

Stanley Lou

by Doug Kent

As the owner of a small grocery and bakery, and the father of 10 children, how do you make ends meet? Little did you know that your second child would be on his own at age 12 and finally end up in the U.S. with his own business. Let's go back a few years now and fill in a few details on this very interesting story.

It is in Tatkon, Burma, on April 5, 1959 that our Mr. April (Mr. A) started his life. He worked in his father's grocery and bakery as did all of his brothers and sisters, and at age 4 started to earn his own money by wrapping candy for his father. In the 9th grade, our Mr. A tested for a Special Program of advanced education but was not allowed to participate because he was not a citizen of Burma. This was very disappointing to his father and to Mr. A. At the tender age of 12, (1972) along with his sister at age 13, were sent to relatives in Macau, to continue their education. Things did not work out due to lack of support from his father, so Mr. A had to go to work to bring in money to sustain himself in this new country. His sister also had to work. The only jobs available were in "sweat shops" associated with the garment industry. Mr. A worked 10 hour days 6 days a week to support himself. He had to learn the language and continue his education. It took 7 years, but Mr. A managed to graduate high school.

It was 1978, and Mr. A managed to save enough money to purchase his own Knitting Shop. He hired 32 workers, and developed his shop into specialized projects along with reconditioning older knitting machines. In just 8 years, Mr. A was able to sell his shop and immigrated to the U.S. In New York, Mr. A worked in the grocery and restaurant industry, and after a short period of time enrolled in night school to learn English.

He managed to find a position in the fashion industry and began to learn the pattern cutting aspect of this very complex, highly competitive industry. Mr. A was accepted into the Fashion Institute of Technology and for the next 7 years, worked full time and went to school at night to become a certified pattern maker. He specialized in women's coats and suits. As a graduate pattern maker, he worked in the garment industry of New York until 2001.

It was in 2001 that Mr. A invested in a 16 unit, residential building in Brooklyn, New York. He managed this rental property until 2011. He had the opportunity to travel and visited Florida several times. Mr. A worked his entire life and worked hard. He had very little time for socializing. In 2011, Mr. A sold the complex in Brooklyn, and moved to Fort Lauderdale where he purchased an 18 bay strip mall. He manages the mall today. In 2014, he met his friend and they live apart but socializing every opportunity they can.

Mr. A is a world traveler and an active swimmer. A Prime Timer for the last three years, this soft spoken, well dressed individual, who has worked since age 12 and has been responsible for himself, always smiles and enjoys life to the fullest.

