



Alan Rubin

Pittsfield, MA

When Alan Rubin was in junior high, an eclectic group of mentors shaped his life. Alan rode to work the summer he was 13 with his father, a New York City appliance store owner, who peppered him with key ideas he still applies today. His second mentor, an African American man from North Carolina, supervised him in the warehouse and taught him the wisdom of common sense. A camp counselor, who found him crying one night after a loss at sports quoted to him, “For when the one great scorer comes to write beside your name, he writes not that you won or lost but how you played the game.” He never again cried after losing at sports and he still quotes this saying when coaching students.

Alan’s dyslexia also guided him to mentors he only met in books. Because reading was hard, Alan focused on his favorite genre, biography. He learned that even the most successful people experience failure. When failure came his way, he always saw it as part of life and something he could learn from. Mentoring was part of Alan’s management style as a research and development engineer for ten years and was integral when he ran the family business for forty years.

In retirement, mentoring has become even more significant for Alan. He mentors children at Morningside Elementary School in Pittsfield. He coaches soccer goalkeepers at McCann, Taconic, and Wahconah high schools. Alan notes that he teaches soccer skills, but he also teaches character. As an OLLI member, Alan also mentors students at Berkshire Community College. When asked about his mentoring style, Alan remarked, “I don’t tell kids all my successes. I tell them about the mistakes I made and what I learned from them.”

Alan also mentored his two children in sports and life and this summer, he and his wife, Sandi, hosted their granddaughter while she interned at Hancock Shaker Village. In 2018 his daughter, Jen, gave him a book length thank you for his mentoring, documenting his career as a small businessperson in New York City.

Photography: Lucy Kennedy

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