

David Oreck Citation

May 24 , 2006

David Oreck

Doctor of Commercial Science

Devoted and innovative founder, talented and driven chairman, charitable civic leader, you, David Oreck, are the epitome of *Opportunitas*, and have dedicated five decades of your life to the world-renowned Oreck Corporation, manufacturing high-quality, premium vacuum cleaners and becoming a celebrated household name and personality. We honor you for your outstanding achievements in the corporate field and for your contributions to Pace University.

Born in Duluth, Minnesota, you proudly joined the military at age 17. Your patriotism for your country led you to risk your life as a radar officer and navigator, flying combat missions in B-29s over Japan with the U.S. Air Force during World War II. After serving and protecting your country, you returned to the United States at the age of 21 and found your new calling in New York City as a salesman. You swiftly rose through the ranks at RCA and accompanied RCA founder David Sarnoff to Washington, D.C., for congressional hearings on setting technical standards for a newfangled invention: color television. When RCA needed a new distributor in New Orleans, a poor-performing market, you seized the opportunity, and in two years time you turned it around and went from last to first place nationally.

Your accomplishments with RCA led you to the creation of your own business in 1963, Oreck Corporation. Early in your career as a corporate business owner, you sold upright vacuum cleaners to a hotel industry that was burdened with heavy and bulky machines. You made such an impact on this industry that eventually your product, the light but powerful upright, became a welcomed and much-anticipated member of the American home. Today your business, Oreck Corporation, is a leader in household appliances and employs 1,500 people.

During the horrific aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, you demonstrated your personal dedication to your employees and compassion for the hurricane victims with the Oreck Employee Relief Fund, which was seeded with a \$500,000 corporate donation. Your leadership also led to a national donation drive for material contributions at 450 Oreck Clean Home Centers across the country so that people could join your efforts in rebuilding Louisiana and Mississippi, as well as your employees' lives. Your generosity and support continued as your corporation provided trailer homes to your Long Beach, Mississippi, employees, flew corporate personnel to temporary worksites in Dallas, Denver, and Atlanta, and donated one vacuum cleaner for every vacuum cleaner sold to the Salvation Army for distribution to hurricane victims in the Gulf Coast.

While leading an extremely busy life, you made time for future entrepreneurs at Pace University. You shared ideas on how to build a premium brand with fascinated Lubin School students as Entrepreneur-in-Residence in spring 2003.

For your reputation of a strong work ethic, innovative marketing strategies, personable approach with your vast number of customers, and your undying commitment to the welfare of your employees, Pace University is honored to confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Commercial Science, honoris causa, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereunto.

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