

REMEMBERING HIS ROOTS

Bob Rice says Architectural Studies launched his career

ROBERT RICE'S CAREER has carried him across the country — from Cornell University, where he earned his Ph.D., to teaching and administrative roles at universities in Michigan and Arizona. But Rice feels a stronger emotional tie to the University of Missouri than anywhere else his career has taken him.

"Mizzou really launched me," Rice said. "The program there got me started in what would eventually become a very satisfying career."

Rice, a native of Columbia who attended Hickman High School, received a bachelor's degree from MU in industrial design in 1954 before starting his commission in the U.S. Air Force. Years later, he returned to Mizzou for a master's in interior design, a program now housed in the College of Human Environmental Sciences' Architectural Studies department.

Rice credits mentors like Kate Rogers, MU's late "Grande Dame of Interior Design,"

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gives back every year to the program that served as a springboard for his career.

"Robert Rice is an accomplished professional and loyal alum remembering his roots to benefit current students," said Ruth Tofle, chair of the Architectural Studies department. "Investing in the renovation of the Rogers Gallery, he recalls how one of his first assignments as a graduate student working with Kate Rogers was helping with gallery displays, and later as a member

with pushing him to finish his master's at MU, even as he juggled full-time work with support of his young family. Rice, who retired from the University of Arizona in 1995 after 20 years as director of the university's School of Family and Consumer Sciences, now



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of the faculty, assisting students with displays."

At Mizzou, Rice also began to polish his craft as an artist. As a graduate assistant for Joe Falsetti, former MU professor of housing and urban design and a sculptor whose work is displayed across Columbia, Rice was captivated by the art of sculpture. Rice has since exhibited his stunning woodwork across Arizona. Rice recently donated a piece titled "Methuselah's Heart," beautifully carved and polished out of a slab of bristle-cone pine, to the University of Arizona's Parkinson's Research Building, in memory of his wife Barbara, who died from the disease.

A model airplane enthusiast, Rice has also had models displayed in museums across the country — including his reproduction of a WWI four-engine German bomber, the Sikorsky S-21 Russky Vityaz, which hangs in the Smithsonian Institute.

Stephen Jorgensen, Dean of the College of Human Environmental Sciences, tributes Rice with helping launch his own career as a college administrator. In 1976, fresh out of his doctorate work at the University of

Minnesota, Jorgensen took a job with the University of Arizona's School of Family and Consumer Sciences, where Rice had just been named director.

"Bob was my first boss, essentially," Jorgensen said. "I had a tremendously successful six years there and my career really took off because of Bob's support." Jorgensen says Rice set a shining example he'd follow throughout his own administrative career.

Rice fondly remembers his time with Jorgensen. The two still talk regularly and the last time Rice visited Columbia two years ago, they attended a Mizzou football game. "I was so delighted when Steve ended up at my alma mater as dean of the college where I started out," Rice said. "In a funny sense, it kind of seems like a full circle."

Rice says the Architectural Studies department, now ranked among the very top programs in the country, has grown far beyond what it was when he attended Mizzou. "That program did so much for me," Rice said. "It's quite an honor to be able to support it so that other students can have the opportunities that I did."