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For Release: Immediately

Alpena Community College Names Its 2024 Distinguished Graduate Arthur Knechtel ('57) to be Honored at ACC Commencement

Alpena— May 9, 2024 — Alpena Community College has selected Arthur Knechtel as its 2024 Distinguished Graduate. He will be honored during ACC's commencement ceremony May 9 at Park Arena on the campus of Alpena Community College. The event begins at 7:00 p.m.

ACC a Launchpad



Before retirement, Mr. Knechtel had a long career with Hercules Incorporated, a major multinational chemical and munitions manufacturing company. A chemical engineer, Mr. Knechtel steadily rose in the organization and eventually became the director of purchasing, flying around the globe to buy raw materials for the company.

Mr. Knechtel graduated from Alpena Community College in 1957 with an associate degree in science. He then attended the University of Michigan, where she earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering.

Mr. Knechtel started working for Hercules right out of college and spent 38 years with the company. In retirement, Mr. Knechtel devoted himself to helping others, pioneering a volunteer project to provide affordable housing for senior citizens in Pennsylvania, where he lives. This resulted in a 28-year labor of love helping to plan, construct, and manage *Luther House*, a four-building complex consisting of 256 apartments for seniors. Over 800 senior citizens that have lived there since it was constructed.

Mr. Knechtel and his wife, Mary Ann, have delivered Meals on Wheels to homebound adults for 26 years. In addition, he has served for 15 years on the finance committee for an after-school program for at-risk kids called *After the Bell*. The program has served over 5,000 children since its inception 25 years ago.

"Giving back to people is important," Mr. Knechtel said. "God has been nice to me. I've had a happy career. I had a happy childhood. I had a great college career, first at ACC and then at U of M. I wanted to give back to the community."

While life has taken Mr. Knechtel to Pennsylvania, he hasn't forgotten his roots in Northern Michigan or the people among whom he was raised. Several years ago, he and his wife established the Arthur H. &

Mary Ann Knechtel Scholarship at the ACC Foundation to assist students pursuing a degree in engineering or science.

Distinguished Graduate Honor

Mr. Knechtel is the thirty-second recipient of the Distinguished Graduate award, which is bestowed upon an ACC alumnus/ae who has impacted the world in their area of expertise. Established in 1998 by the ACC Foundation, this award honors ACC alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary achievement in their chosen professions or who have made a remarkable positive impact on others through philanthropy or service. Its recipients are examples of how a solid educational foundation from ACC can launch a lifetime of achievements.

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About ACC

Founded in 1954, Alpena Community College provides affordable higher education in Northeast Michigan to students with diverse backgrounds and academic goals. Each semester, ACC educates over 2000 students spread between campuses in Alpena and Oscoda, along with students taking advantage of the college's distance learning offerings. In addition to providing two-year degrees and one-year certificates in over 75 programs of study, ACC offers customized workforce training, continuing education courses, dual-enrollment studies for area high school students, cooperative on-campus four-year degree programs, and community education.

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