

Joseph C. Placek Memorial Scholarship



Joseph Placek was born in 1906, one of seven boys born to Ignatz and Tekla Placzek. Joseph Placek's parents came to the United States in 1900. Ignatz, who could not speak English, started a small masonry business building sidewalks and fireplaces.

Joseph was the only son to go on to college, graduating from Northeastern University as an Electrical Engineer. He worked his way through college, working part-time and with scholarships. He was Captain of the Northeastern University Basketball Team. After graduating, he could not find work because of the "Great Depression."

In 1935, he started a business distributing fruits and vegetables to independent stores and restaurants in Westfield. Later, he started to distribute beer and wine.

Today, Commercial Distributing Company is run by the third generation. Richard Placek, second generation, is past president and now chairman of the board. Mark Placek is the current president.

Joseph always wanted to see children happy. Today, Commercial Distributing Company is a long time sponsor of a team in Westfield Little League, which Joseph began many years ago.

This scholarship was established in 2017 by Richard and Marcia Placek, in loving honor of Richard's father, Joseph C. Placek.

Written by: Richard C. Placek
March 20, 2017