

BEST IN FINANCE

JILL HECKLINGER

DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING AND HUMAN RESOURCES, COLLEGEBOUND

Age: 38

Education: Bachelor's degree in accounting and MBA, Loyola University

Past experience: Senior director of treasury, Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc.; manager of financial reporting, Municipal Mortgage and Equity; and senior audit associate, KPMG LLP

Favorite part of the job: "Working for an organization that is helping students in Baltimore City go to college, graduate and change the trajectory of their lives for the better."

Fun fact: "During college I sang the National Anthem at Camden Yards for an Orioles-Yankees game."

Jill Hecklinger moved on from one of Baltimore's biggest companies to a local nonprofit. Now, she wears many hats at the CollegeBound Foundation.

Hecklinger spent 10 years working in various accounting and treasury positions at Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. before joining the nonprofit two years ago. CollegeBound has been a huge change of pace for her.

CollegeBound's mission is to guide students in Baltimore City schools "to and through" college through mentoring and scholarship programs. The nonprofit has offered more than \$3 million in scholarships during its 31 years, Hecklinger said.

Hecklinger has had a lot more on her plate than just being in charge of CollegeBound's finances though. She also heads CollegeBound's human resources department and volunteers to help review the 1,000 applications they receive every year. More recently, she has taken charge of an office change expected in spring of 2020, making sure the transition is done effectively and in a cost-efficient manner. The new location hasn't been announced yet, but Hecklinger said they will remain in Baltimore City.

The hardest part of all the new responsibilities for Hecklinger has been heading human resources. It was an area she had far less experience in, and the hardest to merge with her accounting experience.

Hecklinger's biggest initiative so far has been meeting with each of CollegeBound's teams to determine programmatic needs



BY ERIC STOCKLIN

and costs. She sat down with CollegeBound's college mentoring, scholarship, high school counseling and development teams to find cost savings that amounted to around 2-3% of the nonprofit's total budget.

"That may not seem like a lot on the whole, but to a kid that can make a big difference," Hecklinger said.

She has also changed up CollegeBound's insurance contract and developed a flexible spending account to help pass some savings onto employees. Heckling said the

organization's greatest asset is its people and she intends to keep them happy.

Hecklinger said all the extra responsibilities are worth it when she sees the results at events like CollegeBound's luncheon honoring students who were awarded scholarships.

"When you hear those stories, and luckily with my job I get to a lot, it's hard not to feel hopeful about our city's future," Hecklinger said. "I love my job here because I love the work that we do here."

—Zach Phillips