How the Americans All Storytelling Tool Works for Students

www.americansall.org/hc-students





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Americans All Allan Kullen www.americansall.org /node/566231

Valid Through April 2022.

Membership cards can be used to obtain discounts on goods and services from many of our program's Legacy Partners and are valid for a 3-month period. Social Legacy network members can always download a current card with an updated expiration date. To print a new card, go to your "Welcome Back" page and click on "Download Social Legacy Network membership materials."

Americans All Program Summary and Highlights

Americans All, a 36-year-old, education-based nonprofit, aims to expand its website to house one of our nation's most comprehensive and non-political databases of individual and group stories, past and present, about the *Peopling of America*. To accomplish this, we are in the pilot phase of a community-outreach program that will specifically benefit students—those who participate in non-academic school activities, such as creating online club and team yearbooks and/or publishing their documented and well-written research—and local small businesses and professional service providers by connecting them through a unique storytelling tool and a turnkey revenue generator.



Our <u>storytelling</u> tool is an ideal vehicle to help us all focus on our commonalities rather than our differences. By sharing

stories, especially those of immigrants and underserved populations, we recognize the contributions of **everyone**, while reinforcing the values of diversity, tolerance, acceptance and understanding. People and groups can create and publish stories that can be easily stored, updated and permanently accessed. What makes us unique is the inclusion of historical information to provide context for many of these stories and the experiences, observations, and accomplishments reflected in them.

Lifetime membership in our program is free for individuals, schools and other nonprofits. Businesses and professional service providers pay a nominal fee to publish their stories and can use their stories on our site to reach, and offer discounts to, their customers and clients. We offer our members an optional, inexpensive subscription upgrade to our Social Legacy Network after a free 3-month trial period to continue to access these business discounts. Importantly, we return 80 percent of our gross revenue from membership subscriptions and business registration fees to communities that support our program.

All organizations can create a <u>Legacy Partner</u> landing page on our site. This page contains a description of the organization and can host stories from our Heritage Honor Roll created by individuals and groups that are affiliated with the organization. Organizations can create multiple landing pages and they can be published in various languages.

We plan to implement our pilot in high schools in Howard County. Using the lessons learned, we will refine the program and begin offering it to all high schools in the State before creating a nationwide rollout. We have received a positive response from the Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA), and our Heritage Honor Roll already contains a story from the Howard County Howard County Howard County Historical Society. That story is also linked to its Legacy Partner landing page.

Following the recommendation from HCEDA, we have discussed the program with the Howard County Public School System's Partnerships Office and they offered many suggestions on how to proceed, and importantly, how we needed to modify our website to meet their standards. All suggestions were implemented. In the process, we determined that a school's point of contact (once the program gains the approval of its principal) will be its Athletics and Activities Manager or a member of his/her staff. We will be contacting PTA's directly for their support because they are separate from the schools and have their own procedures.

Benefits of Storytelling to Students

Our unique storytelling tool offers many benefits for students participating in non-academic school activities. It can also make a positive difference in their personal lives.

- All stories begin at birth, and *legacies* are built each time a personal, academic or professional milestone is achieved. Every student has important experiences and lessons learned to share with family, friends and future generations. Creating and publishing a <u>story</u> about themselves (or their families) helps students develop skills in critical thinking, communicating, researching, and, especially, writing—skills needed to help ensure their success in postsecondary education and/or the workforce. For student-athletes, this is an ideal opportunity to showcase their talents to post-secondary institutions
- Americans All enables each school club or team to set up its own free Legacy Partner landing page to host stories created by its members on our Heritage Honor Roll. Each of these landing pages can become a virtual annual yearbook. Students can post their current story on as many landing pages as they desire. If the members of the clubs and teams update their stories after graduation, their peers are kept current on their classmate's activities. For additional exposure, students can also post their stories on any Americans All legacy partner page.
- Our program also provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate that they understand and appreciate the value of community service and volunteerism. By helping others less skilled in the art of writing and the use of today's technology to incorporate images and recordings into their legacy stories, a student can earn service-learning credits. Moreover, storytelling can also be a wonderful intergenerational bonding experience that builds compassion, empathy and understanding.
- Even though Americans All is no longer active in curriculum areas, our resources remain online to provide background for many of our Heritage Honor Roll stories. We will continue to host resources (now called issues/topics) that are academically well-researched and written, especially those that feature individuals or groups that make up local histories. A student can use their second Heritage Honor Roll story in English or set up an additional, free email membership account (https://www.guru99.com/best-free-email-service-providers.html) and select a "Group" story instead of an "Individual" story. Uploading these stories to our site will provide the student with publishing credits which can be beneficial when applying to a postsecondary institution or for a job in the workforce.
- Students will find it easy to start creating their stories. Our story template only requires individuals to fill in a name, date of birth and a summary not to exceed 60 words. Additional story text, hyperlinks, photographs and audio-visual media can be added over time. The story does not have to be completed in one session and can be updated at any time. All previous versions of the story are archived. Moreover, stories can be published in multiple languages. Only the student can edit the story, and half of the story can be privacy protected with a second password.

As part of their lifetime membership in Americans All, we offer our members a free, 3-month subscription to our optional <u>Social Legacy Network</u> to receive additional benefits. After the trial period expires, the cost is \$4 per month to continue receiving these benefits, which includes discounts on goods and services offered by our program partners, such as restaurants and other businesses that cater to their needs. We believe the financial benefits that a member can receive from our business partners will more than cover their monthly subscription fee.

<u>Click here</u> for details on how the Americans All storytelling tool works.

<u>Click here</u> to view a tutorial on how to create a legacy story for an individual.

Sample story from our Heritage Honor Roll

Allan S. Kullen Author Business Printer, Social Entrepreneur, Traveler



"Her name is Ester Baumgartner. 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 Ester while on an archaeological dig at Masada in Negev, Israel. All he knew by the time 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 to play an important role in his life.

Allan was born in Washington, DC, on February 20, 1942, to Eunice (Statland) and Sol Kullen, both originally from Baltimore, MD. His sister, Marian, was born two years later. He grew up in the DC metropolitan area. His father had built a successful career in the printing industry so, in 1959 after a very uneventful four years culminating in his high school graduation, Allan chose to attend the School of Printing Management at Carnegie Institute of Technology (CIT) in Pittsburgh, PA.

Americans All features 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. This action rekindled the passion generated by his travels abroad, and he founded and became president of the People of America Foundation and became co-

photographs, simulations and teacher's guides, all developed by a team of scholars led by Americans All co-developer Dr. Gail C. Christopher Although Americans All was well received by the education community, its appeal was limited to classrooms devoted to teaching social studies. With the national emphasis shifting to support STEM programs, his foundation [Note: This story was excerpted and edited from an interview by Gordon Bernhardt, 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. To view the stories in the Kullen (Kulchinsky) Family Circle, click here.



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CLICK HERE











- Stories can be:
 - · about individuals, groups or issues/topics
 - up to 2,000 words (1,000 can be password protected for privacy)
 - augmented with images, logos, hyperlinks, photographs, and audio-video media.
 - published in multiple languages, including a second story in English.
 - updated easily and have all prior versions archived
 - started by filling in only a few required fields and then be completed over time
 - · also created in a shorter version (up to 500 words) and printed in an 8½" x 11" format
- Americans All provides step-bystep tutorials and easy-to-use templates to simplify the creative process.
- Legacy stories reflect members' views and are not vetted for accuracy. However, all text is filtered through a third party, secure Profanity App to ensure that they do not contain inappropriate language. If requested, our editorial staff can override the App if they feel the identified word or phrase is acceptable by today's standards.
- We comply with the "Children's Online Privacy Protection Act" of 1998 and therefore disallow children under 13 from putting personal information on our site.
- All content and images published on our site are considered to be in the public domain, unless it is clearly noted that they are protected by copyright laws. We cannot provide permission for commercial use. However. content can be reproduced from our site for educational or personal use as long as a citation is provided.

www.americansall.org/node/553341

How the Americans All Storytelling Tool Works

"Stories are one of the most powerful means that [all people] have to influence, teach, and inspire. Storytelling forges connections, among people and between people and ideas. They convey the culture, history, and values that unite people. When it comes to our countries, our communities, and our families, we understand intuitively that the stories we hold in common are an important part of the ties that bind." —Excerpted from a post by Vanessa Boris, an author at Harvard Business Publishing, and Lani Peterson, Psy.D., psychologist, storyteller, and executive coach.

To access all program benefits, including the ability to create, publish and update a legacy story on our Heritage Honor Roll, an individual needs to create a "New User Account" for Americans All (AA). Registration is <u>free</u> and a detailed tutorial walks the individual through each step. We only require a first and last name, e-mail address and a Zip Code. If privacy is an issue, in the "First Name* field and the "Last Name* field, insert an initial, rather than your actual name. Internally, we only identify members by their e-mail addresses, which they use to log in, and their Zip Codes, which we also use to count how many members are registered in each geographic area. We do not require addresses, phone numbers or any other personal information. Importantly, we do not store financial information and do not share or publish any contact information.

A story can only be edited or modified by the member who created it, but the story can be read and/or printed out by anyone. However, to print a story without having the URL information distorting the text, the reader must be a member of Americans All. If the author has privacy protected a portion of the story, the reader must obtain that password from the author as that information is not saved nor can be accessed by the program staff. The privacy password can be added at any time by going to the "Edit My User Account" link on the member's "Welcome Back" page.

The 60-word summary (which can be the lead sentence in the story) follows the honoree's name on the Heritage Honor Roll landing page. This feature exists because two individuals may have the same first/last name. The summary will enable the reader to locate the story of their honoree. (See example below.)

Allan S. Kullen Maryland (*February 20, 1942 - ?*) Author, Businessman, Golfer, Inventor, Jewish, Marketing, Mergers-Acquisitions, Poland, Printer, Social Entrepreneur, Traveler

"Her name is Ester Baumgartner. Do you know her? She's a pretty Swiss girl who sings beautifully, and I think she lives near here." Allan had posed the question in a broken mixture of Hebrew and English to whoever would listen and could understand him. Allan had met Ester while on an archaeological dig at Masada in Negev, Israel. All he knew by the time they parted ways was her name and she was staying in Tel Aviv.

Read more [The "Read more" link will take the reader to the complete story.]

Legacy stories reflect members' views and AA does not vet these stories. The Heritage Honor Roll may contain more than one legacy story for an individual or a group—or the legacy story may appear in more than one language—because members have opted to recognize different

contributions of the same individual or group or want to share the story in the native language of the honoree.

How the Americans All Storytelling Tool Works (continued)

Because stories will be read by individuals of all ages, we want to ensure the legacy stories published on our Heritage Honor Roll do not contain inappropriate language. Therefore, all text is filtered through a secure, third-party Profanity App. If a word or phrase used in a story is on the App's "block" list, the member will receive an error message at the top of the template when he or she clicks on the "Publish My Story" button. If that occurs, replace the word or phrase by using its first and last letters and put an "x" for each letter in between, such as "sxxt."

We can override the App's list of blocked words. If an individual believes the "blocked" word is appropriate, contact us by e-mail. Put the word "Profanity" in the subject line. In the body of the e-mail, identify the "blocked word or phrase" and include the sentence in which it is used. If our editorial board agrees that the word or phrase is appropriate, we will remove the word or phrase from the App's block list and notify the member so he or she can insert the desired word or phrase back into the story.

Within the Heritage Honor Roll, individual honorees and groups are listed alphabetically by last name. If included, maiden names appear between parentheses and nicknames appear between quotation marks (but are not picked up by the Search Engine). If an exact birth or death date is not known, we add "c." to indicate it is an approximation. If the individual is still alive, we insert a question mark symbol (?). The honoree's occupation, field, industry or profession is listed last.

When each story is published, it is assigned a unique 6-digit identification number. If a reader knows the number, he or she can use a shortcut to directly access the story. The reader simply types "www.americansall.org/node/" followed by its identification number as shown here, www.americansall.org/node/566231. Otherwise, the reader can use the SEARCH box at the top of each page or visit the Heritage Honor Roll landing page and search for the story by name, language or state.



How to Create a Legacy Story

Photographs fade over time and, sadly, many are irreplaceable so they cannot continue to be shared. The same is true for our memories. According to the National Archives, "it only takes three generations to lose pieces of an <u>oral</u> family history." However, by <u>writing</u> a legacy story, you can permanently document your personal experiences and accomplishments and your ethnic and cultural heritage. You can also share the lessons you have learned along the way.

You are best qualified to determine how you want to be thought of now and remembered later. Moreover, by taking the time to record and share your story—and the motivation behind your decisions and transitions—you gain a sense of what you have done already and a better idea of what you want to do next. Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard summed it up well: "Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forwards."

Everybody has a story to tell; you do not have to be a celebrity or public figure to create yours. Your life is more interesting and meaningful than you think, and you should record your story while you can still do so. Everybody has survived some circumstance or overcome some obstacle—information that can be passed on to inspire others and, importantly, help them learn who they are and where they came from.

It is never too soon to begin preserving your <u>legacy</u>, a term that usually refers to a gift of property or money distributed through a will. But you own a greater asset: your life's experiences and lessons learned. You are a link that connects your family's past to its future generations. Very few of us have the time, energy or talent to handle telling our entire life story, but we do know what parts are most significant to us and of value to our family. Sharing your life story is one of the greatest—and least expensive—gifts you can leave your family.

Notes on getting started.

Creating a legacy story through Americans All is not hard. Our legacy preservation initiative includes templates and tutorials to guide you through the process. Americans All members will find it easy to start creating their life stories. Our template only requires individuals to fill in their name, date of birth and a summary not to exceed 60 words. Additional story text, hyperlinks and photographs can be added over time.

And you may be surprised that there are people around you who, when you reach out to them, will be excited to help you create your story. Whether you are writing your story yourself or helping someone else to do so, consider these tips.

- There is no one correct format for your story. It can be told chronologically or start with a specific event. It can be a memoir, a tribute, an autobiography, an ethical will or an archive of information. It can focus on as many aspects of your life as you choose or share particular experiences you believe made you who you are today.
- You can change the format of your story as you proceed simply by rearranging the paragraphs and adding new transition sentences.
- You do not need to include everything you did or everyone you know or interacted with in your story. Some things are better left unsaid or unknown.

- Your story can be a combination of written text, images and audio-visual recordings.
- Your story can include hyperlinks to other websites to provide additional (e.g., historical) information tied to an event in your life.
- Your story does not have to be completed in one creative session; it can be saved in draft form while you continue to work on it.
- After your story has been published, it can be updated at any time, with previous editions archived.

How to begin the process.

- Go to <u>www.americansall.org/heritage-honor-roll</u> and scan some of the published legacy stories for inspiration and guidance on how you may want to structure your story.
- Identify topics of interest to you: a hobby, a job, travel/vacations, volunteer work, etc.
- If you start chronologically, you may want to consider events at various times in your life.
- Once you have preliminarily decided on how you want to begin your story, start writing a
 paragraph or two on the most important topics.
- Collect images (photos or art) to enhance your story. You will need a headshot and plenty of photographs to create—or have someone help you create—your photo montage.
- Collect more images than you think you can possibly use and have them scanned into a folder on your computer's desktop, so they will be available when you need them.
- Look for family videos you may have and have them prepared to add to your story.
 Instructions on how to do so this are provided in one of our tutorials.
- Look for logos you want to use—religious, military, education, work or volunteer-based.
 Make sure that you have permission to use them and that they are of good quality.

Questions and topics to help guide the thought process.

Your early life: Your parents and biological family; special games and toys; where you lived; where you went to school; favorite pet(s); who made the greatest impact on you growing up; what was it like to grow up in your household and how this may be different from the one you created when you moved out; holiday events; vacations; how you learned to drive and your first car; what you now realize you would like to have done differently and how that impacted your life today; how you decided at that time on a career; what changed when you went to middle and high school.

The next level: What followed high school; have you changed careers and why; how you met your spouse or significant other; details of your wedding or honeymoon; what was--or were--your "ah-ha" moments or events that changed the path of your life; what part of your military or volunteer service was most meaningful to you and how did it change your life; what you may have learned from your children or friends as you matured; how you deal with your faith; what does wealth mean to you and has that changed since childhood and what lessons would you like to pass on regarding this topic; have you had emotional, health or physical crisis and how did it change your life.

If you are doing an interview, here is a list of questions you should ask. The list may also be useful if you are creating your own story.

First and last name

Birthdate and place

Parents' names and siblings and background information on them

Ethnic and/or cultural background

Pets growing up

Schools attended

Favorite activity as a child and as an adult

What type of music do you like and which musician, instrument, or song?

What is your favorite food and did that change as you grew up?

Are (were) you married, your spouse's name, and how and where you met?

Do you have children or grandchildren and names and ages?

Where have you traveled?

What do (did) you do for a living?

What was the greatest success and/or mistake you made during your life or career?

How did you spend your first paycheck?

What are your favorite memories?

What is your favorite place to visit?

What is the biggest sacrifice you ever made?

What are the two or three things you most care about?

What advice did your parents give you and did you follow it? Also, what was the one (or two) things your parents did that really made you angry?

If you could roll the clock back, where would you be and what might you have done differently and what would you have avoided?

What would be the one thing (or two) that you would want your children or grandchildren to remember about you?

What is (was) your most prized possession?

What things bring you the most pleasure?

Sources: Reasons Why Writing Remains a Critical Skill for Success, Tomas Laurinavicius, a lifestyle entrepreneur and blogger; The Importance of Good Writing Skills in the Workplace, CareerAddict, a careerand success-focused blog; and The Importance of Good Writing Skills, a blog created by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D., and Katharine Hansen, Ph.D.

Note: Legacy stories created for Americans All reflect members' views and are not vetted by the program. Because stories can unintentionally contain information about the people in the story narrative that may be inappropriate or potentially harmful, we recommend that young adults have their story reviewed by a parent, guardian or teacher before it is published. Moreover, we comply with the "Children's Online Privacy Protection Act" (Public law: 105-277), which requires parental consent if children under 13 share information that can be obtained on the Internet.

Americans All Website Tutorials

Americans All members will find it easy to start creating their life stories. Our template only requires individuals to fill in their names, pertinent dates and a summary not to exceed 60 words. Additional story text, hyperlinks and photographs can be added over time. The following tutorials will help you create and publish your legacy story. You can update your story at any time, for free, and all previous versions are archived.

Registration tutorials:

- Summary graphic on "How Americans All Works"
- How to register for Americans All and create a Heritage Honor Roll story
- How to register for Americans All as a Point of Contact for a nonprofit Legacy Partner
- How to register for Americans All as a Point of Contact for a school Legacy Partner
- How to become a business Legacy Partner
- How to add my location to a Business Legacy Partner account
- How to register for Americans All as a homeschool family—Currently in development
- Examples of registration templates

Information field tutorials

- · Create a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for an individual in English
- Create a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for an individual in a foreign language or create a second story in English
- Upload images for a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for an individual group in all languages
- Create a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for a group in English
- Create a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for a group in an additional language
- Upload images for a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for a group in all languages
- · Create an Americans All landing page for a nonprofit Legacy Partner in English
- · Create an Americans All landing page for a nonprofit Legacy Partner in an additional language
- Upload an image for a nonprofit Legacy Partner landing page in all languages
- Create an Americans All landing page for a Business Legacy Partner in English
- · Create an Americans All landing page for a Business Legacy Partner in an additional language
- Upload images for a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story for a group in all languages
- · Create an Americans All landing page to add a location to a Business Legacy Partner account in English
- Create an Americans All landing page to add a location for a Business Legacy Partner account in an additional language
- Upload an image when adding a location to a Business Legacy Partner account in all languages
- · Create an Americans All landing page for a school Legacy Partner in English
- Create an Americans All landing page for a school Legacy Partner in an additional languages
- Upload an image for a school Legacy Partner landing page in all languages

In addition, see:

- How to create a Heritage Honor Roll legacy story and information for younger children
- Examples of Heritage Honor Roll Stories in multiple languages
- Examples of various styles of Heritage Honor Roll legacy story montages
- Examples of Legacy Partner pages
- How to increase the size of images
- How to create a second story
- Information on how to locate and download logos from the Internet
- Information on how to augment your legacy story with hyperlinks
- · Examples of how a Legacy Partner home page can be enhanced by publishing it in multiple languages

Sample Nonprofit Legacy Partners & Issues/Topics Pages

All Legacy Partners receive a 6-digit ID Number when they register so their clients, members, friends and staff can easily find them on our site by putting the word "node" and that ID number after our web address—
www.americansall.org/node/xxxxxx. Moreover, Legacy Partners can access Americans All logos and marketing materials to help advertise their membership in our program.

Nonprofit Legacy Partners (NLPs) participate in Americans All at no cost because they host, on their free Legacy Partner home page(s) on our website, legacy stories that members have published on our Heritage Honor Roll to provide further exposure for these stories. These home page(s)—one for each chapter/division/office and in multiple languages, if desired—share information about the organization and help it better connect with current and future members.

NLPs are listed on our Legacy Partner landing page and can be searched by name, language, category and location. To help individuals and groups that share a common interest but do not have a national organization, and to consolidate stories on historically relevant topics, we have added landing pages for these "issue/topics" in our Legacy Partner section. If an individual or a group creates a story about an issue/topic we have not identified, notify us via our **Contact page** and we can help create a landing page for that issue/topic.

Some of the major Categories (many have sub-pages) and Issues/Topics identified in our Legacy Partner section are:

American County, City or Town /node/566345

American History /node/566344

Champions of Social Justice /node/566356

Colleges /node/566389

Covid-19 /node/566360

Education Organizations /node/566346

Ethnic and Cultural Groups /node/564232

First Responders /node/566361

Fraternal Organizations /node/566347

Legal Profession /node/566358

<u>Libraries</u> /node/566388

Military Personnel and Organizations /node/566348

Museums /node/566390

Political Leaders /node/566350

Political Organizations /node/566351

Social Organizations /node/566352

Women's Suffrage Movement /node/5662772