

Create Your Own Destiny

By Linda Wellbrock

It was 6:00 a.m. on a Monday morning and Allison Sargent awoke as usual to do the daily bus commute into Manhattan from Montclair, NJ. For over a decade, she had an amazing career in fashion with Lord and Taylor at their flagship location in NYC, where she produced large-scale special events that launched the retailer's highly successful merchandising program the Focus American series. Her high profile position afforded her dream job opportunities like traveling all over the world and working directly with high fashion icons like Bill Blass, Ralph Lauren and Liz Claiborne. She enjoyed every aspect of her job until her biggest dream came true by becoming a mother. Suddenly, her dream job needed to be tweaked. A stranger on a bus helped her with that. One evening, a woman sat next to her and said, "You need to create your own destiny. I've seen you on this bus everyday and you know everyone and you have something special about you. Have you ever thought about starting your own business?" Sargent talked with this woman the entire ride from New York, but never saw her again. It was someone who changed her life and made her think about how she could have it

programs. I wanted to start a business that provided real service and high-level design philosophy.

Today, Sargent feels like she has been preparing for her current position as founder and president of Allison Sargent Events (ASE) for most of her working life. Based in Montclair, ASE is a full-service custom events & corporate gifts company with a motto of "one-of-a-kind creativity with dramatic style." Sargent and ASE plan to focus more on philanthropy, while also developing ideas for helping female entrepreneurs in the state.

"My professional experience in retailing, upbringing and background were key stepping stones for launching the event business," says Sargent. "I love listening to my clients and

"I have had fantastic women role models who helped shaped my personal and professional life."

hearing what they want. And then, we guide each client through the planning process while paying close attention to hundreds of small, yet essential, details that are part of every special event."



all - how she could create her own destiny and realize the dream of becoming a successful entrepreneur and mother."

After that evening on the bus, Sargent started thinking, "I have been driven to do this from the time I was 11-years-old. I remember planning dinner parties for my eighth grade classmates and talking with my mother about how she could help me...I made a plan. I wanted to focus on private clients and corporations that needed detailed-oriented full service events and corporate gift

Sargent has created, designed and produced imaginative corporate and social events for Fortune 500 companies, mid-size and small businesses, industry associations and non-profit organizations as well as families and individuals. Throughout the year, ASE also plans and executes a wide variety of social occasions including weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, sweet sixteens, anniversaries and birthday parties for people of all ages. The company has also planned destination events that are held in

locations around the world.

“I believe in all the good things. I believe that you can build a business with all the right principles,” she says. Those who worked with Sargent appreciate her vision, creativity and attention to detail, as well as the special dramatic flair that she brings to each occasion. She makes every event a true celebration of a client’s dreams from an elegant, intimate dinner party to a classic wedding reception or the most extravagant corporate gala.

“Life is a big circle. We all sit at the table of life except we never know what chair we will sit in next.” Sargent says. “I have had fantastic women role models who helped shaped my personal and professional life. I’ve been so blessed in my life to have had opportunities to work with the best of the best.

And my role is to continue that legacy by mentoring and helping women who want to achieve their potential in business or by giving back to their communities. I seem to gravitate towards helping women connect with jobs, people and organizations.

“I would advise anyone who is thinking about starting their own company to be confident, believe in the dream and have the drive and ambition to see it through.” For her clients, she suggests including a philanthropic

as a board member to such nonprofits like the Salvation Army in Montclair and the Montclair Fund for Educational Excellence. For many years, she has been an assistant scoutmaster with the Boy Scouts of America Troop 13 in Montclair. In fact, she organized, raised funds and went with Troop 13 scouts when they attended the World Jamboree in England last summer. This spring, Sargent, her husband David, and her daughter Carly, watched as her son, Tucker received his Eagle Scout honor.

For more information contact Allison Sargent at 973-783-5689 or go to www.allisonsargent.com.

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dimension in their events to make them more meaningful. For example, she recently presented a program about entertainment tips and tablescaping at the Mansion in May, as part of a fundraiser for Morristown Memorial Hospital.

When not tablescaping, Sargent contributes her time, resources and expertise