

George Allen Weiss

George Weiss, your belief in the transformative powers of education has created opportunities for thousands of at-risk children throughout the United States. In 1987, you founded Say Yes to Education when you boldly promised to send more than 100 Philadelphia schoolchildren to college if they graduated high school. Today, this nonprofit organization impacts 65,000 students in five cities, including Hartford.

You serve as chairman of Say Yes, which combines comprehensive support for students in grades kindergarten through 12 with the incentive of college scholarships to bridge the achievement gap between urban and suburban children.

In 1978, your success as a stockbroker led you to found George Weiss Associates, a money-management firm with offices in Hartford and New York. You currently are president of this firm and CEO of Weiss Multi-Strategy Advisers.

You know firsthand how education can change lives. The son of Jewish immigrants who fled Nazi Austria, you grew up poor in Massachusetts and began bussing tables at age 11. You were working in a hotel coffee shop when a Boston University professor encouraged you to attend the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, where you graduated in 1965.

It was at Penn where you discovered your love of philanthropy. During your sophomore year, your fraternity hosted a Christmas party for 12 underprivileged boys. You befriended them, playing pool and basketball and listening to their stories of hardship. After working a few years on Wall Street, you returned to take them to lunch and learned that all 12, inspired by your friendship, had graduated high school. It was then that you made a vow to provide opportunities for underserved youth through education.

Along the way, you never forgot your pledge. In addition to founding and growing Say Yes, you have given most generously to the University of Pennsylvania, endowing professorships and scholarships and funding academic and athletic centers.

Your philanthropy is not limited to the realm of education. In response to a young relative's diagnosis, you founded the Orphan Disease Pathway Project, which partners with Penn Medicine to find cures and treatments for rare diseases.

Your generosity of spirit also is evident in your volunteer commitments: you are a trustee at Penn Medicine and a member of the Penn Medicine Executive Committee. In the past, you served as vice chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania and chair of its Development Committee. You also chaired the university's "Making History" campaign, which raised \$4.3 billion for Penn.

In recognition of your dedicated service to your alma mater, you received Penn's 1985 Alumni Award of Merit and an honorary doctor of laws degree in 2014. Other awards include honorary doctorates from Syracuse University, Lesley College, and Colby-Sawyer College, as well as the Cleveland E. Dodge Medal for distinguished service in education. You also are a life regent of the University of Hartford, which bestowed upon you its Medal for Distinguished Service in 1996.

In recognition of your exemplary educational philanthropy and your devotion to providing opportunities for at-risk youth, I have the honor of presenting you, George Allen Weiss, for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

Joanne Berger-Sweeney
President and Trinity College
Professor of Neuroscience

Philip S. Khoury '71
Vice Chair, Trinity College Board
of Trustees

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