



THE ASSOCIATION & VOICE OF THE US SEWN PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

**SEAMS' Member Spotlight:
Almack Liners**

Note: Each edition of our newsletter, SEAMS features one of our esteemed members. In this edition of SEAMS Member Spotlight, [Almack Liners](#), Chatsworth, Calif, is featured. Susana Almack, founder and president, responds to questions submitted by Devin Steele.

Year founded: 1990

3) Primary Specialties:

Cut-and-sew / product development for fabric and garments.

Number of employees/locations?

One location in Chatsworth, Calif. with 11 employees.

Markets served:

50/50 private sector/government contracts. "As for the government contracts, we provide services for the U.S. Military and U.S. Federal Prison Industries, as well as other private sector companies that have contracts with the U.S. Government."

Historical insights:

The company is 100 percent owned by me Almack and has been since its inception. "I'm originally from Buenos Aires, Argentina. My father owned a textile company in Argentina. I moved to the United States when I was 18 and learned the ins and outs of the business through my father. Over the 30 years that Almack Liners has existed, I have learned to diversify to fit different needs in the textile market. I've always been involved in product development for the private sector but I earned my first government contract around 20 years ago. Three years ago, I began my own women's contemporary clothing line called Stones Flowers Apparel."

Company's differentiators?

"Almack Liners is incredibly loyal to its vendors and clients. Due to the small size but advanced capabilities of our company, we are able to provide personally tailored solutions to all of our clients. Our success is also due to the great working relationship we've maintained with all of our vendors. In addition, we have the distinction of being both a woman and minority-owned small business."

Type of manufacturing processes handled in the production facility:

"The only manufacturing process **that is not** completed in-house is the conversion of raw materials into fabric. This leaves the following processes that we handle in-house: product development (fabric/garment), pattern/sample making, grading, samples/duplicates, cut-and-sew and finishing."

Internal designer:

"Yelena Sonkin is a crucial member of our team at both Almack Liners and Stone Flowers Apparel. She is a fabric developer and a garment designer."



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Military products:

“In conjunction with Beverly Kimball (formerly of Natick), Almack Liners developed and designed the physical fitness uniform (PFU) trunks for the U.S. Army. This included the issued and optional trunks. Almack Liners designed the trunks themselves as well as two of the component fabrics used in the trunks (the liner fabric and side-panel fabric). For the PFU trunks that we designed, Almack Liners provides the aforementioned fabric to UNICOR FPI to produce the issued PFU trunks and to Soffe Apparel for the optional PFU trunks. We also hold other contracts with UNICOR FPI and the private sector manufacturers, under which we provide fabric for production of PFUs for the Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy.

On Berry Amendment:

“The Berry Amendment is important to our business because it requires all products manufactured for federal contracts to be made in the U.S.A. along with the components used in the products. As discussed above, Almack Liners is an entirely U.S.A.-based business. As an aside, everything for Almack Liners' contemporary clothing line (Stone Flowers Apparel) is made in the U.S.A. as well.”

How company has adapted over the last few years to remain competitive, especially as much apparel production has moved offshore?

“Almack Liners takes pride in producing everything in the U.S. We try to make our clients and consumers aware of the importance of keeping our economy moving through the patronage of U.S.-based businesses. Obviously, the Berry Amendment has kept the public sector side of our business relevant. In terms of the private sector, we emphasize that we ensure ethical work conditions for our employees by keeping all the production in-house, which we believe is an increasing concern for American consumers.

Thoughts on the made-in-America movement:

“I think the made-in-America movement is a must! We need to support each other and we have the values as a nation to respect and cultivate a healthy environment for our employees, which transfers over to a higher quality product for our consumers. The made-in-America movement has also ensured that garment, fabric and dye production is sustainable for the environment, in a way that is not the case for offshore production. We can't underestimate the importance of this. By keeping production in the U.S., we maintain a healthy relationship with Mother Earth.

Company's ongoing strategy to produce or source in this country:

The biggest element is maintaining the excellent relationship we have with our vendors. By establishing and maintaining these relationships with other U.S.-based vendors, it's easier to continue developing and manufacturing high-quality products through a team effort.

Biggest challenges and opportunities in manufacturing in the USA?

“Since *we've never* manufactured abroad and have maintained solid capitalization for most of the history of the company, I don't personally see many serious challenges to manufacturing in the U.S. The main challenge, undeniably, would be the increased costs that come with manufacturing here and thereby remaining competitive in the marketplace with cheaper products coming from overseas. However, the opportunities that come with manufacturing in the USA as a U.S. Citizen-owned business is that we have much greater quality control over all elements of our production and thereby insure that



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we create a higher quality product than our competitors that use overseas production, in addition to a much faster turnaround.

How the coronavirus crisis has affected business:

“Our business was fortunate to be designated as an essential business due to our government contracts. As a result, we were able to stay open. We listed our business with the City of Los Angeles as a local manufacturer to produce PPE masks for local businesses and individuals in need of them in order to re-open as restrictions loosened in the city. Once we started producing PPE masks, we resumed production at full capacity. The nature of our workplace is such that we could maintain social distancing within the warehouse while still employing our full workforce.”

Business outlook for the company for the foreseeable future:

“It’s a tough road ahead for everyone. As long as we are all working together and helping each other, from vendors to clients, we will see continued success.

Business conditions, her opinion on the health of the apparel/textile/sewn products industry markets the company serves and what things will make you successful in this environment:

“With coronavirus, it’s a very delicate time for our industry. With people staying at home and sometimes without a source of income, fewer clothes are being purchased. However, what will make our company succeed is our ability to give a fast turnaround for businesses when they do reopen and suddenly have to meet the needs of consumers that are returning to pre-COVID purchasing habits. Eventually, we will find a new normal, and when we do, our ability to adapt and quickly meet the needs of other U.S. based clients, by virtue of being a U.S.-based business ourselves, will enable us to be successful.”

On being a SEAMS member:

“I’ve been a member for around a decade. SEAMS brings a world of value for our business. SEAMS gives us the ability to network with like-minded individuals in this industry and share our successes and failures in order to learn from them. It provides unlimited resources since SEAMS is always on top of what’s going on with the industry and helps us meet the rapidly changing needs of the business climate. SEAMS pays invaluable dividends to all of its members.