Save the Dates! Lectures Confirmed for Fall 2015

Tony Menendez, best known as the “Accountant Who Beat Halliburton,” will speak on Tuesday, September 29th at 7:15 p.m. in Hilton 100 as part of the Center for Accounting Ethics, Governance, and the Public Interest’s Distinguished Speaker Series. Menendez is an expert in corporate governance and ethics, and has spoken at numerous universities and conferences around the country. His lecture will focus on his experiences and insights into corporate wrongdoing and the importance of ethical decision-making. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Gary Cokins, an expert on performance measurement and advanced cost management, will speak on Wednesday, October 28th at 7:15 p.m. in Hilton 100 as part of the Paul A. Grosch Lecture Series. Cokins is known for his innovative approach to performance measurement and has written extensively on the subject. His lecture will focus on the importance of analytics in business decision-making.

The Accounting Times
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I would like to begin my first message as chair of the Department of Accounting by thanking Mahmoud Nourayi for his many years of service as chair. He has been a great leader, colleague and friend. Now, on to the highlights!

The annual Accounting Society Spring Banquet was another huge success with 50 accounting students awarded scholarships totaling more than $291,000. Read more about Alumnus of the Year Tom McGee ’89 and Professor of the Year Nancy Coster in this issue. I also want to thank Professor Scott Delaney for his leadership and service as faculty moderator of the Accounting Society for the past four years and am pleased to welcome Professor Meghna Singhvi into this role.

Our students continue to be recruited by Big 4, midsized and local accounting firms. In fact, nearly 80% of our graduating seniors had accepted a full-time position by the end of May – just over half were with Big 4 accounting firms. Eight students graduated from our Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) program, all of whom accepted jobs with accounting firms or with industry. We’ve observed an increase in the number of MSA students applying to the MSA program now that 150 hours is required for CPA qualification.

LMU Accounting continues to earn national recognition and recently came in at #15 in U.S. News & World Report’s 2016 “Best Graduate Schools” ranking. According to the 2014 National Association of State Boards of Accountancy report, the LMU passing rate on all four parts of the CPA exam significantly exceeded both state and national averages.

Our Accounting Advisory Board had another active year providing guidance and support to the program. I especially want to thank Jim Hindman ’82 and Noelle Repetti ’90 for their leadership and welcome John Di Carlo ’77 and Michael Good ’96 as the new chair and vice-chair, respectively.

I am grateful to the accounting faculty for their hard work and dedication to our students through teaching, advising and spending time with the accounting firms. Please join me in congratulating Professor Larry Kalbers as chair, Department of Accounting, please visit the Accounting Times online at www.lmu.edu/accounting.

Larry Kalbers, Ph.D., CPA
Chair, Department of Accounting

NEW FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

James Plecnik and Shan Wang

James Plecnik joins LMU’s accounting faculty as a tenure-track assistant professor. His research interests include tax avoidance, individual taxation, corporate taxation and ethics. James taught individual taxation and introductory accounting classes during his time as a doctoral student in the Fogelman College of Business at the University of Memphis. His research has been published in various tax journals and he’s presented at multiple academic conferences and CPE events.

Shan Wang also joins LMU’s accounting faculty as a tenure-track assistant professor. Her research interests include top management teams, the labor market for executives and directors, corporate governance, voluntary disclosure, financial reporting and tax strategy. She taught financial and managerial accounting during her time as a doctoral student in the Lundquist College of Business at the University of Oregon.

Shan has a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from Tai Yuan University of Technology in China, a master’s degree in chemistry from the University of California, Riverside, a master’s degree in accounting from California State University, Fullerton, and a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Oregon. She has presented her work at several national conferences and is a member of the American Accounting Association.

University of Memphis. His research has been published in various tax journals and he presented at multiple academic conferences and CPE events. James earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting with a minor in philosophy from Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina, a master’s degree in taxation from the University of Memphis, and a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Memphis. He is a CPA with experience in both public accounting and small businesses.

Larry Kalbers Appointed Chair of Accounting Department

Larry Kalbers has been appointed chair of the Department of Accounting, succeeding Mahmoud Nourayi who served in the position from 2005-2015. In addition to chair, Larry will continue his duties as the R. Chad Dreier Chair in Accounting Ethics and director of the Center for Accounting Ethics, Governance, and the Public Interest.

“I am honored to be selected by Dean Draper and the accounting faculty to serve in this leadership role,” said Larry. “This position comes with a lot of responsibility and opportunity. I look forward to working with others to build upon the strong foundation and reputation of the LMU Accounting Program.”

One of Larry’s biggest priorities for the coming year is to conduct a review of the undergraduate curriculum – not only examining content within and across courses, but making sure students are developing the skills they need to remain competitive. Another priority is to increase the number of students in the Master of Science in Accounting Program.

“Just completed my tenth year at LMU and it’s really the mission of the university and the friendly people that I like most about working here,” said Larry. “We have incredible students who are very talented and faculty members with a strong commitment to teaching, scholarship and service.”

Larry’s predecessor, Mahmoud Nourayi, also joins LMU’s Fogelman College of Business at the University of Memphis. His research has been published in various tax journals and he presented at multiple academic conferences and CPE events. James earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting with a minor in philosophy from Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina, a master’s degree in taxation from the University of Memphis, and a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Memphis. He is a CPA with experience in both public accounting and small businesses.

Larry has a great colleague and friend who has shown good judgment and promoted the success of the program and our students,” said Mahmoud. “I am certain he will lead the department in a thoughtful and caring manner and will add to our success as we continue to grow our reputation.”
ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR
Tom McGee ’89

I am extremely humbled and incredibly honored to receive this award,” said Tom during his acceptance speech. “It’s especially exciting to see some familiar faces in the crowd like former faculty and classmates – many of whom I haven’t seen or talked to since graduation.”

In front of over 200 students, faculty, alumni and industry professionals (including his daughter, two brothers, and nephew who is a current LMU student), Tom spent the first half of his speech gushing over his children’s accomplishments and crediting his older brother for inspiring him to pursue accounting as a profession. It was refreshing to witness someone with so much career success and power talk openly and honestly about his immense love and gratitude toward family.

“It is most fitting that Tom McGee was honored as the 2015 LMU Accounting Alumnus of the Year,” said Accounting Professor George Dasaro. “His success, work ethic, love of family and service to others make him a perfect role model for our accounting students. We take great pride in Tom’s accomplishments.”

In his speech, Tom encouraged accounting students and soon-to-be graduates to take risks, follow their passions, find work that excites them and give back to those in need. He told them to always remember to smile, especially when times are most challenging, and noted that people want to be around positive people. “The three things I love most about working in the accounting profession are the people, the challenging work and having a job that really matters,” said Tom. “Being a part of the LMU family is something of which I am very proud.”

He ended by reminding everyone to stay connected to their alma mater. In 2013, Tom and his wife started an endowed scholarship fund for accounting students to lessen the financial burden of an LMU education.

During his 25 years with Deloitte, Tom has held a variety of regional, national and global leadership roles including deputy CEO for the U.S. firm, national managing partner of Deloitte Growth Enterprise Services, chief of staff of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (DTTL) and secretary of the DTTL Executive.

He has served numerous mid-market public and private companies as well as some of Deloitte’s largest clients including New Mountain Capital, Energy Capital Partners, DIRECTV, Hearst Entertainment, Berkshire Partners, Dole Food Company, Kingston Technology, Nissan, Office Depot and Toshiba.

Tom is also active in numerous civic, charitable and academic organizations. He currently serves on the boards of Covenant House International and the New York Catholic Foundation, as well as the Finance Council of the Archdiocese of New York and the LMU Board of Regents.

Tom has earned respect and admiration from his colleagues who believe wholeheartedly in his leadership capabilities. Looking back, he feels that without the education and opportunities he received from LMU, his life and career could have ended up much different.

“I was the one class that challenged me to work harder than I thought I could, so when I did well I felt on top of the world,” said Kate. “My subsequent accounting classes were no different and my fascination with accounting has onlygrown.”

Senior accounting major Kate Blackwell is the type of student who professors dream of teaching and firms aspire to recruit. She’s a fast learner, a hard worker and a natural born leader who is eager to enter the accounting profession. “I am extremely humbled and honored to receive this award,” said Tom during his acceptance speech. “It’s especially exciting to see some familiar faces in the crowd like former faculty and classmates – many of whom I haven’t seen or talked to since graduation.”

Kate gained important business skills by attending summer leadership conferences hosted by Deloitte, Ernst & Young and KPMG. She studied abroad in Spain during the fall of 2014 and made the Dean’s List the last five semesters. She’s a member of the Delta Gamma Sorority, the Alpha Sigma Nu Honor Society, Beta Gamma Sigma and served as captain of the intramural basketball team. At the Accounting Society Banquet in April, Kate was awarded a Deloitte Scholarship as well as the Dreier Family Endowed Accounting Scholarship. According to Kate, she’s been thrilled. “I am extremely humbled and honored to receive this award,” said Tom during his acceptance speech. “It’s especially exciting to see some familiar faces in the crowd like former faculty and classmates – many of whom I haven’t seen or talked to since graduation.”

Kate spent the summer working at Deloitte as an audit intern in her hometown of Seattle, Wash. After she graduates from LMU in May 2016, she hopes to continue working with the firm full-time.

“Accounting is a field that exposes you to so many facets of business, so I knew that it would produce great opportunities. From my conversations with accounting professionals, you can learn such a vast amount in a short period of time when working at a Big 4 firm, so I am extremely excited to enter that environment.”

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
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KateBlackwell
climate change knowledge, attitude, behavior and discussed strategies for more effective public engagement. Climate change is seen as a distant problem so very few people are worried about it impacting their lives; however, Americans are starting to connect the dots between climate change and extreme weather (California drought, blizzards in the Northeast, flooding in the South) and realizing that it’s mostly human-caused.

And finally, the Center for Accounting Ethics welcomed Rick Fleming, Investor Advocate of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, for a lecture titled “How Investors Become Road Kill on the Path of Least Resistance.” Fleming discussed the influence of industry in the regulatory system, and argued that investors need to be more vocal in order to avoid becoming road kill in the rulemaking process. He pointed out that SEC rules tend to be more favorable to industry and believes investors need to be more vocal in the regulatory process in order to restore faith in the economic system.

GIVING BACK
Class of 1980 Starts Endowed Accounting Scholarship

It’s been 35 years since the LMU Accounting Class of 1980 bid farewell to campus life on the bluff and embarked on the real world. Though career opportunities took them in different directions, these graduates still share the special bond of being taught and mentored by some of the best accounting faculty in the nation — including Paul Gorsch, George Dasaro, Bill Kinseila and former Associate Dean Gary Sibiec.

To mark the 35th anniversary of their LMU experience, 1980 classmates Joel Poladian, Mark Hayakawa, Frank Herrera, Lynne Kimmes Johnson, Ross O’Brien and Steve Wassak wanted to do something extra special for their alma mater. Together they established the “Accounting Class of 1980 Endowed Scholarship” to give deserving LMU accounting students access to a Jesuit education that will prepare them for a life of leadership and service.

“Our accounting professors at LMU guided us in launching our careers,” said Joel Poladian. “Much of what we have accomplished is due to the foundation provided by our accounting education. This scholarship is a way to pay it forward to future generations.”

They set a goal of $100,000 in gifts and pledges to make the fund fully endowed so that every year going forward an accounting student would receive a scholarship. The team came up with a strategy to reach out to their 1980 classmates via email, calls and visits to encourage them to contribute to this worthy cause. They were successful in their efforts and reached their goal of $100,000. In fact, the Class of 1980 is the first group of graduates to establish a class gift to honor faculty and the accounting program.

“Nothing is more fulfilling than providing others the opportunity to experience an LMU education as we did,” said Steve Wassak. “Not only did we reach our goal but we enjoyed learning about the incredible journeys of our classmates after so many years. Hopefully this will inspire other alumni to start their own class gift or an individual scholarship fund.”

Interestingly, the Class of 1980 was also the first class to establish the annual Accounting Society Banquet. Steve was able to attend the banquet this past spring and was impressed with how far it’s come in 35 years.

The first banquet was a small gathering of students enjoying liquid refreshments and handing out silly awards,” said Steve. “To see the level it’s at today with the fancy ballroom, dinner, awards and scholarships — I kept looking around the room with such pride thinking this is unbelievable!”

For more information on starting a class gift or individual scholarship fund, please contact Roberta Kuhman, Director of Development, at roberta.kuhman@lmu.edu or 310.258.5483.

2015 Accounting Society Spring Awards Banquet

On April 23, the LMU Accounting Society held its 35th annual Spring Awards Banquet at the Marina del Rey Marriott. Over 200 guests attended, including students, faculty, staff, alumni and industry professionals. This year, scholarships totaling $287,000 were awarded to 50 students. Thank you to our very generous scholarship donors who are supporting our students in the 2015-16 academic year. Here are our student recipients and the scholarships they were awarded (in parenthesis):

Kate Blackwell (Deloitte, Dreier Family Endowed Accounting Scholarship);

Lauren Caradang (Accounting Advisory Board Scholarship, California CPA Society);

Joan Corvalho (Ernst & Young, Stephen & Judy Page Endowed Scholarship);

Davelyn Couch (Young Family Scholarship, PricewaterhouseCoopers);

Ryan DeBlasi (Holthouse Carlin & Van Trigt);

Brian Doline (LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship, PricewaterhouseCoopers);

Keith Elliott (California CPA Society, Keys Family Scholarship, KPMG);

Alejandra Garcia (Becker Professional Education);

Edwin Garcia (Provenca/Arias Family Scholarship);

Carlos Gaudinez (Deloitte, LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship);

Babur Ghadari (Moss Adams);

Christian Gutierrez (Deloitte, LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship);

Amanda Henderson (Becker Professional Education);

Savanah Jehan (Arthur Andersen Alumni Scholarship);

Lauren Jyo (Holthouse Carlin & Van Trigt);

Matthew Kondratiev (LMU Accounting Department Annual Scholarship);

Alyson Lock (Gambirreva Savetti, John A. Garstka Accounting Scholarship);

Kate Meregillano (KPMG, LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship);

Paul Naimes (Deloitte, Hirshman Family Scholarship in Accounting);

Andrea Pabon (Joseph & Carol Page Family Accounting Scholarship, KPMG);

Taylor Paschen (Accounting Advisory Board Scholarship);

Markesh Patel (RP Lighting, CPA Review, Noemi Perez (PricewaterhouseCoopers);

Paige Peterson (Moss Adams);

Alexa Rajaram (LMU Accounting Department Annual Scholarship);

Mollie Richard (California CPA Society, Keys Family Scholarship);

Ron Roach (CBIZ, LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship);

Daniella Ryskina (Accounting & Financial Women’s Alliance, LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship, RBZ);

Ashlie Stinson (LMU Accounting Department Annual Scholarship);

Kevin Santos (Holthouse Carlin & Van Trigt);

Evelia Santy (Stephen & Judy Page Endowed Scholarship);

Erik Sarpit (CohnReznick, J.C. & Kristi Frey Family Endowed Scholarship);

Kenny Schumacher (Frank Rimmersman & Co., LMU Accounting Alumni Scholarship);

Ting Song (Green Hasson Janes);

Jeffrey Walker (LMU Accounting Department Annual Scholarship);

Nicholas Watkins (Accounting Advisory Board Scholarship);

Alah Westland (Poladian Accounting Scholarship, PricewaterhouseCoopers);

Jabao Zhu (Keys Family Scholarship, Windes, Inc.)

For a complete list of accounting donors for the 2014 calendar year, please go to: cba.lmu.edu/2014-accounts

ACCOUNTING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Sonia Chavez-Lorance

Nicole Conrad

Caitlin Dickson

Sarah Liaw

Michelle Lie

YumBee Na

Khyen Nguyen

Vivian Nguyen

Taylor Paschen

Alexandra Popping

Elizabeth Sepetjian

Michael Tran

PAUL A. GRORSCH AWARD

Sarah Liaw

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE AWARD

Michael Tran

INCOMING MEMBERS OF THE 2015-2016 ACCOUNTING SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Keith Elliott, President

Erik Sarpit, Vice President

Jonny Fermin, VP, Career Planning & Employer Relations

Daniella Ryskina, Secretary

Ricardo Bosa, Treasurer

Laureen Jyo, Director of Service & PR

Matthew Kondratiev, Historian

Jabao Zhu, Mentor Coordinator

Justin Takacs, Program Coordinator

Alex Garcia, Director of Technology

Alex Venetos, Special Events Coordinator

Dr. Meghna Singhvi, Faculty Moderator