

Laura Kennedy

Finding New Opportunity in Challenging Times

When Laura Kennedy graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in real estate and land development in 2009, the great recession was just taking hold. As plans to help expand her family's real estate development company didn't appear feasible at the time, she quickly realized she needed a Plan B. Kennedy wanted to pursue a master's degree, but as a parent to two young children, commuting to campus every day would be tough. Kennedy researched online options and learned about Sac State's Master of Science in Accountancy (MSA) degree program, a completely web-based degree offered collaboratively by the College of Business and the College of Continuing Education.

"Having the MSA program online appealed to me since I had a family at home to care for – I could attend classes and complete coursework online but also be part of the campus when I was able," she said.

Kennedy enrolled in the MSA program and joined Beta Alpha Psi, a professional, honorary accounting organization that has served Sac State since 1964. The organization focuses on scholastic excellence and professional networking.

Kennedy served on the board for Beta Alpha Psi, which gave her the opportunity to elevate herself among her peers and gain recognition from leading professionals. She began working in public accounting with Moss Adams, LLP prior to graduating from Sac State with her Master of Science in Accountancy degree in January 2012.

"Getting the MSA degree gave me an opportunity to earn my CPA license and work in public accounting," she said. "And being involved in Beta Alpha Psi led to a number of networking and job opportunities, as well as wonderful friendships."

After a few years Kennedy moved on from public accounting into private accounting and was hired as the finance manager for Anton Development. This opportunity allowed her to couple her educational accomplishments with her previous work experience in real estate development and accounting. She enjoyed the challenges of her new role and became an integral part of the company's accounting department as they created a new brand and market for themselves. However, her ultimate passion was public accounting.

Today, Kennedy is an assurance manager at Macias, Gini & O'Connell LLP (MGO), one of the top 100 public accounting firms in the nation.

"I really enjoy the interactions we have with our clients," said Kennedy. "Learning about each of my clients' businesses is always exciting and providing excellent business services is my priority."

Kennedy also enjoys the fact that every day is different, and that she gets to help younger accountants learn the ropes. That love of teaching also led her to become an adjunct accounting professor. She began her teaching career at a satellite campus of Strayer University, then moved to teaching online, and eventually transitioned to online teaching at Ashford University. She also had the opportunity to teach courses at Cosumnes River Community College, where she coincidentally took her first accounting course.

"My professors at Sac State encouraged me and helped me get where I am today," she said. "I have a strong desire to give back and help students who are pursuing their degrees so they can be successful in their educational and career goals."



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Outside of her work duties, Kennedy has a passion for health and fitness. She serves as a Wellness Warrior at work, coordinating a variety of wellness activities and challenges to help MGO staff stay healthy. She also plays women's tackle football for the Sacramento Sirens, competes in CrossFit competitions and is a youth flag football coach.

Kennedy recently enlisted in the United States Air Force. She always had a desire to give back to her country and is proud to have the opportunity to serve and follow in her fathers' footsteps, who retired as a Lieutenant Colonel with over 30 years in the Army. She completed her basic training and technical training in early 2021 and is excited for her new adventure. 