

McCLAIN J. "MACK" EASTON  
1946 - 1988

Mack was born an identical twin with his brother Mike in September 1946 in Milford, Utah. The boys were eight when the family moved to Mesquite, Nevada, a small town on the desert. Sports were a consuming interest to Mack, including playing football, basketball, and baseball, much of it on school teams. Scouting also was of high interest to him with many adventures camping in the desert and earning the coveted rank of Eagle Scout.

During his high school years, Mack was involved in drama, sports, and the Forensic Club. He was photographer of the yearbook, President of the Student Council, and was valedictorian of his graduating class. His undergraduate studies began at Dixie College. He interrupted his studies to serve a two-year mission for his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The two-year mission took him to Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. He then continued his education at Brigham Young University, and graduated cum laude with a degree in business management in 1970. In 1971, Mack received his Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah. He also was the recipient of the John A. Carlson Scholarship. The scholarship is given annually to the outstanding graduate student.

The Army drafted Mack after college and he was sent to Japan, where he served honorably.

Mack's professional career began at Chrysler Corporation in Detroit, Michigan where he worked until 1981. He then moved to Alaska to become the Assistant Superintendent for Business/Finance at the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. He became a member of the Alaska Association of School Business Officials and served on the board. He was elected President-Elect for 1987 and would have assumed the position of President in April of 1988.

Certain personality traits endeared Mack to his colleagues in his professional life. He was quickly recognized for his friendliness and humor, qualities that created a comfortable and optimistic atmosphere in the school district.

Many recognized Mack for his integrity and his willingness to learn and to help others. With no previous school finance experience, his professionalism enabled him to quickly master this field, becoming a recognized expert in state school funding. He was unassuming, and like many people who accomplish much, he never sought recognition for himself. He was content to make a difference in the quality of education available to the youth of Fairbanks. Mack recognized the value of an education. Being able to contribute to the education process of so many children made his work pleasing and purposeful.

Mack's personal life is an even higher tribute to him. Mack married Nani Rush in 1970 in a ceremony that they believe sealed them, and their children to come, as an eternal

family. His commitment to Nani and their six children highlighted his life. The same qualities that softened the stress in the workplace contributed to the obvious warm, loving, and accepting relationships within his family. Others recognized his expertise in creating a happy home life and often asked him to present classes to the young people in his church. He took personal interest in the efforts of these young people and their accomplishments, never missing a chance to compliment a young person. In tribute to Mack, some of the young men who felt his influence most wrote to Nani expressing deep appreciation for the sincere interest and lasting influence he had on their lives.

Mack and five of his children were seriously injured in a car accident on February 23, 1988. A great outpouring of love and concern encircled his family as they faced their recovery in the hospital. Friends, teachers, and fellow workers helped Nani by keeping a round-the-clock vigil with each of the children. The children recovered, but Mack died on March 6, 1988. His funeral services, held in a church that could accommodate seven hundred, was filled to overflowing, another testament to the many lives that were touched by this modest but very influencing man. After services in Fairbanks, Alaska, and Mesquite, Nevada, Mack was buried near his boyhood home.

On the banks of the Chena River in Fairbanks, Alaska, lies Golden Heart Park, a monument to the many individuals who have made significant contributions to our way of life in this heartland of Alaska. The inscription on one plaque reads:

"In memory of McClain J. "Mack" Easton, whose love for his family and dedication to the education of the children in Fairbanks stand as an ensign of Christian service and values."

This description epitomized the priorities by which Mack balanced commitments to his family, his church, the community, and his profession.