



Joel Stuart Berman

April 5, 1948 - December 12, 2024

Joel Berman, 76, passed away peacefully in Vero Beach Florida on December 12, 2024. Joel was born in Brooklyn, New York, and remained there to attend Brooklyn College where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. He then attended law school at the University of Florida, where he graduated 1st in his class and was inaugurated into the Order of the Coif.

Joel spent almost his entire career of 50+ years at Nova Southeastern University. After several years working at a law firm in Palm Beach, in 1974 he joined the inaugural faculty at Florida's then-newest law school at Nova University. Joel taught at the Shepard Broad College of Law at Nova University for 11 years. During this time, he received numerous accolades for his teaching. According to Joel, "The satisfaction I received from teaching law students was never matched in any other endeavor I undertook."

In 1985, Joel transitioned into the legal affairs department at Nova Southeastern University and became Vice President of Legal Affairs. He officially retired in July 2023.

Joel was well-known and loved. He was loyal, kind, generous, humble, and a teacher and counselor through and through. He connected to people in a very special way. No task was too big. As much time as he put into his work, he always found time to contribute to the community and help anyone in need.

He derived great satisfaction in trying to better the lives of others.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years Rita Berman, son Evan Berman, daughter Debra Berman Rempell, granddaughter Alana Rempell, and countless other family and friends, all whose lives he touched in so many ways.

Joel's family planned an intimate graveside funeral with just his immediate family on December 18th in Asheville, North Carolina. For those of you who know Joel and Rita best, you know that Asheville was a very special place for them. They have always loved the mountains and felt most at peace there. Joel was buried at a beautiful hillside cemetery overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains.

We would love to read your remembrances of Joel on the Tribute Wall on this website.

If you would like, memorial contributions may be made to the scholarship fund set up in Joel's name at the Shepard Broad College of Law at NSU.

<https://www.nova.edu/giving/SB-LAW-Memory-Joel-Berman>

Cemetery Details

Lewis Memorial Park

415 Beaverdam Road
Asheville, NC 28804

Previous Events

Graveside Service

DEC 18. 3:00 PM (ET)

Lewis Memorial Park
415 Beaverdam Road
Asheville, NC 28804

Rabbi Wolff Alterman officiating

Tribute Wall



“ Joel Berman was one of my law professors at Nova. I am saddened to learn of his passing. He was a great Professor and a mentor. I always valued speaking with him and learning from him. He was a special person.



Joel Roth - September 02, 2025 at 12:50 PM

CF

“ I know that I have learned more than I ever could have expected because I knew Joel !
I sat in the seat right in front of him and he and I had often talked about different ways of interpreting the Torah!
I had converted to judaism at Temple Beth Shalom and Joel was a very big part of my journey to learn and grow.
He would always have time and would tell me to please call him with any questions, thoughts or concerns about any aspect of the Torah, the temple, and how the temple compares with other temples that he visited and had been a member of !
I am very sorry that I have taken such a long time for my offering sympathy for the family of Joe Berman, and praise for Joe himself !
He was a great person and I know I will always remember him and will miss not sitting there and knowing that he was there right behind me.
Thank you Charlie W Fox. Vero beach Florida sleep well my friend.

Charles W. Fox - July 21, 2025 at 10:33 PM

ML

“ Joel was a friend, a mensch, and a true believer in tikkun olam. He made the world a better place. Joel repaired people's lives with his loving heart. He will be deeply missed by many. His memory will always be a blessing.

Morton R Laitner - June 11, 2025 at 07:38 AM

LS

“ I only learned of Joel's passing today, through a mutual friend. It came as a shock. We met when in law school at UF. The 4 of us became friends. I have always considered Joel and Rita as friends. The best word I can think of to describe Joel is to say he was a Mensch. He touched many lives, always in a positive manner. May his memory be a blessing.

Lee Schillinger - June 06, 2025 at 07:35 PM

MS

“ I only learned of Joel's passing a few days ago; what a shock. I met Joel growing up in Brooklyn when I was 12 and he was about 4 years older. He was a real mensch then and always has been since then. Always more than willing to help someone who needed help with something or just advise. In my 72 years there have been few people I've known who had integrity like Joel and without question it was a way of living and not just a catch phrase. I could go on and on remembering good and caring things Joel has done, and many have gone through my mind as I've been sitting here writing this. Joel will certainly be missed, and his memory will be a blessing to many as it certainly is to me.

Michael Steinberg

Michael Steinberg - April 03, 2025 at 05:18 AM

BL

“ Joel Berman was a remarkable human being, an incredible mentor, and a friend. He had a profound impact on my life—guiding me through career decisions, shaping my future goals, and making me a better lawyer. But beyond that, he helped me grow as a person. Our conversations weren't just about law school and the law. They were about life—about purpose, faith, and what it means to be a good person. Our talks about Judaism and spirituality reminded me to appreciate each day, to find meaning in my work, and to show up for my family, friends, and community in the best way I can. Joel's wisdom, kindness, and unwavering support will stay with me always. His legacy isn't just in the lives he touched but in the example he set—one of generosity, integrity, and a deep care for others. Rest in peace, Joel. Your presence in my life meant more than words can say, and you will never be forgotten.

Blake Landis - February 16, 2025 at 08:48 PM

MS

“ Joel was my uncle, mentor, advisor, and friend. Throughout my entire life, Joel was always there for me providing love, support and guidance. No major decision was made without Joel's input and advice. No matter the issue, he was always there. I always thought I was getting "special treatment" because Joel was my uncle, but Joel acted in this manner for everyone. Whether you were family, a friend, a work colleague, or complete stranger, Joel was always there providing love, support and guidance. Joel dedicated his life to helping others. He always told me his goal in life was to leave the world in a better place than how he found it. Joel through his selfless dedication to his community definitely accomplished this goal. For those who knew him, he was irreplaceable. Words can't describe the impact he had on my life and others. Joel will be greatly missed by all. May his memory be a blessing.

Michael Steinbaum - January 17, 2025 at 02:41 PM

LS

“ I was a Charter Class member of the law school. I met Joel the very first day the school opened. He was my teacher, my mentor and most of all my friend. After school I used to take my father to synagogue on the high holy days. Each and every time Joel would come over give me a hug acknowledge my dad and sit with us. One year I was unable to attend but my dad who was elderly attended services. Joel sat with him all day and made sure he was ok and cared for. I remember first year in torts Joel would walk around the class and see who highlighted their case in the book and who didn't. The few times my book was not highlighted he would call on me and laugh! Joel made me and my charter classmates feel at ease. He cared about us all with a constant smile on his face. I love Joel Berman❤️ Rest in Peace my friend 🙏 Best Jay Schwartz

lay schwartz - January 13, 2025 at 10:03 AM

DG

“ Joel Berman was unique. Many have attested to his intelligence, ethics, dedication, self-effacing ways, and kindness to others. I am going to remember Joel with love—because he did everything with love. Whether it was looking out for his client's best interests, teaching lessons about the law and life, caring for his family, caring about his colleagues, caring about his community and the world at large, or being sure to tell me - every time we spoke - to call him if there was ever anything he could do help me, he acted from a place of deep wisdom and humanity. I will miss his counsel and friendship and the beautiful photos of nature he would email me. I will always remember our many years of wide-ranging conversations and try to think “what would Joel do?” whenever I need some clarity and inspiration. In that way, he will continue to impart valuable lessons and for that, and for the privilege to know him, I am truly thankful. Denise Ganz

Denise Ganz - January 12, 2025 at 05:38 PM

LL

“ I was a student of Professor Joel Berman at Nova Law School 1981-1984. In my first year, he taught Torts and made the class so interesting. Later, I was in his Wills and then Trusts classes. I recall that he had written the book used for those classes but I stopped purchasing books after being placed on probation my first semester. I thought it would be better to try a different approach. Knowing that I did not have the book, he would intentionally call on me in class asking for the issue in the case. Of course, I had no clue so he would tell me to guess. So, I would make something up and he would respond, "wrong". After the third consecutive class, he said, "you have been wrong three times in a row. Are you going to buy the book now?" I responded, "no, because you are such an excellent professor and if I concentrate on what you are teaching and take good notes, I think I will do better. I only have to be right on your final exam." I also told him that he should take that as a compliment. After the exams, he asked if I would give him my student i.d. number for the exam because he was curious as to what grade I received. He was shocked to find that he had given me a B+, and I was happy because in my last year I was working four part-time jobs and made Dean's list. Professor Berman also supervised me as the President of the Public Interest Law Society with our special project working with the elderly. He was so kind, thoughtful and compassionate. I will always remember, and have shared with others over the years, how while in law school, I developed the worst ear infection but could not afford to go to the doctor. Professor Berman made it happen. Condolences to his family and friends for this profound loss. He was truly a mensch and will be fondly remembered as such.

Laura S. Leve - January 11, 2025 at 05:59 PM

AL

“ My mom, Lora Lubin, and I travelled to a family bar mitzvah In Florida many years ago, where we met our cousin, Joel Berman, and his wife, Rita, for the very first time! I was thrilled to have such a dynamic, warm, intelligent cousin and Rita was so upbeat and welcoming. We were instant friends.

Just this year, I was singing at a cancer conference in eastern Florida, and then traveling around was thrilled to be able to visit Joel and Rita in Vero Beach and have a fun, lovely Sunday brunch together at an outdoor cafe.

I wish we had had more opportunities to reunite, dear cousin, but I'm so thankful we finally connected in person.

Allene Lubin - January 11, 2025 at 09:26 AM

UT

“ I worked for and with Joel for around 25 years as his Paralegal at Nova Southeastern University. Joel never lost his love for teaching law as a law professor, his first class being at Nova University. When he took the position as VP for Legal Affairs for then Nova Southeastern University, he carried over his love for the law to be an outstanding professional and as a perfectionist, as many of you who knew and worked with Joel, well know. However, despite our busy daily schedule, Joel always made the time for anyone who required assistance or personal legal advice. Over the years, Joel became my mentor, and I am grateful that he took me under his wing. Not only was Joel my mentor but he also became my friend and I became a friend of his family. I hope Joel will be with us today to hear how much we all care. May he be happy wherever his soul may carry him. Happy travels Joel. Urte Trieskey

Urte Trieskey - January 10, 2025 at 04:35 PM

CJ

“ Bessie and I met Joel and Rita at an outdoor concert in Vero Beach, Florida, about 10 years ago while enjoying the concert and the conversation we struck up a friendship that lasted until the time of his passing. Almost every Sunday morning, we would meet at Panera’s for a quick breakfast and a long conversation on topics ranging from Politics to religion to family and each other’s ancestry. When talking with Joel, I felt like I was back in a kafenio in Greece where everyone enjoyed each other’s company for an hour or so of relaxation and intellectual chit chat. Bessie and I will miss Joel for his intellect, honesty, decency and caring for others and especially for his family. And yes he often talked about the serenity and beauty of Asheville and the surrounding mountains. I feel I have been robbed of a best friend and a special human being. Joel may your memory be eternal. And thank you for visiting me and Bessie just days before you passed. Thank you for the joy and wisdom you gave us. Θεως να τον Σιχορέση May you rest in eternal peace. Love forever
Chris & Bessie Jones

Chris & Bessie Jones - January 09, 2025 at 04:38 PM

HB

“ As a member of the charter class, Joel was the ultimate professional educator that made sure we understood torts and wills, trusts, and estates. His enthusiasm was incredible. I also had the good fortune of working him for 2 years after graduation. Condolences to Rita and family. Rest in peace.

Howard Berman - January 01, 2025 at 02:54 PM

DM

“ Joel was my law professor for first year torts in 1978. A tremendous educator, his passion for the subject was a huge factor in my pursuit of a career as a civil trial lawyer. Joel was also my biggest supporter when I encountered a death in my family during my second year of study that placed me in jeopardy at the school, speaking on my behalf to the faculty committee that ultimately went with Joel's recommendation and I was able to excel in my studies, graduate and become the lawyer that I did. Joel's huge heart and love of NSU will stay with all of us forever. Rest well and God Bless. Doug McIntosh

Doug McIntosh - December 31, 2024 at 04:00 PM

PF

Joel will be missed. His memory of teaching with humor and amazing energy is in all our minds forever!! Joel RIP as we celebrate your life

Paul Finizio - December 31, 2024 at 09:59 PM

BR

“ Joel, my friend, my colleague. We started the NSU Law School 50 years ago. You were the best professor. The best colleague. A best friend in our challenging new law school environment. Your smile, your enthusiasm, your positive attitude made those first years so memorable. Jacquelyn always said you were her favorite professor. Mine too. Bruce Rogow

Bruce Rogow - December 31, 2024 at 01:13 PM

CD

“ Joel was such an amazing person. I had the pleasure of working with him over the years doing his personal insurance. He will be greatly missed. Praying for the family during this time.
Sincerely, Connie Dean

Connie Dean - December 26, 2024 at 03:34 PM

BB

“ *I was so very sorry to hear of Joel's passing. He was such a fine person, intelligent and interesting, kind, and always concerned about others. I considered him a friend and I will miss him. To Rita and family, John and I send our deepest condolences for your profound loss. May his memory forever be a blessing.*
Brenda Batty

Brenda Batty - December 25, 2024 at 02:43 PM

SS

“ Joel was a very special person. He had a deep sense of stewardship for the well-being of others, especially for his family and friends. Excellence was his goal in his professional life, evident by his direct involvement in the expansion of Nova Southeastern University, its programs and reputation as well as his success as a lawyer.

Judaism influenced Joel's ethical and religious conduct. With Rita by his side, he conducted Passover Seders at nursing homes, providing dignity and continuity for those who would have been forgotten. We were told that the participants called him " Rabbi."

Joel was a 'learned man.' Whether speaking with a doctor or a rabbi, Joel commanded the respect of his peers. He was a teacher at heart. Conversations with Joel often became detailed discussions on the subject at hand, with relevant professorial insights provided. He was very well versed on any topic discussed.

When our family needed advice Joel was the person we turned to. He would listen very carefully before giving his opinion and was always on the money. His warm smile and direct eye contact made us feel valued. We will greatly miss Joel. He was very special to us.

Shari and Lenny Steinbaum

Shari & Lenny Steinbaum - December 25, 2024 at 12:27 PM

MM

“ I knew Joel for more than 50 years. We joined Kingsley House at Brooklyn College as a vehicle for socialization, not always easy, at a commuter school. We made friendships that have stood the test of time.

I say that with certainty as, although separated by distance, we shared memories and stories that brought warm feelings of camaraderie through the years. We began an alumni group and dedicated a scholarship for deserving Brooklyn College students in the name of Kingsley House. I wondered why I had not heard from Joel in a while as we would correspond with each other every few months. I was shocked and greatly saddened when I received the news that he had left us.

Our religion teaches that if we save a life, it is as if we had saved the world. Then too, it seems to me, if we lose a good person, young, or old, the world is greatly diminished and each of us suffers the loss.

Condolences to the family and rest in peace my long time friend. May the memories you have left us last for all time and may Joel's name forever be a blessing.

Myron Moskowitz

Myron Moskowitz - December 23, 2024 at 04:10 PM

LM

“ Joel was a distant cousin but he was so close to my heart. My respect for him was immense. He was so giving of his time helping my family whenever we had legal cases to be solved. Joel was a giving man to many in need. My mother in law, a lawyer as well also enjoyed his company very much. His legal opinions were very much appreciated, as well as his friendship.

Joel was a great man with a wonderful heart. He will be missed by all of his family, friends and colleagues. He always put everyone first as the selfless man he was.

Linda and Tom Miller - December 23, 2024 at 01:15 PM

SD

“ I have known J.B. (Joel Berman) for over 60 years. We went to high school and college together. We were in the same house plan (small fraternity). We went on vacations as well as working as waiters at the same restaurant together. We worked in the evenings and spent the days at Manhattan Beach in the summertime.. He was my best man in my wedding to Arlene Ungar . During all these years Arlene and I have remained close friends even though we live 1300 miles apart.

Joel has always been available to discuss issues and problems, no matter how busy he was. His council was priceless. I always thought he would make a great rabbi. Anyone with problems or issues could go to JB for advice.

He was extremely bright ,excelling in school and in his chosen profession. He was a good athlete and a very hard worker.

We were shocked to hear of his passing as he always kept in great shape. Joel was the rock of his family and will surely be missed. Our sincere condolences to Rita and the entire family. May his memory be a blessing.

Stan and Arlene Dorfman

Stanley Dorfman - December 22, 2024 at 07:36 PM

SS

“ *My beloved Uncle Joel was not only the smartest man I knew but also the heart of our family. We all turned to him for advice, guidance, and support. Uncle Joel had an incredible gift for listening, offering wisdom that always seemed to light the way forward.*

He was there for every important moment of my life: cheering me on as I grew up, standing by me on my wedding day, and celebrating the births of both of my daughters. His kindness, positivity, and unwavering presence made him a rock in our family. He had a way of making everyone feel seen, loved, and supported.

One of my most cherished memories is a recent trip I took to Vero Beach with my daughters, London and Mya, to visit Uncle Joel and Aunt Rita. That day was filled with laughter and love. It's a memory I will hold close to my heart forever, especially knowing it was our last time together.

I was so lucky to be able to call him, my uncle. I will miss him very much.

*Love,
Stacey*

Stacey Steinbaum - December 22, 2024 at 02:10 PM

DD

“ Joel and I were friends for almost 60 years. There were many parallels in our lives. We both attended Lafayette High School in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn and attended Brooklyn College, graduating in 1970. Joel graduated summa cum laude and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. In 1971, we both held temporary positions teaching social studies at our alma mater, Lafayette High School. 1971 also marked the year we both were married (Susan and I on April 4 and Joel and Rita on June 6). They soon moved to Florida where Joel was enrolled in the University of Florida Law School. Once again Joel's outstanding scholarship led to his graduating #1 in his class. He was admitted to the Florida Bar and spent a few years in private practice. He became a professor at the new Nova University Law School and would later become the University's Vice President of Legal Affairs.

There is no doubt Joel's academic and professional achievements were of the highest caliber. Susan and I, however, will always remember him because of the mensch he was and will never forget him because he was truly unforgettable. He was honest, kind, humble, charitable, sincere, dedicated, loyal and most of all, the best friend one could have. Joel will remain in our memories and in our hearts. To Rita and the family please accept our deepest condolences and know that your loss is our loss, as well.

- Doug Drucker

Douglas Drucker - December 22, 2024 at 09:53 AM

BC

“ Joel was very caring and supportive. He loved a good challenge and was very creative in his approach to legal documents. He was a natural teacher and through our interactions I learned about the law, contracts and his life and family. He was a cherished friend and colleague. Although by profession he had to prepare for the worst he was by nature optimistic. With deepest condolences to his family
Bonnie Clearwater

bonnie clearwater - December 22, 2024 at 06:38 AM

AS

“ There aren't words to describe what a special man Joel was - one of a kind. He was truly exceptional in all ways and will be deeply missed by all who whose lives he touched. I will be forever grateful to have been his friend and colleague; I can't express how much I will miss him and what a profound impact he has had on my life. My heartfelt condolences to the family; my thoughts and prayers are with you.

Alyson Silva - December 21, 2024 at 07:38 AM

DA

“ Joel was a good man. Although I am not a lawyer, I learned plenty of law from chatting with him during our consultations. May he rest in peace. My condolences to the Berman family.



Daniel J Alfonso - December 20, 2024 at 07:17 PM

BJ

“ Joel is fondly remembered as Nova Law as a member of our founding faculty. I got to work closely with Joel in his capacity as University VP for Legal Affairs when I became the Dean of NSU Law. I came to rely on his good counsel, and his everlasting support for the College of Law. All of us at NSU Law send the Berman family our condolences.

Beto Juárez

Beto Juárez - December 20, 2024 at 10:25 AM