

Allan Boomer: Raising the Bar of Alumni Excellence

By: Titilola Bakare

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The popular notion of what it means to be an active alumnus includes annual giving from a distance and attendance at a social event or two each year. As Chairman of the NYU Stern Alumni Council and recently named Association of Hispanic and Black Business Students Distinguished Alumnus of the year, Allan Boomer's devoted service to the school transcends this paradigm and sets a new standard.

After graduating from Stern in 2004, Allan Boomer joined Goldman Sachs where he is currently a Vice President in the Private Wealth Management group. Before Stern, Boomer started his career at Merrill Lynch in Operations Management. While spending his days at Merrill, Boomer spent evenings preparing income taxes. Soon, he found himself much more excited about his evenings than the days he spent focused on operational strategy and cost management.

"On the cost side you are limited in terms of your impact...in the service industry 'cost-cutting' is a fancy way of saying 'firing people'...I was good at it but I saw people losing their jobs...I saw people ruined by this." said Boomer.

It became clear to him that a role on the brokerage side of the business would combine his love for client facing work with his financial dexterity. Though his role at Merrill Lynch remains a necessary part of the business, Boomer wanted to focus his energy on helping people build wealth.

With this objective, Boomer quickly realized that an MBA program was the pathway to his dream. With a characteristic humility, He now expresses that he once considered Stern a "long-shot." When admitted, the decision to attend Stern was easy despite lucrative scholarship offers at other institutions.

"If you follow your heart and make the right decision," commented Boomer, "money, while it is important, should never be a determining factor."

Shortly thereafter, Boomer became one of the first Stern Students to ever receive the Robert Toigo Foundation Fellowship and secured substantial funding for his education.

This serendipitous string of events, followed by a wonderful two years that led him to his dream job, is the foundation of Boomer's devotion to the Stern community. Says Boomer:

"If I look at why I am sitting here now, it's because of Stern. I graduated with a sense of indebtedness that I don't think I can ever repay. All I can do now is attempt to repay it through service and financial giving. That's what prompted me to get involved with the Alumni Council."

Boomer describes the Alumni Council as "the ambassador for the school" geared towards "engaging the alumni [to] come back and give back."

Now serving the 3rd and final year of his tenure, Boomer has been involved in initiatives that are broadening the scope and impact of the Alumni Council. These include the Global Alumni

Conference that took place in Barcelona this summer, Stern's new "lifetime email address" policy, and work that is currently underway to re-design the SWAP system to engage existing social networking tools such as Facebook and LinkedIn. "You are an alumni for much longer than you are a student," said Boomer. When considered in those simple terms, why wouldn't one want to extract as much value as possible from the alumni experience?

With continued innovation, Boomer hopes to capture the hearts and minds of alumni who may never have experienced the Stern of today.

"We are trying to energize the alumni community. We inherited a school that was a commuter school for many years."

When asked what current students can do to activate their relationships with alumni and prepare to join their ranks, Boomer advised that current students "change the orientation" of how we view the alumni community.

"If you leverage an alumnus just to get a job, it's a one time transaction. Challenge your orientation towards alumni. Relationships are really the currency of business. A student who only focuses on that transaction misses out on the opportunity to leverage this as long term relationship. Change the orientation. Shame on you if you graduate and you don't have an alumnus as a mentor. Get to know their families. Care about the events of their lives."

When Allan Boomer talks about family, it is clear that his wife and 3 children are an inspiration. Each day, Boomer takes a train to Somerset, NJ, the same town where he grew up. Ever the picture of efficiency, he reads the Wall Street Journal on the way in and the Daily News on the way back.

How does he balance a challenging career, family, and his role on the Alumni Council? Boomer credits prioritization as the key to his success.

"I say no to a lot of stuff...I guess I know how to pick my spots."

Though Boomer may say no to some things, his community involvement extends beyond Stern. In addition to serving as a trustee of his church, Boomer is also a Robert Toigo Foundation mentor. One of his mentees who is also a Stern alumnus had the following wonderful things to say about Boomer's impact on his life.

"One conversation with Allan and you will immediately recognize that he has an uncanny ability to genuinely connect with people. The advice and the guidance that he provided me with during my years at Stern helped me to navigate many of the unwritten rules of corporate recruiting. As a mentor and a friend, Allan continues to be instrumental to my professional and personal growth."

Before taking his seat at the recent Association of Hispanic and Black Business Students (AHBBS) Conference, Boomer first had to navigate a crowded sea of students, alumni, and faculty eager to share a greeting.

With an easy grace, he stopped countless times along the way to offer hugs, handshakes, and an ever-present smile, all with the attentive enthusiasm that many reserve for old friends. Even in the simple act of crossing a room, Allan Boomer exemplifies a new definition of truly distinguished leadership.