



ENCORE ASSOCIATES INC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Debra Lambert  
(925) 837-6933  
[debra8500@aol.com](mailto:debra8500@aol.com)

**Lee Merritts Joins Encore Associates, Inc. as Senior Partner**

Former Procter & Gamble Executive to Develop Diversity Strategy Solutions for Retailers, Manufacturers and CPG Companies in Food and Drug Industry

**October 13, 2003, San Ramon, CA** – Lee Merritts, recently retired Procter & Gamble executive and first-ever Director of Diversity for P & G, North America has joined Encore Associates, Inc., a national sales and marketing and strategic advisory firm to the food industry.

“Working with Lee as a trading partner during his tenure at P & G, I can think of no individual that better exemplifies the very best values and commitment to excellence that the food and drug industry has to offer. We are proud that Lee has chosen to continue his service to the industry as part of the Encore team,” said Gary Smith, President and CEO Encore Associates, Inc.

Merritts’ successful career at Procter & Gamble spanned 32 years. During his tenure he held several senior management positions prior to being named the company’s ‘first-ever’ full-time Director of Diversity reporting directly to N. American Region President, Rob Steele. As a result of his leadership in this role and with the support of the company’s top executives, Procter & Gamble was able to fully integrate diversity into the company’s mainstream business planning. In recognition of Lee’s significant achievements and contributions to the company and to the industry, Procter & Gamble North America recently initiated an annual “Lee Merritts Diversity Award” named in his honor. The award recognizes Merritts’ commitment and accomplishments in bringing diversity and business strategies together to serve the growing ethnic consumer community.

“Unfortunately, diversity is too often treated as a periodic “program” rather than a critical business imperative. Meaningful and effective Diversity-readiness requires high-level leadership, ownership, and commitment,” Merritts stated. “It is not difficult to predict that companies that make it a corporate priority to seamlessly integrate diversity strategy into their mainstream business plans, will gain long term competitive advantage with the fastest growing consumer segments. Those that fail to properly position themselves are in danger of significant share loss, and growing legal challenge,” added Merritts.

As a senior partner at Encore, Merritts will provide advisory services to assist companies in developing tailored organizational diversity strategy solutions in the areas of organizational assessment, strategic implementation, business case data

ENCORE ASSOCIATES INC

2333 SAN RAMON VALLEY BLVD., SUITE 160, SAN RAMON, CA 94583-1763  
T 925.837.6933 F 925.837.6948 [www.EncoreAssociates.com](http://www.EncoreAssociates.com)

development, leadership team training, executive coaching and mentoring and network / affinity group programs.

Lee and his wife Gigi live in San Ramon, California.

About Encore Associates, Inc.

[www.encoreassociates.com](http://www.encoreassociates.com)

Encore Associates, Inc. (EAI) based in San Ramon, California is a full-service company providing business solutions, and subject matter experts and in-depth resources to meet the changing need of retailers, manufacturers and consumer packaged goods companies in the food and drug industry. Encore Sales Co. provides solution services and product sales through a well-designed and uniquely focused approach at the local and national chain headquarters levels.

The company currently operates regional offices strategically located in Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.

-0o0-