

Robert I. Lappin
Philanthropist, Businessman
Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*

Robert Lappin. Your name has become synonymous with doing the right thing. In your mind, however, you do the only thing a principled man of conviction *can* do. You do the honorable thing. Because of you, both your employees and the hundreds of North Shore Jewish men, women and children who participate in the programs funded by your foundation are able to say, “I know a noble man of principle. I know a true *mensch*.”

A person of few words, strong convictions and fierce loyalties, your success in business has not altered your intrinsic sense of self. A humble man, you are not given to outward, material expressions of your achievements. You continue to drive your 21-year-old Mercedes, and until well into your '80s were a familiar site rollerblading from your home in Swampscott to your office in Shetland Park.

Your devotion to your Jewish heritage is legend and your efforts to instill those values in the younger generation bear fruit each year when your eponymous Robert I. Lappin Foundation sends Jewish teenagers from 23 North Shore towns to Israel through the Youth to Israel Adventure. Despite suffering massive financial losses two years ago, you and your foundation worked tirelessly to ensure the survival of the program, believing it to be “a rite of passage for every Jewish teen in our community.”

During the recent financial upheavals on Wall Street, when others looked out for themselves, you looked out for others. In replenishing your employees' lost retirement savings from your personal funds, you restored our faith in humanity. A beacon of trust, hope and responsibility in a time of great darkness, you led us toward the light.

Your success in business has made you a wealthy man. Your success as human being, however, has brought you the kind of riches others may never know. After your family, you call the work of your foundation the greatest joy of your life. A lover of people, and a lover of the land of Israel, you uphold the highest ideals of the Jewish faith, nourishing its rich and historic heritage in the youth who will follow you. May you live long and prosper.