

Former Ralphs CEO Allumbaugh Establishes Gift and Scholarship

With USC Marshall Food Industry Management Program

Gift will Further Enhance Development of Leaders in the Food Industry

Los Angeles, CA – May 3, 2018 – A generous million-dollar gift from the estate of Byron Allumbaugh was donated to the USC Marshall School of Business Food Industry Management (FIM) Programs. The Byron Allumbaugh Food Industry Leadership Scholarship has been established and is dedicated to educating and developing future leaders in the Food Industry. This full, graduate-level scholarship will be awarded each year to one outstanding FIM alumni accepted to the new online Master of Science in Food Industry Leadership. Allumbaugh spent 39 years with Ralphs Grocery Co., including nearly 20 years as chairman and CEO before his retirement.

“We are profoundly grateful that someone with Byron Allumbaugh’s reputation and prestige in the food industry has chosen to donate to the education of high potential future leaders,” said Cynthia McCloud, Director, USC Marshall Food Industry Management (FIM) Programs. “Mr. Allumbaugh’s vision to support education throughout his career has changed the lives of many.”

Allumbaugh began his career at Ralphs in 1958, the same year that USC launched the Food Industry Management Program at the Marshall School of Business. Allumbaugh sent many students through the certificate programs and provided guidance for the program as a close partner with Dr. Jim Stevenson, FIM director emeritus, for many years.



“The Food Industry Management program at USC Marshall is the pride and joy of the food industry,” said Stevenson, who led the FIM program from 1971 to 1998. “Over the years it has also become internationally known, with students from Finland, Ireland, Spain, Chile and Argentina.”

In addition to his leadership roles at Ralphs, Allumbaugh was an important visionary and leader in our industry, added McCloud. He was one of the co-founders and the Chairman of the Uniform Code Council, an organization that created the UPC code that is still used all over the world today. He held the roles of Food Marketing Institute chairman for two terms, chairman of the California Retailer Association from 1986 to 1993, and president of the Western Association of Food Chains in 1972. In 1987, FMI awarded him its highest individual honor, the Sidney Rabb award. Allumbaugh was later named a Horatio Alger Award winner in 1996.

“Byron’s unwavering commitment to training and education, including his support of the prestigious USC Food Industry Management Program, helped Ralphs build a highly respected management team, achieve industry-leading results, and develop many leaders who eventually went on to lead other companies” said Jim Lee, retired food industry leader from Ralphs and Stater Bros. and current professor in the FIM program.

Allumbaugh and his wife Ronnie remained active in supporting many charitable causes after his retirement. The Allumbaughs were passionate about helping others achieve their education; they were especially focused on supporting education for underprivileged children through the Horatio Alger Association.

Through the generous donation to the USC Marshall Food Industry Management Program, Marshall will be able to further enhance the program experience and add new programs as it continues the 60-year tradition of growing and developing future leaders.

The WAFC

This year, the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) celebrates its 60th anniversary of the partnership with the USC Marshall School of Business in supporting the Food Industry Management Program. Through the generous donations of companies and individuals in the food industry, this partnership has helped grow some of the top executives in the industry.

About the Food Industry Management Program at USC Marshall

The Food Industry Management Program at USC Marshall School of Business was established 1958. Each year, students attend a semester-long four-month leadership program. The university admits a maximum of 35 students from a wide range of companies in the food industry. Each student accepted into this elite program receives a full-tuition scholarship from the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC).

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