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The Elm ANNOUNCEMENTS

UMB Commencement 2023: Honorary Staff Marshal Susan McKechnie, CPA

May 03, 2023

Leading up to UMB's commencement on May 18, *The Elm* will feature stories on the ceremony's student speaker and honorees. For more information, go to UMB's [Commencement 2023 website](#). Read about all the honorees [at this link](#).

HONORARY STAFF MARSHAL

Susan McKechnie, CPA

Former Assistant Vice President for Financial Services and University Controller

Susan McKechnie had always wanted to attend a University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) commencement but couldn't find time because of her busy work schedule. On May 18, she'll be attending UMB's 2023 graduation ceremony, but not as merely a spectator.

McKechnie, who has worked at UMB for 23 years, including serving as controller from 2010 to 2022, will be part of the commencement platform party as the inaugural Honorary Staff Marshal.

"It had been a regret of mine that I had never attended a UMB graduation — there was always too much work to do," McKechnie said. "So this is a great ending to my wonderful career at UMB. I was deeply honored to be chosen Staff Marshal."

McKechnie left her job as controller last year, but she wasn't quite done serving UMB.

She worked part time for the past year to help implement the new Concur travel and expense system, a cloud-based travel booking application that launched in April, and retired May 1.

McKechnie, who grew up in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., said that after high school she was torn between pursuing a career in accounting or computer science. She earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the State University of New York at Oswego before becoming a certified public accountant.

"I flipped back and forth in college and ultimately became a CPA," McKechnie said. "But I always loved automating business processes and found a way to satisfy both competencies by implementing accounting, business, and payroll systems throughout my career."

She worked as an accountant and director of finance for organizations in New York state before moving to Maryland in 2000. At UMB, she held roles as a payroll manager, accounting systems and reporting manager, and enterprise-wide applications specialist before being promoted to controller.

As controller, McKechnie was responsible for the primary financial operations of payroll, disbursements, student financial services, capital asset accounting, and general accounting/reporting.

"Every single person who works for or attends UMB was touched by a transaction processed by my department," McKechnie said. "I spent most of my time and energy working with my amazing management team in finding ways to improve operations in each of these areas or troubleshooting the scenarios that didn't neatly fit within our normal rules and procedures."

Scott Bitner, MBA, CPA, vice president for finance and auxiliary services and deputy chief financial officer, has high praise for McKechnie.

"Susan evolved the organization to become customer service-focused and contributed to many policy updates in conjunction with implementing numerous process improvements," he said. "Susan is truly 'one of the good ones' who exhibited the qualities of a high-character employee."



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