

Rosemary Kowalski

A distinguished businesswoman, Rosemary Kowalski, Chairman Emeritus of The RK Group, is well-known for her philanthropic efforts in San Antonio's cultural, human services and educational organizations. The RK Group, now under the ownership of her son, Greg Kowalski, is without question, the preeminent full-service special event organization throughout San Antonio and South Texas.

A native of the Alamo city, Rosemary attended Blessed Sacrament Academy and Incarnate Word High School. In 1946, she began her career in a tiny barbecue restaurant called Uncle Ben's, which she and her husband purchased after World War II. After responding to a request to cater a church bazaar, Kowalski began catering private parties. With long hours, hard work and dedication, her reputation for giving customers more than they expect grew by leaps and bounds. By 1961, "Catering by Rosemary" became the official company name.

Referred to as the "Legend of Texas," in 1968, Rosemary was called upon to cater most of the official events of HemisFair. Afterwards, the city of San Antonio offered the contract for all catering services in the new convention center. Kowalski transformed the business into the RK Group in 1993 and today, eleven divisions are operated under this corporate umbrella, including catering and delivery services, rentals and designs, management services, floral arrangements and restaurants.

Former San Antonio mayor Walter McAllister once told Rosemary... "Young lady, some day you are going to amount to something." He was right. Ms Kowalski has built an empire from "scratch" and helped pave the way for women in what she contends is still "a man's world." Although the catering company has served Pope John Paul II, Prince Charles, Billy Graham, Willie Nelson, Grace Kelly, several U.S. presidents and 20 of the past Texas Business Hall of Fame Honorees, she remains a woman without pretensions. While Rosemary enjoys catering events for the famous, she is most grateful for the repeat local business; for it is the local clientele that helped build the legendary catering company.

Kowalski's awards number nearly 20, beginning with her election to the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame and most recently, being honored by San Antonio's New World Wine & Food Festival for her outstanding culinary contributions to that city.

She has worked tirelessly to build the renowned catering business, all the while continuing to support civic community and religious causes in her beloved San Antonio. At 80, she continues to devote herself to the organizations which are dear to her heart including helping to bring a Smithsonian satellite museum to San Antonio, and supporting local Hispanic artists.

Kowalski continues to be involved in the local affairs of San Antonio, serving on many civic, religious and social boards. She is a charter member of LDEI Texas Chapter and is past president. Currently, she is involved in developing a special school that provides

dropouts with a second chance at an education. Her charitable contributions to worthwhile endeavors are as legendary as her career achievements.

Rosemary's enthusiasm for business and, more importantly life, has never waned.... She has achieved excellence in her field, remains active in mentoring young women, and continues to challenge herself to embrace new business techniques and develop new interests.