



## Jon Hardesty of Leonardtown, MD, Named Food Lion's Store Manager of the Year

February 10, 2025 at 12:03 PM EST

Four more exceptional leaders recognized out of more than 1,100



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Jon Hardesty, Store Manager of the Food Lion Store in Leonardtown, MD, is the 2024 Ralph W. Ketner Store Manager Excellence Award winner.

SALISBURY, N.C., Feb. 10, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Jon Hardesty, store manager of the Food Lion located at 40955 Merchant Lane Leonardtown, MD 20650, was named Food Lion's 2024 Ralph W. Ketner Store Manager Excellence Award winner. Hardesty was selected from a group of more than 1,100 store managers serving their neighbors across Food Lion's 10-state operating area.

Named after one of Food Lion's founders, the Ralph W. Ketner Store Manager Excellence Awards recognize and honor exceptional store managers who enrich the lives of Food Lion's customers, associates and communities they serve.

In addition to Hardesty's recognition as Food Lion's 2024 Ralph W. Ketner Store Manager Excellence Award winner, four other store managers were

honored for exceptional leadership as 2024 Divisional Store Manager Excellence Award recipients. They include:

- **Mid-Atlantic Division:** Josh Carver, 1005 N Madison Blvd Roxboro, NC 27573
- **Southern Division:** Alex Clever, 2401 Reidville Road, Spartanburg, SC 29301
- **Central Division:** Toby Pentecost, 1224 Gallatin Road Scottsville, KY 42164
- **Richmond/Norfolk Division:** Christian Dendy, 1313 N Road Street Elizabeth City, NC 27909

The annual award celebrates and recognizes exceptional Food Lion store managers who operate outstanding grocery stores while making a positive impact on neighbors in the towns and cities they serve. In recognition of Hardesty's outstanding commitment to his community, Food Lion will donate 20,000 meals in his name to Leonardtown Church of the Nazarene Outreach Ministry in Leonardtown, MD, through the retailer's hunger-relief platform, Food Lion Feeds.

"This honor truly reflects the incredible team I have the privilege of working with each day," said Hardesty. "I am honored to receive this award and grateful to be part of an organization that values community, integrity and professional growth."

Hardesty joined Food Lion in 2005 and leads a dedicated team of 160 associates. He believes managing a store successfully is about creating an environment where associates are treated with respect and have opportunities to grow professionally. He encourages associates to deliver exceptional customer service each day while building relationships with customers. Hardesty is also passionate about serving his community. He and his associates support various organizations in the Leonardtown community.

"Store managers are the heartbeat of Food Lion," said Meg Ham, President, Food Lion. "They are accountable for delivering exceptional excellence in operating great grocery stores. Jon has done just that and made a positive impact on the lives of associates and customers by creating an environment where everyone is welcomed and appreciated. By showing care for his community and helping his associates thrive, Jon's leadership is felt inside and outside his store. I deeply appreciate all five of these exceptional store leaders for bringing our brand, strategy and culture to life in our stores every day."

"Jon's recognition as Store Manager of the Year is a testament to his passion for his associates, customers and for Food Lion," said Kristen Riley, Vice President, Northern Division, Food Lion. "Jon is passionate about nourishing his neighbors in Leonardtown, and his associates are equally dedicated to this mission. That commitment is demonstrated in how they serve customers, help decrease food insecurity and take care of their community every day."

All five honorees are also celebrated for successfully leading the business, supporting their teams and inspiring others.

#### **About Food Lion**

Food Lion is an omnichannel grocery retailer committed to nourishing its neighbors. More than 82,000 associates across 1,100+ stores deliver an easy, fresh and affordable shopping experience throughout 10 Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic states. With a focus on hunger relief, Food Lion is a pioneer in food rescue. In 2014, Food Lion Feeds was created and has since donated more than 1.2 billion meals to those who are food insecure. The retailer has committed to donate 1.5 billion meals by 2025. Founded and based in Salisbury, N.C., since 1957, Food Lion is a company of Ahold Delhaize USA, the U.S. division of Zaandam-based Ahold Delhaize. For more information, visit [foodlion.com](https://www.foodlion.com).

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/411d8a2c-8efb-4018-b146-0da6f21de277>