

PRESS RELEASE

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Maur Hill-Mount Academy Class of 2024 Commencement Speaker Announced

Atchison, Kan. - We are honored to announce Atchison native and alumnus Michael J. Kuckelman will deliver the keynote address for the Maur Hill-Mount Academy Class of 2024. Mike is a member of Overland Park law firm, Kuckelman Torline Kirkland ("KTK").

Mike is a 1982 graduate of MH-MA. He graduated from Washburn University with a bachelor's degree in accounting and became a CPA. He returned to Washburn Law School and obtained his Juris Doctor degree.

In 1990, Mike started his legal career in litigation at Blackwell Sanders (now known as Husch Blackwell). Mike was responsible for the firm's European litigation practice and was based in London, England from 2000-2007. He is a member of the Bar in England and Wales.

Following the 9/11 terrorist attack, Mike was appointed by the U.S. District Court for the S.D. of N.Y. to serve as one of five lead attorneys on the 9/11 Plaintiffs Executive Committee and tasked with litigating the World Trade Center cases. His team recovered \$1.2 billion. More recently, he was appointed by the SEC Receiver to pursue claims in Texas against Ponzi scheme, Stanford Financial, and recovered \$65 million for the victims. In 2012, Mike founded his current law firm, KTK, where he focuses on tort litigation and commercial litigation. Throughout his career, he provided pro-bono legal services for parents adopting children.

He has been involved in politics for most of his adult life. In 2019, Mike was elected Chairman of the Kansas Republican Party and served two terms. He served as a national delegate at the 2016 and 2020 Republican National Conventions. He is currently Chairman of the Board at Benedictine College and served on several other boards focused on Catholic education including, the MH-MA board.

Mike's dedication to his profession, his passion for politics and his philanthropic works of mercy make him a wonderful candidate to speak to the graduating class and offer his words of advice for the journey ahead. As in his favorite quote from Ronald Reagan, "Trust but verify," Mike's professional career is one of dedication, honor and integrity as he lives to seek justice and work hard for our judicial system.

"We are grateful to Mike for coming back to his alma mater to share his insight with the class of 2024. His distinguished career in politics, representing the Republican party, his strong Catholic faith and his commitment to helping families, as well as being an alumnus were all reasons he was an obvious choice for being the Commencement speaker at Maur Hill-Mount Academy," says David Trotter, President of MH-MA.

While at Maur Hill-Mount Academy, he was a leader in his class academically and was active in the MH-MA speech teams. During his time at MH-MA, he was employed by the Exchange Bank and is very grateful for the training and guidance he received there.

His Commencement speech will not only equip the graduates with advice for their future but to turn what they love into a profession, while enjoying the years ahead with humor and fun. Trotter says, "Mike is a great example to these young adults on being a leader and how your role in the workplace can positively affect so many lives. He has an impressive resume and life story. I'm excited to hear his speech."

Mike's high school years at MH-MA were memorable and gifted him friendships for a lifetime. Being native to Atchison, Mike's favorite part about the school was learning about the world and other cultures from the international boarding students.

Mike resides in Overland Park, Kansas and has three successful adult children, Sara, Jacob and Matthew. When he is not diving into politics, Mike also enjoys snow skiing in his free time.

The Baccalaureate Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, May 18 at 9:00am at Mount St. Scholastica Chapel and the Commencement ceremony will follow at the MH-MA Haverty Gymnasium, 1000 Green Street, at 10:45am.