

MIZZOU

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Alumni Profile

Mapping tomorrow

Although Bennie Martin majored in physics at Mizzou, he spent an early phase of his professional career as a cartographer. In 1965, Martin, BS '61, worked for the Aeronautical Chart and Information Center making maps for U.S. Air Force pilots. "Most of the work there was classified," Martin says. "I started out in analytical photogrammetry. You can view overlapping aerial photographs through an instrument and see a 3-D image of an area. It was like a model, so you could measure geographic or cultural features for intelligence."

Maps, navigation, intelligence — outside of work, he gave those concepts a twist. For years, he has volunteered to help young people see possibilities for their lives, set courses and develop their minds. "I'm concerned about the education system," Martin says. "It doesn't seem like it's getting the results we should be getting. So, I've helped." For 12 years, he served on the park board for Northwoods, a municipality of St. Louis. During his tenure, Northwoods' board members planned and built a pavilion in a city park. It's a modest structure that serves as headquarters for youth programs, Martin says.






Bennie Martin, BS '61, of St. Louis started tutoring youngsters 12 years ago after retiring, and he's still at it. Photo by Nicholas Benner

But Martin feels most comfortable working one-on-one. He retired 15 years ago and soon started tutoring grade school students during weekly 60-minute sessions. “Usually, they have trouble with reading, especially vocabulary and spelling. Many don’t participate well in class. Some don’t seem to have any interest in schoolwork. Sometimes all that changes over the course of a year. It’s very rewarding when it happens, and that’s why I’m still doing it.”

Martin has been tutoring long enough to see some of his students grow up and get their names in newspapers for accomplishments. “We can become good friends sometimes, and I enjoy seeing grade school children in the hallways. They just like that individual attention for an hour.” — Dale Smith

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