020-September 2020
4-H Fashion Review Judge, University of Missouri Extension Office	October 2019 – Present
United Way Women’s Leadership Council, Kansas City, Missouri	2015-2019
Kansas City Central Exchange, Kansas City, Missouri	2016-2018