

**KAREN S. KALISH**

225 Linden Ave. St. Louis, Mo. 63105  
314.727.2727h, 314.727.1122fax, 314.580.6832c  
[karenkalish@gmail.com](mailto:karenkalish@gmail.com) [www.karenkalish.com](http://www.karenkalish.com)

Karen Kalish is a serial social entrepreneur focused on literacy, closing the academic, opportunity, and achievement gaps in public schools, and ending all forms of anti-Semitism and discrimination, especially racial. She is the founder of three nonprofits and one program: Operation Understanding DC in Washington, DC, and Cultural Leadership and HOME WORKS! The Teacher Home Visit Program in St. Louis. The program was Books and Badges in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Karen lived in Washington, DC for 27 years, Chicago for five years, and Cambridge, Massachusetts for two years. She taught school for six years in DC (Sidwell Friends) before becoming the consumer and investigative reporter for CBS-TV there. In 1978 she had the same beat for ABC-TV in Chicago, and then was the Washington, DC reporter/producer for Entertainment Tonight. In 1987, she started Kalish Communications to teach clients how to talk to the media without putting their foot in their mouth and how to write and give dynamic, interesting speeches and presentations. She has served on the boards of directors of many nonprofits from the NAACP to the DC Jewish Community Center and has won many awards for her community service including a Purpose Prize Fellowship and the NCCJ Brotherhood and Sisterhood Award and one of the St. Louis Business Journal's Diversity Award.

In 1994 in Washington she started:

- *Operation Understanding DC*, a year-long leadership program for Black and Jewish high school students that teaches them about their own and each other's race, religion, culture, and history.

In 2001 Karen returned to St. Louis (after being gone for 34 years), where she works on education transformation and establishing a level playing field for communities of color. The programs she has started are:

- *HOME WORKS! The Teacher Home Visit Program* trains, supports and pays teachers to go to the homes of their struggling students to get their families engaged in their children's education. HOME WORKS! teachers build trust and relationships to partner with parents to improve academic achievement, attendance, classroom behavior, and homework completion. And it's working!
- *Books and Badges* partnered St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department recruits and other reading partners with St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) elementary students to improve reading and language skills.
- *Cultural Leadership* is a year-long educational leadership program for high school students to teach them about civil rights, social justice, and democracy, and how to be activists, advocates, and change agents to rid America of racism and all forms of discrimination to make the US a country with justice, equity, and opportunity for all.

Karen received an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School in 2000 (at age 54!) and spent a second year there taking a full load of classes in the African American, leadership, and nonprofit departments. (She was so proud of her degree from Harvard that she enlarged it to make wallpaper for her office bathroom wall!)

Karen is the author of [How to Give a Terrific Presentation](#), [Dealing Effectively with the Media](#), and [I'll See You On The Radio](#). She has traveled widely nationally and internationally including hiking to the bottom of the Grand Canyon in 2005 and visiting Antarctica in 2010.

11/9/2021