



Jim Allen is a Man of His Word

Jim Allen is a man of his word. At a news conference this past June, Allen, CEO Seminole Gaming and Chairman of Hard Rock International, announced to the world that the official opening day for the Hard Rock's new \$1.3 billion "Guitar Hotel" would be October 24, 2019. Period. End of story.

Maybe there were naysayers. Maybe some unexpected tropical disturbance would upset the master plan. But guess what? The hotel opened, as Jim Allen promised, on Thursday, October 24.

For two years, thousands of workers were on a mission to make sure that the hotel would open on the day Allen said it would. The crews worked around the clock on days that many of us found unbearable to leave the house. In what seems now, like a blink of an eye, a building in the shape of a guitar started to appear and it was like nothing we have ever seen.

Business schools should teach courses about Jim Allen. I don't know him very well but what I do know is that he's been working since he was a teenager to support his family after his father died. He had a full-time job as a dishwasher at a pizzeria when he was just 14. Talk about playing the cards you were dealt with.

He later worked for some of the best companies in the world and soared to the top. Jim Allen has been with the Seminole Tribe of Florida as CEO of Seminole Gaming since 2001. His loyalty and commitment is

unwavering. What separates him from the pack is that he announces to the world what his visions are and then sets out to do it.

He has passion, creativity and guts. If you were to look up the term “thinks out of the box” you will find Jim Allen’s picture. Quite frankly, I don’t think there is one specific term that can accurately describe him. All I know is that he runs a huge operation. Forbes calls the Hard Rock franchise, “one of the best companies in the world to work for.”

One day (I don’t know when) the light bulb went off in his head and Jim Allen decided that the world needed a hotel in the shape of a guitar. From what I have learned, many people thought he was downright crazy. Nothing was going to stop him!

I had the privilege of attending the Grand Opening of the #Guitar Hotel. I still haven’t recovered from it. The highlight was the traditional guitar smash and VIP party held poolside. Once the program got underway, members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida welcomed and thanked everyone. One by one, they expressed gratitude to the people who built the hotel, the Hard Rock staff and sang the praises of a man they trust with their lives, Jim Allen. They called him a “visionary” and “a leader.”

When it came to building the new Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood, Jim put all of his chips on the table. He knew he had a winning hand.

During the afternoon of October 24, before the festivities, I was able to talk with Jim, again. *Here’s what he had to say.*