

The Magazine of the Mizzou Alumni Association

MIZZOU

Accounting for Ethics

Celebrity clients are nice, but Richard Orin's inspiration came from an accounting professor.



Sixty-four years after Richard Orin graduated from MU, and after decades of a successful law and accounting practice, he still thinks back to the inspirational conversations he had as a student with DR Scott. Photo by Nicholas Benner.

Story by Erik Potter

Published Aug. 12, 2013

Richard Orin came to Mizzou already a U.S. Navy veteran with college experience. He worked three jobs rather than accept money from his parents because though only 19, he felt he was a “man” and should be independent.

He caught the attention of DR Scott, a pillar of the then School of Business and Public Administration, who took Orin under his wing. Scott was a World War I veteran with a Harvard PhD and great confidence in his opinions. The two discussed academics and current events, including President Harry S Truman’s controversial decision to recognize Israel. “Our meetings were very precious and something I will always remember,” says Orin, BS BA ’49, now 86.

After graduation, Orin returned to his home city of New York and worked as a junior account executive while attending New York University’s law school at night. After another military stint — this time in the U.S. Army during the Korean War — he finally earned two law degrees and has spent the past 60 years practicing tax law as an attorney and CPA.

He’s had many celebrity clients, including filmmaker and comedian Mel Brooks and travel guide author Arthur Frommer, A&S ’48, who once gave him a personal tour of Amsterdam. He served the Broadway musical production *The Fantasticks* for 41 years.

But rather than glamour and celebrity, Orin says, the

essence of public accountancy is professional responsibility and ethics. It's a value that Scott instilled in him, and one that Orin, as the sponsor of the School of Accountancy's annual Orin Ethics Symposium, seeks to instill in others.

Orin only attended Mizzou a short time but says his experience left an indelible mark on him. "I went to the other schools longer," he says, "but my three semesters here were more significant in my life."

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Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 | Phone: 573-882-5916 | Email: mizzou@missouri.edu

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