



## Martin Ekechukwu

Martin Ekechukwu, born in Nigeria to a Nigerian father and Czech mother, is the youngest of 4 children. He spent most of his childhood traveling back and forth from Nigeria and the Czech Republic visiting his extended family and attending school there in the summer. In the late 80's, Martin's father moved his family to Fayetteville, AR to pursue better opportunities as

a professor teaching Anthropology and Sociology. Martin attended the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville on an academic scholarship and walked on to the Track and Field team to compete as a world class high jumper. He continuously played tennis, his passion, during his undergrad studies. Immediately upon receipt of his Bachelors of Science in Microbiology, he decided to play tennis professionally for a limited time with some success.

Martin transitioned to working as a sales representative for Merck Pharmaceuticals in the Houston area while seeking out graduate business schools to further enhance his potential for a long-term career in a marketing capacity. He was accepted into and attended Duke University, Fuqua School of Business with a focus in marketing management. Martin, constantly seeking out new experiences, interned at Ford Motor Company in a brand management role as well as Atari Corporation and finally took a

marketing role at the Toyota Motor Company headquarters in Los Angeles.

He was finally able to work within his passion of health and wellness by taking a position as a brand manager for Nantucket Nectars, a 100% pure, not from concentrate, single serve juice. It was there that Martin realized that he was on a pathway to provide the best and freshest products to a consumer that deserved to have more control over their daily goals of balancing a healthy diet without sacrificing taste. His father, who currently suffers from high blood pressure, was Martin's influence in ensuring that he did not fall victim to the same challenges and encouraged him to find ways to maintain a well-balanced and healthy lifestyle.

In the summer of 2008, Martin identified an opportunity to use lessons learned and put his on stamp on a fragmented industry which led to the development of his own brand of a most cherished drink - tea. He created the brand Village Tea Company and runs the brand as CEO, President and Creative Director. Village Tea, a premium loose-leaf tea company and product line is dedicated to teaching consumers about the health and wellness benefits of loose tea but with a very simple message – Premium Tea for the Everyday Escape.

Martin sees tea as the silver bullet of modern day society and one that it is often overlooked as a source of health and wellness due it being overshadowed by companies that serve subpar tea (tea dust, as Martin likes to call it) which significantly limits the healthy properties naturally found in tea and results in just a flavored hot water no better than Kool-Aid. Village Tea products are packaged in biodegradable and environmentally friendly materials and are distributed nationally.

Last but definitely not least, Martin is also the father of an incredible 3 year old girl that is the light of his life and which drives him to continue his quest in advocating more education for healthy foods. He speaks on several health and wellness panels in Dallas, TX and sits on a humanitarian non-profit board, the Kunak Foundation, which is dedicated to providing every day medicines to rural villages in Nigeria. He continues to be an avid athlete and plays tennis frequently.

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