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Accounting

Oct. 24, 2016



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Boyd University – MBA, University of Maryland Baltimore County – Information Systems Management/Technical Writing Minor. Certified Public Accountant, Chartered Global Management Accountant, Certified Information Systems Auditor.

Q&A:

What advice would you give to female college students about the opportunities for women in the accounting profession?

Accounting professionals are well respected and recognized for the critical thinking and improved decision making we bring to organizations of all sizes around the world. I advise all accounting students – female and male – to sit for the CPA Exam – as soon as possible. Beginning your career in Public Accounting offers a strong foundation that you can build upon to reach Partner or if you decide later to pursue a career in Business Industry, Education, Government, Not-for Profit, or Consulting.

What would you suggest to accounting firms that are interested in retaining and advancing more qualified female staff?

Executive Sponsorship and clarity in the tone from the top regarding leadership development opportunities, the promotion process, and work-life balance strategies are critical to reduce the assumptions and rumors that impact retention.

Communicate the advancement opportunities available. After that baseline overview, schedule regular one on one meetings and have candid discussions about their goals and the steps needed to reach them.

I am also a strong advocate of mentorship programs. I am fortunate to have had many mentors who helped me further develop my strengths. I encourage firms to invest in these programs to not only provide career development resources for new

professionals but also to provide great teaching and learning opportunities for more

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I have also enjoyed the volunteerism and giving back to the profession through the AICPA, the Maryland Association of CPAs and the National Association of Black Accountants. In each of these organizations, there is a long history of supporting young professionals as they begin their careers.

I'm proud to have supported the many outstanding initiatives that benefit the community as well as the profession.

What are you currently reading?

I read a number of accounting, leadership, and technology publications including the Journal of Accountancy, Oracle Profit Magazine, and The Maryland Association of CPA's Statement Magazine. I'm also active on social media and use Flipboard for a summary of various topics and specific focus areas.

I love book referrals and as a result am currently reading Contagious: Why Things Catch On by Jonah Berger.

What changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5 years)?

Rapid shifts in technology are continuing to change the business landscape, both in the US and globally. CPAs have an opportunity to harness the power of technology and drive value for their clients and in their organizations. From big data to assurance work around cybersecurity, CPAs are very well positioned to play a leadership role as technology enables new market offerings as well as challenges.

How do you see yourself participating in shaping the future of the accounting profession?

Similar to those who have come before us, I believe we have an obligation to look

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I'm also passionate about helping to develop a pipeline of leaders across all areas of the profession and driving quality not only in public accounting, but in management accounting as well.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped shape the direction or focus of your professional life.

My parents were my first mentors—providing me the confidence and belief that I could be anything I wanted. Growing up in the inner city of Baltimore, my parents impressed upon me the benefits of becoming of well education and I have carried that foundational principle throughout my life.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

“To Whom Much is Given, Much is Required.” I first learned about the CPA profession in the 3rd grade and it made a significant difference in my life. As a result, I try to “pay it forward” by raising awareness of the amazing opportunities in our profession to both students and adults.

[See the other recipients of the 2016 Most Powerful Women in Accounting award.](#)

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