

Entrepreneur Joel Labovitz dies at 92

Feb 18, 2021



Duluth entrepreneur Joel Labovitz died on Saturday, Feb. 13, at the age of 92. Born in Duluth, he graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth in 1949 with a B.A. in Business Administration.

He is the son of E. Maurice Labovitz, who founded the Maurices clothing chain in 1931. Joel took over the firm in 1955, when it had three stores, and ran it until 1981, when it had grown to 271. He was also board chairman of Duluth-based Labovitz Enterprises, which has interests in the Lion Hotel Group and First Properties, owner of the Holiday Inn & Suites and Holiday Center Shopping Mall, and the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Duluth. It also owns and operates hotels and real estate in Bozeman, Mont.; Bloomington, Minn., and Palm Coast, Fla.

During his career, Labovitz was named Business Leader of the Year by University of Minnesota Duluth Student Business Administration Club and Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce. He also was the first recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Minnesota Duluth and served on the Board of Directors of Minnesota Public Radio.

Labovitz also served as inspiration for Joel Labovitz Entrepreneurial Success Awards, presented annually for 25 years until 2017 by the University of Minnesota Duluth Center for Economic Development. They recognized private entrepreneurs who exhibited business skills and community contributions similar to their namesake.

He is survived by his children, Mark (Jennifer), Anne Labovitz Gamble (Bill) and Sarah Bauer (Mick); his wife Sharon; his grandchildren, Jackson, Tessa, Henry, Isabella, Eddie, Maya Li, Cecelia, Rosie and Eva.

He was laid to rest in a private family burial. To see his full obituary, [click here](#).