



Ron Kollman is the founder and former Executive Director of Chefs With a Mission. Prior to forming Chefs With A Mission in 2012, Ron was the Executive Director Community Partnerships for the Atlantic City Rescue Mission (ACRM).

Ron's job at the Rescue Mission was to lead the community outreach of the ACRM by (1) strengthening existing programs, (2) developing new programs, and (3) increasing community awareness of the great humanitarian work done being performed daily by the ACRM. He was recruited for this difficult job because he had a reputation for innovation, teaching experience, and most importantly, leadership. As Executive Director of Community Partnerships, Ron also worked with other organizations, on their own turf, to develop opportunities in multiple tiers: volunteerism, research, training, and related programs. His goal in doing so was to provide clients at the ACRM with enhanced services and expanded opportunities. While at the Mission, Ron also assisted a Veterans housing program in becoming established in Atlantic City. Ron declined the opportunity to serve as their executive director in order to form Chefs With A Mission.

Ron is a 4th generation chef and the formation of Chefs With a Mission, a 501 (c) (3) charity has given him the opportunity to bring his extensive background in the food services to this newly formed innovative service organization.

Born in Somers Point, Ron is a lifelong resident of Atlantic County. Extending a multi-generational family tradition of engaging in the culinary arts, he became a chef/baker upon graduation from high school. In 1976, he entered the Army under the "stripes for skills program;" he became an instructor of food services immediately after basic training. In addition to teaching, Ron was trained and certified as a Race Relations and Equal Opportunity Officer (RREO). The RREO experience, coupled with teaching, made Ron a counselor, mediator, negotiator, therapist, medic, and all around problem solver. It was there that he developed his sense of community and the need to understand and appreciate all the peoples of this planet. In the Army, however, Ron realized that he needed to concentrate on his own formal education to make his plans for the community and himself come true.

While still in the military, Ron attended Glassboro State College (now Rowan University). He received a B.A. in Education (Vocational/Training). He used that degree for seventeen years as a public school food services instructor, seeking other certifications at Rutgers University during that time. Ron left teaching in 1997 to serve for seven years as an Apprenticeship and Training Coordinator for the State of New Jersey. During his career as an educator, he had the opportunity to work with adults and children from very diverse backgrounds and populations. Ron took a special interest in those students with the greatest barriers to becoming successful, while encouraging his gifted and talented students to understand, appreciate, help, and support their less fortunate colleagues.

By 2004, Ron Kollman had completed 28 years in his school district. He decided it was a good time to retire, while still young, to pursue professional and personal interests. Ron's focus, nevertheless, was still human relations and services, and he assisted numerous organizations in those efforts. These jobs, while difficult, were exciting. He (1) worked on inner city and downtown redevelopment projects with a national development company, (2) served as an Executive for the Boy Scouts of America, and (3) became a Director of a Community Resource

Center for an International Community Corrections Contractor. He even worked with a well-known rap artist linked to the national developer.

Ron has compiled a substantial "real world" resume. He is always willing to share his experiences with the educational community, especially with students who need encouragement to overcome impediments to their success. He says that many of these students need a leader and a role model to show them that this is a country of opportunity if you know where to look.

His journey – family business, military, higher education, public schools, non-profit organizations, for profit businesses, Boy Scout, and so on – has given him the credibility to lead others into productive lives they thought unachievable. Ron wants to empower others as he has empowered himself.

Ron's philosophy is a combination of thoughts expressed most eloquently by other leaders:

Winston Churchill

"What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we have gone."

Thomas Jefferson

"God grant that men of principle shall be our principal men."

George Washington

"I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of an honest man."

Eleanor Roosevelt

"We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down."

Martin Luther King Jr.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Dwight D. Eisenhower

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

Abraham Lincoln

"The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good."