Americans All®
A Social Legacy Network

Allan S. Kullen *Businessman and Social Entrepreneur*

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"Her name is Esther Steamgartner. Do you know her?" Allan Kullen had posed the question in a broken mixture of Hebrew and English to whoever would listen and could understand him. Allan had met Esther while on an extended business trip to Israel. Although he had met her only a few times, they parted ways was her name and the fact that she was staying in Tel Aviv. So, after finishing his work, he decided he would try to find her. He hitchhiked his way to Tel Aviv and, despite all odds, found her.

It was not just Esther that Allan found, however. "The odds were none-to-none that an American speaking Hebrew very poorly could venture to a foreign city and find some girl he met for two weeks on a mountaintop while traveling probably do so

Allan was born (Stallard) and in 1946 in the printing in Technology 1956, CIT was becoming Can advantage of that opportunity by becoming very invol Fred Pagan, Sr., Award, given to the student with th Management.

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Allan S. Kullen *(February 20, 1946 –)* Businessman and Social Entrepreneur

Allan was a graduating class in the printing school. All

Feeling the need to gain additional business training, Allan entered a two-year MBA program at the University of California, Berkeley. During his first year, he met representatives of NSIEE, a Dutch travel organization that organized student trips to Europe. He began to work with them, starting by pulling out a daily newspaper for the eight-day crossing by sea. He also accepted an internship as a consultant for a printing company in Amsterdam. That fall, rather than returning home, he traveled extensively where, for the first time, he recognized the importance of the printed word in shaping history. He realized that the technology he was learning could help back to the United States and, after returning home from this eye-opening experience, chose to enter the workforce rather than resume his schooling at Berkeley.

He began his career as marketing director for his father's firm, Kaufmann Press, Inc. When his father's company was acquired by a public company, Publisher's Company, Inc. (Pubco), he went to work for Pubco, initially assisting with its acquisitions program and subsequently finding more challenging niche in its publishing division. He was responsible for the development and production of the 10-volume International Library of Afro-American History and, later, the revision of The New American Encyclopedia, which was done in partnership with Mondadori Publishing in Italy.

When Pubco began to fail, he realized he needed to build a future where he could better control his own destiny, especially since he was now married to the former Diane Klein and they had two children, Allison and Todd. Pubco was sold to Time, Inc. in 1974 and, in 1975, Allan left to start his own business. Many of his customers were in default with their bank and formed Todd-Allan Printing Co., Inc., which he ran until 2010. During that period, he grew the company through internal sales and roll-up acquisitions of eight smaller firms, merging them into the company. At its peak, Todd-Allan had $18 million in annual sales and 127 employees. In 1981, he obtained a patent for "printing having continuous tone gradation that could produce original pieces of art from commercial printing plates." In 1982, with the collaboration of 15 local and national printing suppliers, he published The Practical Graphic Arts Guide, a 700-page compendium of expert technical advice for print buyers.

While working at Pubco, Allan observed that some of its large printing vendors also owned educational properties as sidelines to make up for periods of slow commercial sales, and he brought that manufacturing strategy to Todd-Allan. In 1986, he created a subsidiary called Ellis Island Publishing to produce Ellis Island: The Experience, which featured photographs and texts on the contributions that immigrants made to the nation's development when they come through Ellis Island. At the same time, he was printing for the Coordinating Committee for Ellis Island, a nonprofit group focused on the same topic. The action rekindled the passion generated by his travels abroad, and he founded and became president of the "People of America" Foundation and became co-developer of its signature resource program, Americans All.

The program consisted of printed texts and recordings, period-specific posters and photographs, and simulations of documents and artifacts that were used by and about the people who made up the United States. Christopher Jeffries, of Americans All, was instrumental in the education community, as Joe Gale linked to classrooms devoted to teaching social studies. With the national emphasis shifting to support STEAM programs, his foundation could not secure investors to meet its goal of making these instructional resources available to the nations 125,000 public and private K–12 schools and 800,000 homeschools.

Allan responded by forming a marketing and operations entity, the Americans All Benefit Corporation. To gain the revenue needed to meet the foundations goal, he focused his efforts on one of the program's main elements—the Heritage Honor Roll. Under the new structure, Americans All has become a Social Legacy Network that "connects the dots between the, legacy, education and the American Dream."

[Note: This story was excerpted and edited from an interview by Gordon Bernhard, author of Profiles in Success (Volume 6): Inspiration from Executive Leaders in the Washington D.C. Area.]

To view the legacy story about Albert "Chew" Kullen, click here.