

Twenty Billionaires Who Started With Nothing



Leon Charney

Age:72

Schooling: BA, Yeshiva University; law degree, Brooklyn Law School

Hometown: Bayonne, NJ

Money Made: Real Estate

Best-known venture: L.H. Charney Associates

Leon Charney made more than a billion dollars from real estate investments especially in properties around Manhattan's Times Square. "The Leon Charney Report", his weekly cable tv show, states that his "rise to international prominence is a classic 'American Dream' story." Charney started amid humble beginnings as the child of immigrant parents. His father's death while Charney was young left the family destitute. Charney worked his way through college and law school, singing at times for money (he still serves as a cantor). With \$200 in the bank, he started a law firm and first came to prominence advising President Jimmy Carter on the 1978 Camp David Accords.