



H&R Block announces passing of co-founder, Henry W. Bloch

April 23, 2019

Business legend represented the best in American entrepreneurialism and philanthropy

KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 23, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- One of the founding voices of the tax preparation industry was lost today with the passing of Henry Wollman Bloch, 96. Bloch was a visionary entrepreneur and philanthropist who, along with his brother Richard, co-founded H&R Block Inc. (NYSE: HRB) in 1955.

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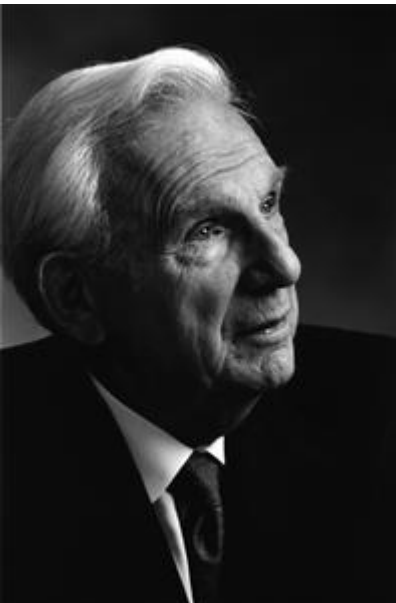
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With strong personal values and a commitment to clients, Bloch helped guide the growth of the small family business from a single storefront on Main Street in Kansas City, Mo., to become a global consumer tax services provider.

Born July 30, 1922, Bloch died peacefully today surrounded by his family.

Bloch retired as the company's chief executive officer in 1992 and as chairman of the board of directors in 2000. In 1989, he became chairman of the board of directors and chief executive officer. He served as president of H&R Block from 1962 until 1988, adding the title of chief executive officer in 1974.

Although retired, Bloch worked daily on his many philanthropic endeavors in Kansas City, including the Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation, the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri – Kansas City, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Saint Luke's Hospital and the H & R Block Foundation.

"Through his honesty and integrity, Henry embodied the best of American business, entrepreneurship and philanthropy. In so many ways, he was ahead of his time and a model for today's entrepreneur," said Jeff Jones, president and chief executive officer of H&R Block Inc. "His vision lives on through our H&R Block associates and the many philanthropic organizations that he supported."

A life of achievement

Bloch, the second son of a prominent Kansas City lawyer, attended Southwest High School in Kansas City and began his college career at the University of Kansas City, later transferring to the University of Michigan, from which he graduated in 1944 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in mathematics.

He joined the Army Air Corps shortly after the United States entered World War II. Serving in the Eighth Air Force as a navigator on B-17 bombers, he flew 32 combat missions over Germany, three of them over Berlin, and was awarded the Air Medal and three Oak Leaf Clusters.

After the war in 1945, Bloch and his brother, Leon, founded United Business Company, which provided bookkeeping and other services to small businesses in Kansas City. Shortly thereafter, Leon left the business to pursue a law degree, and younger brother Richard joined United Business

Company in 1946.

Tax preparation was a complementary service offered by the two brothers to their small business clients. But in 1955, the brothers decided to eliminate the tax service and focus on their bookkeeping business. One client – an advertising representative with *The Kansas City Star* – encouraged them to continue their tax preparation service and persuaded them to place two advertisements in the paper. The ads offered federal and state income tax preparation for \$5.

The response to the advertisements was immediate and overwhelming, because the Internal Revenue Service had just started phasing out its practice of preparing tax returns free-of-charge to taxpayers in Kansas City, with plans to eliminate the free service across the country. Later that year, Henry and Richard Bloch founded H&R Block, changing the spelling of their last name to make it easier to pronounce and spell.

In 1956, the IRS discontinued free tax preparation in New York City, and the brothers pursued this opportunity by opening six offices there, along with two additional offices in Kansas City. The company generated more than \$120,000 in revenue, a six-fold increase over the previous year.

The company rapidly expanded, aided by the concept of franchising H&R Block tax offices. In 1962, H&R Block became a public company, with an initial public offering of 75,000 shares at \$4 each. Today, there are more than 12,000 H&R Block offices.

A life of giving

In addition to building a successful business, Bloch was committed to building stronger communities through education, healthcare and the arts. This was especially evident in his hometown of Kansas City.

Henry once said, "Over the years, I have enjoyed giving back. And in the process I have learned that true success is not measured in what you get, but in what you give back."

In 2011, Henry and his wife, Marion, established the Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation to be able to continue to give back to Kansas City for generations to come. The Foundation supports efforts in the areas of post-secondary business and entrepreneurship education; healthcare; social services; education for low-income, underserved youth; visual and performing arts; and Jewish organizations in Kansas City.

In addition to his own foundation, Bloch and his wife were life-long supporters of three Kansas City institutions: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Saint Luke's Hospital and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Bloch had a passion for the arts and served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, one of the nation's premiere art museums. In June 2007, the museum opened the internationally acclaimed Bloch Building expansion, named in honor of Henry and Marion Bloch. And in 2010, Marion and Henry Bloch announced that they would donate their expansive personal collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings to the museum, which includes works from artists such as Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Edgar Degas. The Bloch Galleries, which opened in March 2017, in the museum's original 1933 Beaux-Arts building, features nearly 30 masterpieces acquired by the Bloch family over the course of two decades.

Over the years, Bloch donated countless hours in the classroom, mentored Bloch Scholars students and provided funding for scholarships and professorships. In 2012, Bloch provided a gift to the University of Missouri-Kansas City that supported the construction of a state-of-the-art building to house the Henry W. Bloch School of Management's graduate and executive programs.

During his lifetime, Bloch served on more than 50 corporate and nonprofit boards and received more than 50 awards and citations recognizing his entrepreneurial and philanthropic service to the academic, cultural and business communities. He received honorary doctorate degrees from eight colleges and universities.

Bloch is preceded in death by his wife, Marion; brothers Richard and Leon; and his parents. Mr. Bloch is survived by his four children: Robert L. Bloch, Thomas M. Bloch, Mrs. Mary Jo Brown, and Mrs. Elizabeth Uhlmann, all of Kansas City; 12 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren.

Bloch's brother and business partner, Richard, died on July 21, 2004. His brother was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer in 1978, and told he had three months to live. On his personal quest to "beat the odds," he was cured after two years of aggressive therapy. Richard Bloch made a promise that if he survived, he would devote his life to helping others fight cancer. He left the business in 1980 and devoted the rest of his life to philanthropic activities to help cancer patients.

To learn more about the life of Henry Bloch, please visit www.rememberinghenrybloch.com.

About H&R Block

H&R Block, Inc. (NYSE: HRB) is a global consumer tax services provider. [Tax return preparation](#) services are provided by professional tax preparers in approximately 12,000 company-owned and franchise [retail tax offices](#) worldwide, and through H&R Block [tax software products](#) for the DIY consumer. H&R Block also offers adjacent Tax Plus products and services. In fiscal 2018, H&R Block had annual revenues of over \$3.1 billion with over 23 million tax returns prepared worldwide. For more information, visit the [H&R Block Newsroom](#).

[Download Henry W. Bloch video tribute \(broll\)](#)

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