

# 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Season of Lights Gala Honoree:

## Jake Jabs

### Biography

Jake Jabs is the President and CEO of American Furniture Warehouse.

The fourth of nine children, Jabs was born and raised in rural Montana, and his parents were immigrants from Russia and Poland who fled communism. Jabs' credits his family for providing him a strong work ethic, a sense of family, a love of music and a love of freedom we have in America. In fact, this long-time musician's entrepreneurial career began by teaching guitar and starting a music store in Bozeman, MT. He started to add furniture to his music store and determined everybody needed furniture and not a guitar!

Jabs started AFW with one store in Denver, CO in 1975 and under his leadership American Furniture Warehouse has expanded into a twelve-store operation that has experienced a remarkable growth trend over the years. As he has been since the beginning, Jabs is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the company and also oversees the company's team of buyers. Today, American Furniture Warehouse is one of the top retail furniture companies in the U.S. and the largest privately-held businesses in Colorado.

The self-taught businessman credits American Furniture's success to "the basic American philosophy of hard work, long hours, self confidence, the courage to take risks, and the desire to give value and service to every customer."

An active member of the community and philanthropist, Jabs lends his support to hundreds of non-profit organizations. Jabs' has received hundreds of awards over the years. Here are a few of the top awards bestowed upon Jabs and AFW over the years.

AFW was National Home Furnishings Association Retailer of the Year

AFW was Furniture Today's Retailer of the Year

AFW has been voted Colorado's Best Furniture Store in many Colorado cities year after year

AFW was awarded the Green Fleet Award from The Regional Air Quality Council for the over 350 trucking fleet that is operated by AFW.

In 2010 Montana State University named the University's Entrepreneurial School the

*Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship for the New West*

Jabs' served as an officer in the Air Force and has traveled throughout more than 50 countries and has made a lifelong study of various forms of government and business. He often speaks to high school and college students on topics such as the basics of business and the keys to success.

In addition, he has written numerous articles, including "Free Enterprise and the Land of Opportunity" and "We Must Save Small Business," as well as articles on Russia and Poland.

His autobiography, "An American Tiger," was published in 2000 and his latest book "Thriving in Tough Times" published in 2011 are available online at [www.afwonline.com](http://www.afwonline.com), Amazon Kindle, Barnes and Noble Nook, or any of American Furniture Warehouse locations.