

George Bruckman L'59



George Bruckman L'59, graduated high school, college, and law school, and served in the Air Force—all by the time he reached the age of 23. “I was very ambitious,” he says. “I wanted to get as far as I could as fast as I could.” Born during the Depression, Bruckman came to Syracuse and studied as an undergrad for three years. He had graduated from The Bronx High School of

Science and felt well prepared for college. After three years, he was ready for the next step and signed up for a program that allowed him to begin his law degree program during his senior year of college. He did that, all the while teaching Hebrew school on the side to earn some extra money. “I always worked,” he said. “I never wanted to be a burden on anyone.”

After graduating law school, Bruckman attended basic training at the Fort Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and was an air policeman in active duty for several months. For many years, he continued as a member of the United States Air Force Reserves and Air National Guard, and served as a government appeals agent for the Selective Service System.

He began his law career with two firms in New York and then, with some trepidation, accepted a job offer from his own father, who had a small law firm, also in Manhattan. The father and son formed a partnership in 1963, which gradually grew to employ 30 attorneys. “My father was an interesting mentor,” Bruckman says. “He was the last of the old time lawyers. He knew 90 percent of 90 percent.” The elder Bruckman practiced law for more than 70 years. “He would have kept practicing but he didn’t want to keep taking CLE’s,” Bruckman says. His father died last December, two weeks shy of his 102nd birthday.

And the attorney tradition continues in the Bruckman family. When Bruckman comes to Syracuse for his 50th reunion this fall, son David, managing director of Citrin Cooperman Wealth Management, will return for his 20th.

Bruckman is a partner at Goetz Fitzpatrick in Manhattan, a firm that is a result of a merger from the original Bruckman and Bruckman. Over the years he has served as outside general counsel to the Dannon Company and regional counsel to Beatrice Foods and Kraft General Foods. Now approaching his 51st year of private practice, he chairs the firm’s trust and estate practice and is still general counsel to several large corporations in the building, service, food and contracting industries.

“I like solving problems,” Bruckman says. “I don’t like the same thing over and over again.” His most rewarding work these days includes projects that involve financial planning, trusts, and estates. “I work with people and families, it’s more satisfying, and it’s problem solving,” he says. “I find it very stimulating.”