

CANADIAN GROCER 2019

Retail expert John Williams has died

1936-2019

J.C. Williams Group founder got his start in grocery and worked with several major retailers throughout his career

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John C. Williams, founder of retail consulting agency J.C. Williams Group, died Sept. 21. The cause of death wasn't disclosed.

Williams kicked off his career in retail as a bag boy at a Safeway in Vancouver. He graduated from the University of British Columbia and earned an MBA from Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

He founded J.C. Williams Group in Toronto in 1974 and specialized in retail and distribution strategy, real estate and urban revitalization. He worked with retailers and brands including MasterCard, Birks, Walmart, Bell Canada and Levi's.

In 2013, Williams received Retail Council of Canada's Retail Hall of Fame Award, which recognizes individuals who have demonstrated leadership in advancing and promoting the retail industry in Canada as a career, and who are strong advocates of retail education and training.

Williams stepped away from day-to-day management of the business earlier this year, but continued to mentor the team up to his last days.