

President's Panel on Politics and Policy

National Politics and Community Organizing



UMB welcomed former U.S. senator Barbara Mikulski on Nov. 27, 2018, to the SMC Campus Center.

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Barbara Mikulski

Retired Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, MSW '65, was raised in the Highlandtown neighborhood of Baltimore, attended Catholic schools, and was a social worker in the 1960s, having graduated from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. After organizing neighborhoods to fight a major highway project, Mikulski won election to the Baltimore City Council in 1971, where she served for five years.

In 1976, she ran for Congress and represented Maryland's 3rd District for 10 years. She became the first Democratic woman senator elected in her own right in 1986. She served in the Senate for 30 years (1987-2017), becoming the longest-serving woman both in the Senate and in Congress. As the Dean of the Women, Mikulski mentored other women senators through her bipartisan dinners and power workshops to train newly elected women. Throughout her career, Mikulski has worked to pass legislation to protect the most vulnerable members of society and to advance scientific research and democracy around the world. Mikulski was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by then-President Barack Obama in 2015.

Mikulski retired from the U.S. Senate on Jan. 3, 2017. Currently a Homewood Professor of Public Policy at Johns Hopkins University, she participates in speaking engagements on the topics of leadership, innovation, and women's empowerment across the country. She currently sits on the boards of the National Democratic Institute and the Baltimore Community Foundation.

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