

UCI Paul Merage School of Business

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The Paul Merage School of Business at UCI Graduates More than 500 Students

Alumna Kristen Monson Gives 2016 Distinguished Executive Commencement Speech

Irvine, CA – (June 14, 2016) – UC Irvine Paul Merage School of Business alumna and retired PIMCO executive Kristen S. Monson gave the 2016 Distinguished Executive Commencement presentation to an audience of more than 500 graduating students and their families in a ceremony held Monday, June 13, at the Bren Events Center on the UC Irvine campus. Kwaku Gyabaah, a graduating Executive MBA student and director for the Clark Construction Group, served as the Student Commencement Speaker representing the Class of 2016.

Both shared insights and advice to a graduating class of 547 students made up of 130 undergraduates, seven PhDs, 106 Full-Time MBAs, 135 Fully Employed MBAs, 43 Executive MBAs and 34 Healthcare Executive MBAs. Also in this year's graduating class were 92 students receiving a Master of Professional Accountancy.

"It was a privilege to share my insight with the Merage School graduates of 2016. My experience at UCI and the Merage School helped lay the foundation for success in both my career and in my personal life. This institution provided me inspiration and I'm proud to have had the opportunity to share my experiences with the outstanding students graduating this year," said Monson.

"Kristen and Kwaku are exemplary members of the Merage School Alumni, as is UC Regent Eloy Oakley, MBA '99, who was also with us for the commencement ceremony. Eloy is president of Long Beach City College and yet another example of the outstanding graduates who support our school," commented Eric Spangenberg, dean of the Merage School. "It's leaders like these who provide

inspiration and have helped us create a world-class program that continues to ascend among ranked business schools worldwide.”

Monson is a 2006 recipient of the UCI Distinguished Alumni Award, a longtime member of the Merage School Dean’s Advisory Board and a Charter Member of the Dean’s Leadership Circle. In 2015, she was recognized by the Merage School following her pledge of [\\$1.5 million](#) to name the Grand Terrace in the new Merage School building. Her gift is the largest pledged in support of the new business school facility and the largest received to date from a Merage School graduate.

Kwaku Gyabaah earned his Bachelor Degree in Electrical Engineering from Howard University in Washington, DC. and began his career with Clark Construction, one of the nation's largest general contractors. During his 11-year tenure, Gyabaah worked in multiple markets serving in operational, strategic and client/project acquisition roles. He earned his MBA from The Paul Merage School of Business in 2016. Currently he is serving as the director of Purchasing and Community Engagement for Clark's nearly \$2 billion Western Region. At UCI, Gyabaah is active with the Center for Real Estate and a member of the Merage Real Estate Association.

About The Paul Merage School of Business at UC Irvine

The Paul Merage School of Business offers four dynamic MBA programs, a Master of Professional Accountancy, two specialized Master’s programs – plus PhD and undergraduate business degrees – that deliver its thematic approach to business education: sustainable growth through strategic innovation. It graduates leaders with the exceptional ability to help grow their organizations through analytical decision-making, innovation and collaborative execution. In-class and on-site experiences with real-world business problems give students the edge needed to help companies compete in today’s global economy. To learn more, visit: merage.uci.edu, or go to: merage.uci.edu/go/commencement, for details about the program.

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