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Donor Profile: The Power of Mentoring

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The Power of Mentoring

Matching Gift Launches Accounting Student Initiative

WHEN KENT KLAUS (BUS '82) LOOKS BACK AT HIS UNDERGRADUATE YEARS AT DEPAUL, ONE THING STANDS OUT: THE MENTORING HE RECEIVED ALONG THE WAY.

“DePaul is unique in the ways that it supports our students by giving them access to lots of mentoring. I am a strong believer in the power of mentoring and credit it with being a lifelong key to my success,” says Klaus, a partner in Global Employer Services at Deloitte Tax LLP who also has served as an adjunct instructor at the Driehaus College of Business periodically since 1988.

Raised on the Southwest Side of Chicago, Klaus commuted to DePaul. As a sophomore, he landed his first professional job at an accounting firm, which he found through DePaul’s Career Center. After 20 years at Arthur Andersen, Klaus began working for Deloitte in 2002. He and his wife, Susan, live in Mount Prospect, Ill.

An outspoken advocate for diversity and inclusion for people with disabilities in the professional services industry, Klaus has been instrumental in making the accounting profession a more inclusive place. “This is always a delicate topic because it puts a mirror up against my profession,” he says. “From my perspective, it would serve professional services well if we could project an image in the marketplace that shows that not only do we want people with disabilities to work with us, but we encourage them to do so.”

Klaus is a member of the college’s advisory council and past president and board member of Ledger & Quill, the School of Accountancy and MIS giving society. Now he is giving back to DePaul yet again.

Through a generous gift from Klaus, matched by the Deloitte Foundation, the School of Accountancy & MIS will soon gain a valuable addition: the Office of Student Success and Engagement.

This one-stop shop for skills training and access to professionals in the field aims to give students the comprehensive support they need for career and life success, from résumé and interviewing workshops to regular interactions with top Chicago employers.

“The idea is to tie all of those resources together so that students can access the full breadth of services available to them from the school and the university,” says Klaus.

Not surprisingly, what excites him the most is the mentoring. “The biggest thing that I hope we’ll accomplish with this initiative is to identify mentors for students who will be available to them for the length of time that they’re here at the university,” he says.

This project brings Klaus full circle. “If it weren’t for DePaul, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I want to pay that forward to a new generation of students,” he says.



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