



UCG Alumni Success Stories

One of the greatest benefits of LinkedIn and other social media platforms is that it gives us the opportunity to stay in touch and follow the success of individuals who began their careers at UCG Technologies (formerly United Computer Group, Inc.): our interns and alumni. These individuals joined UCG full of potential and energy. It wasn't long before they became strong contributors bringing fresh ideas and building client relationships, all the while learning business strategies that would eventually support their growth into successful careers.

As business owners, of course we would prefer to keep our best employees forever! Still, we encourage our employees to go after their dreams and find their true passion in life, whether here at UCG or in a different industry. Today's article is the first in a series of interviews, UCG Alumni Success Stories, conducted by our marketing consultant, Francine Ciaccia, of MoMo Companies Ltd. We are pleased and honored to introduce Margie Martyn, Ph.D. Margie, thank you for being a part of UCG's success!

Margie Martyn, Ph.D.

President at Harold Washington College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago



Margie Marty, Ph.D.

Margie has been an educator and administrator in higher education for eighteen years. She is experienced in the areas of strategic planning, budgeting, accreditation, assessment, international programs, curriculum development, online learning and leveraging technology in teaching and learning, information services and adult learning.

Margie specializes in strategic planning, enrollment management and student retention, accreditation, assessment, online learning, and international programs.

Margie, when did you meet Jim Kandrac and how did it come to be that he offered you employment at UCG?

It was 1992 and I was working for the owners of the building where his company was located doing some clerical and bookkeeping work. I think he noticed that I had some good "customer service skills" and saw potential in me, so he offered me a position in marketing and business development. He told me that "my voice smiled on the phone" and it's funny because I wrote that in a cover letter for my next job and that is how I was able to enter the world of higher education.



Margie Martyn, 1992

That's fantastic; you were being interviewed by Jim all the while and didn't realized it! Please tell me about some of the most satisfying responsibilities and tasks you were involved with.

The most important thing that I learned was how significant excellent customer service is, and how critical it is to take care of each and every customer. Jim taught me and I quote, "people don't buy products from people, they buy the products *and* the service that comes with those products." Jim helped me understand by his example the importance of listening very closely to what customers need, excellent follow up skills, remembering personal information about our clients so that they knew we really cared about them (and we really did), etc.

I spent a lot of time on sales too. It's a great lesson for every single person to learn. I recommend that everyone work in sales at least for two to three years. You learn the value of persistence, of being told no, and how to turn a no into yes. During my time at UCG, I worked diligently, formed a relationship and closed a partnership deal with a very large global company that sold computers, parts and accessories. It made me realize that persistence is often rewarded with success!

You definitely began by learning *the* most valuable lesson: it's all about the relationships. At the time, UCG was a five-year old tech company. What did you learn about the world of technology?

During that time I learned so much about the power of computers and how they can be used for communication and marketing. Jim had me write a newsletter about our products in Microsoft Word and I had never really used computers much before. I remember him showing me how to use one of the original Web search tools, Mosaic. I also learned a lot about the products that we sold (I/O devices) which allowed PC printers to connect to IBM AS400s and System 36 mainframe computers. I didn't even know what a mainframe computer was, never dreaming that in the future, I would share with my students many examples about their use in business.

Jim sent me and another employee on our first business trip to Salt Lake City to visit I-O Corporation. I had never traveled for business and it was a wonderful experience to meet the

vendor, learn about our products, and better understand how important vendor relationships were as well.

It sounds like you had a very fulfilling work and life experience at UCG. What did you like most about working there?

The thing I liked best was learning from Jim. He is a bundle of energy, and is so focused. Each day he would come in excited to sell our products and to see how UCG could improve. He expected 120% from us all of the time and we loved delivering it. He was a lot of fun too. There were many times that we would laugh and have fun while we problem solved on how to increase our sales.

I learned the value of being part of a team and how much we needed each other, and how much we could accomplish together. I learned what a great leader looks like (Jim). He or she is driven, competitive, tough and kind. Jim expected a lot of us, but he rewarded us too. We got a percentage of our sales and it taught us that if we worked hard and helped the company do well, we did well too. He cared about our growth as employees and as people.

It's occurs to me that at the time, Jim was only in his early 30's. Some people are just born leaders!

That was so impressive to me as well. I also want to mention that after I left UCG, Jim kept in touch with me over the years. He wrote a very kind recommendation letter which I used in my application for the Baldwin-Wallace University MBA program. He also took the time to present to some of my classes at Baldwin-Wallace University years later.

What was your most valuable take-away when you left UCG to join Baldwin-Wallace College?

I started at Baldwin Wallace College in Berea, OH as an Internship Coordinator in the Career Services department. My biggest takeaway was that you can't be afraid to learn new things and the only way to get ahead is by being a quick learner and through hard work. This reminds me of a saying that my current supervisor says (Chancellor of City Colleges of Chicago) which is that "You need to work hard. And if that doesn't work, work harder."

What advice do you have for individuals looking to set or adjust their career path?

The best advice is to cast your net far and wide. Check with your college to see if there is a career services department. If so, go there and make sure that they know you what you are looking for. Add your resume to their resume database. Go to as many networking events that you can. A lot of schools have them at their colleges, where companies come and meet students either formally or informally. Ask for business cards and then send a professionally written email thanking the person for their time and reminding him or her that you are looking for an internship. Attend free career fairs in your city and network there.

Create a professional LinkedIn account that shows your experience and background. Check all of your social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and take down anything that does not reflect a professional persona.

Do research on companies in your area to understand their mission, values, and goals. Take these names to your Career Services Department to see if there are relationships with the companies or see if they would be willing to reach out to them. Do volunteer work in the meantime to show that you are willing to work hard. Bottom line: Don't wait for the opportunity to come to you; go out and get it!

Margie lives in Chicago with her husband Scott, who also works at the City Colleges of Chicago at the District Office in the Office of Strategy and Center of Excellence. They have three children, one grandchild and two more on the way. In their spare time, they enjoy participating in Chicago 5k running races and the Chicago triathlon.

Learn more about Margie Martyn by visiting her [LinkedIn profile](#).

Learn more about [UCG Technologies](#) and its founder & president, [Jim. Kandrak](#).