TOP 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN ACCOUNTING

Who’s next?

The 2022 class of thought leaders and changemakers are worried about who will be available to lead the profession in the future.
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Looking for a next generation to lead

By Danielle Lee

Talent is the talk of the accounting profession — and the 2022 Top 100 Most Influential People are leading many of those conversations. Their expert advice on the talent shortage, diversity and inclusion, and many other timely topics is partially what landed them on this year’s list of the most impactful thought leaders and changemakers in the profession, along with the ways they have gone beyond mere rhetoric to take action and create change.

We’ve asked the Top 100 to share some of that wisdom throughout these pages. Those thoughts, from some of accounting’s most successful leaders, are valuable in guiding the next generation of influencers at a time when there is uncertainty about how the profession can even continue to attract and retain such sought-after talent. (For full responses to all our questions, visit AccountingToday.com.)

Given this crisis point, we asked this year’s class if they would still choose the same career today. While the answers revealed that the Top 100 would be just as energized about entering accounting today, the honorees also acknowledged that the profession has to go further to attract an entirely new demographic of young talent. Hopefully, this year’s Top 100 will help inspire that next wave.

As always, it is a large undertaking to narrow down this list to just 100 spots, and many factors have to be considered, including the level of influence within roughly the last six months and projected over the next six. The movers and shakers of accounting go beyond 100 (and our Ones to Watch), but this year’s honorees are a great representation of its wisest and most experienced guides, who we expect to steer that next generation.

Presenting the 2022 Top 100 Most Influential People! AT
With more than 20 years of cloud experience, Right Networks delivers a community of experts unmatched in providing security, reliability and accessibility to accounting firms.

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A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Berson intends to help sustain that growth with a focus on the key areas of ESG, and diversity, equity and inclusion.
Born: Cape Town, South Africa, 1961
College: University of Cape Town; University of South Africa
First full-time job: Audit staff, Mazars
Favorite podcast: NPR’s “Up First”

Joe Biden
U.S. president
With a divided Congress, Biden will find it even harder than before to advance anything remotely ambitious, meaning that any legislation that his administration may pursue in areas like tax will likely be limited to those proposals that have widespread support.
Born: Scranton, Pennsylvania, 1942
College: University of Delaware; Syracuse University College of Law
First full-time job: Clerk, law firm

Ken Bishop
President and CEO, NASBA
Bishop’s goal is to maintain the relevancy of the CPA credential — a critical task amid declining interest — and he is pursuing it with bold initiatives like the CPA Evolution project and the associated revamp of the CPA exam on which his National Association of State Boards of Accountancy is partnering with the AICPA.
Born: Mexico, Missouri, 1951
College: University of Missouri
First full-time job: Staff, Kroger Co.
Favorite podcast: “Exchanges at Goldman Sachs”

Julie Boland
U.S. chair, MP and Americas MP, Ernst & Young
Unusually for a Big Four managing partner, Boland spent time in investment banking and industry, and — besides giving her valuable insight into the capital markets — that perspective may explain the value she puts on bringing together people with diverse backgrounds and experiences at EY.
Born: Cleveland
College: University of Vermont; University of Chicago Booth School of Business
First full-time job: Audit staff/CPA, PwC

Jim Boomer
CEO, Boomer Consulting
Boomer leads one of the most influential teams of consultants to the profession, helping firms and individual accountants prepare for every aspect of the future through their consulting, events, training and thought leadership.
Born: Manhattan, Kansas, 1976
College: Kansas State University; University of Texas at Austin
First full-time job: Senior consultant, Arthur Andersen Business Consulting
Favorite podcast: “On the Air: Accounting Today”

L. Gary Boomer
Founder, visionary and strategist, Boomer Consulting
One of the few people who can get away with the job title “visionary,” Boomer certainly fits the bill, having long foresaw the key role technology will play in the future of the profession, and that firm and tech leaders need to bridge the gap between them to manage the digital transformation that is already underway.
Born: Portis, Kansas, 1945
College: Kansas State University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, John Strain & Co. CPAs
Favorite podcast: “Multiplier Mindset”

Jim Bourke
Managing director, advisory services, WithumSmith+Brown
Bourke is one of the leading educators of the profession on everything from how best to leverage tech to drive change in accounting, to how to construct a best-in-class tech stack — all while doing his full-time job as a leader at Withum.
Born: Jersey City, N.J., 1964
College: Kean University
First full-time job: Staff level I accountant, WithumSmith+Brown
Favorite podcast: “TechStuff”

Wes Bricker
Vice chair, Trust Solutions co-leader, PwC
Between his previous role as chief accountant at the SEC and his current leadership position at PricewaterhouseCoopers, Bricker brings a unique breadth of vision to helping build a bright future for the profession centered around relevancy, quality, trust, and an ever-broader web of decision-useful information.
Born: Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, 1978
College: Elizabethtown College; American University
First full-time job: Associate, PwC
Favorite podcast: “This American Life”

Rebekah Brown
CEO, MACPA
The Maryland Association of CPAs has long since established itself as one of the most forward-looking of state societies, and Brown played a high-profile role in building the national platform from which she will now have an outsized influence on the future of the profession.
Born: Towson, Maryland, 1987
College: Ohio State University
First full-time job: Audit staff, SCGH Group
Favorite podcast: “Office Ladies”

Jennifer Burns
Chief auditor, AICPA
Burns leads the strategic direction of the institute’s audit standard-setting, from getting input from stakeholders at the start of the process to educating practitioners at the end — as she and her team are doing now with the quality management standards that were approved earlier this year.
Born: Alameda, California, 1970
College: Claremont McKenna College
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite podcast: NPR’s “Consider This”

Ted Callahan
Director, Intuit QuickBooks partner segment
Callahan and the company strive to connect small-business owners with the accounting professionals they need, and listen carefully to those accounting pros to help develop the tools they need “to be the hero to their small-business clients.”
Born: Nashville, Tennessee
College: Stanford University; Dartmouth Tuck School of Business
First full-time job: Cross-functional role, eALITY
Favorite podcast: “That Pedal Show”

David Cieslak
EVP, chief cloud officer, RKL eSolutions
While the number of new tools available to accountants can seem staggering, Cieslak narrows down the top prospects through his many speaking engagements and popular “Inspector Gadget” sessions, while keeping an eye to the horizon for the next set of tech must-haves for firms.
Born: Binghamton, N.Y., 1959
College: UCLA
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite podcast: “Honestly with Bari- Weiss”

Sue Coffey
CEO, public accounting, AICPA
When you look at some of the most important initiatives at the AICPA, you’ll find Coffey in the lead, whether it’s looking for ways to fill the talent pipeline, reimagining accounting education and the CPA exam, protecting and enhancing the CPA profession’s brand and reputation for quality and integrity, or revolutionizing the tools at the core of the audit.
Born: Cedar Grove, N.J., 1964
College: Fairfield University
First full-time job: Intern, Cove Awning and Tent Co.
Favorite podcast: “Revisionist History”

Erin Collins
National Taxpayer Advocate
Collins plays a crucial role in independently scrutinizing the tax system on behalf of the taxpaying public — as,
for instance, earlier this year, when she reported a much larger backlog of unprocessed returns than the IRS was acknowledging.

**College:** UC Irvine; Southwestern Law School

**First full-time job:** Special trial attorney, Office of Chief Counsel

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**Crystal Cooke**

**Director, diversity and inclusion, AICPA**

Cooke works at the intersection of two of the profession’s most urgent mandates: improving diversity and inclusion efforts, and broadening the pipeline of those entering accounting, overseeing a team that works to attract underrepresented populations to institute membership.

**Born:** Jackson, Tennessee, 1976

**College:** University of Cincinnati

**First full-time job:** Internal auditor, Fifth Third Bank

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**Ken Corbin**

**Chief taxpayer experience officer, IRS**

Corbin has been commissioner of the Wage and Investment Division for some time, but his appointment as the IRS’s first-ever CTXO has raised his profile — and put him in something of a hotseat, as the agency struggles with a host of unprocessed returns than the IRS was acknowledging.

**Born:** Jackson, Tennessee, 1976

**College:** Emory University

**First full-time job:** Atlanta Service Center

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**Gale Crosley**

**President and founder, Crosley+Co.**

Crosley works to keep clients and the profession apprised of how everything from ESG to shifting leadership structures will influence firm operations — and how firms can channel these emerging factors into boosting profits.

**Born:** Cleveland, 1951

**College:** University of Akron

**First full-time job:** Staff auditor, Arthur Andersen

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**Kevin Dancey**

**CEO, IFAC**

Under Dancey, the International Federation of Accountants is committed to helping accountants make the world a better place in many ways, including major efforts to encourage the profession to embrace ESG, and a recent action plan to help it fight corruption and crime.

**Born:** Oshawa, Ontario, 1950

**College:** McMaster University

**First full-time job:** Economics department, McMaster University

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**Carmine Di Sibio**

**Global chairman and CEO, Ernst & Young**

The global chair of a Big Four firm is always influential, but Di Sibio took it even further, catalyzing a professionwide discussion on the eternal potential for conflict between auditing and consulting practices by announcing an upcoming vote to split up EY along those lines.

**Born:** Frigento, Italy, 1963

**College:** Colgate University; New York University Stern School of Business

**First full-time job:** Auditor, Arthur Young

**Favorite podcast:** “13: A Colgate University Podcast” and “The Mark Divine Show”

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**Sarah Dobek**

**President and founder, Inovatus Consulting**

Dobek keeps her finger firmly on the pulse of the profession — most specifically through the growth survey she conducts to help firms benchmark their staffing efforts. She also helps staff hone crucial business development skills, while also keeping an eye on the latest trends in the profession.

**Born:** Dallas, 1981

**College:** Purdue University

**First full-time job:** Marketing coordinator, John R. Waters & Co.

**Favorite podcast:** “Right-Side Up Leadership”

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**Kimberly Ellison-Taylor**

**Founder and CEO, KET Solutions**

A trailblazer herself, Ellison-Taylor works tirelessly to open doors for others and to create a more open and welcoming profession — and all with an exuberance, a positivity, and a passion for the profession that are infectious.

**Born:** Baltimore, 1970

**College:** University of Maryland Baltimore County; Loyola University; Community

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Keeping an eye out

One hundred is not enough slots for all the people making a difference in the profession

Every year, we lament how difficult it is to limit our list of the Most Influential to just 100 people, and this year is no different, so we’ve taken our usual approach of creating a subgroup of folks whose influence is new or emerging, but who we feel will be worth paying attention to in the future: our annual Ones to Watch.

We'll start in the government and regulatory space, where the recent departure of Charles Rettig from the IRS gives us not one, but two people worth watching: Douglas O’Donnell, the current acting commissioner until Congress confirms Daniel Werfel, who is the Biden administration’s nominee for the official post (and who himself served as acting IRS commissioner under President Obama). That confirmation, as with so much else in Washington these days, is complicated by the results of the midterm elections, which will likely lead to a whole new cast of congressional leaders. How all that power gets divvied up will have a major impact on tax and other legislation, so the ultimate winners will be worth watching.

On the organization front, we’ll highlight Kalil Merhib, the vice president of growth and professional services at CPA.com, who has emerged as a major voice around client advisory services, an area CPA.com has championed. And we’ll direct your attention also to Frank Sands, the recently installed president of the National Conference of CPA Practitioners, an important advocate for small firms and sole practitioners.

We don’t include many managing partners or firm leaders in the Top 100 (we tend to recognize them in our Managing Partner Elite list), but we’re adding two to this year’s OTW, starting with Eric Majchrzak, the CEO of Arizona-based BeachFleischman. Long recognized as a pioneer in marketing for accounting firms, Majchrzak bears watching as an example of the potential for nonaccountants to rise to the very top in the profession. And Peter Scovuzzo, CEO of Marcum Technology, and a principal and CIO at Top 100 Firm Marcum, stands out as an exemplar of the important role that innovative tech leaders can play at firms that know how to empower them.

Next up in terms of emerging influence are a trio of consultants:

First, there’s Sarah Elliott, whose leadership consulting firm Intend2Lead is helping grow the next generation. Second, there’s Will Hill, who brings a ton of experience from working with firms across the country for Thomson Reuters to his new consulting firm, Will Hill Consults. And last — but only alphabetically — is Ryan Lazanis, a CPA whose Future Firm coaching program and weekly newsletter reach thousands of firm leaders.

We’re also keeping an eye on a number of people at technology vendors. Following his appointment as president of Sage North America in May of this year, Aziz Benmalek has been focused on growing the business — and supporting the ongoing evolution of CAS within the profession, as is Nicole Ksiazek, the director of the Sage Intacct Accountants Program.

Meanwhile, Intuit’s training and education leader for the tax and accounting profession, Jasen Stine, is working to, well, train and educate tax and accounting pros — particularly around making the move to advisory services.

Finally, an innovator to watch: Christopher Vanover’s AuditClub offers what he describes as an “auditors-as-a-service” model to provide fractional staff and other resources to hard-pressed audit firms.
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Lee Fredericksen
Managing partner, Higie Fredericksen’s trademark research studies helped revolutionize accounting marketing, and he’s been expanding them to provide insights on an ever-wider range of subjects.
Born: Grenoble, France, 1964
College: HEC Paris
First full-time job: Bain & Co.

Denise LeDuc
President and CEO, CalCPAs
As head of one of the nation’s largest state societies, Froemming is encouraging candid conversations about diversity and gender equality that are leading to new strategies to boost ED and expand the pipeline of new accountants.
Born: Baltimore, 1957
College: University of Pennsylvania
First full-time job: Assistant professor, University of Mississippi Medical School

Julio Gonzalez
CEO, KPMG US
The commission’s climate disclosure proposals are making headlines, but Gonzalez is also reengineering the PCAOB with updated standards and a resolution (we hope) to its long-running difficulties inspecting Chinese audit firms.
Born: Baltimore, 1957
College: University of Pennsylvania
First full-time job: Goldman Sachs & Co.

J. Russell George
Tax Administration Inspectorate Director, Canada
Many suggest that Faber’s 2021 ouster as CEO of Danone was a result of gender equality that are leading to new conversations about diversity and inclusion, while also serving as a strong advocate for all his members’ needs.
Born: Richmond, Virginia, 1969
College: Marshall College
First full-time job: Staff auditor, Arthur Andersen

Angie Grissom
Chairman, SEC
A trusted advisor to trusted advisors — she counsels hundreds of managing partners, coaches emerging leaders, and partners with other consultants and thought leaders to push forward needed changes in the profession.
Born: New York City
College: Howard University
First full-time job: Assistant director, Queens County

Calvin Harris
CEOs, NYSSCPA
As the first Black head of the oldest state society in the country, Harris is well-positioned to help move the profession toward enhanced diversity, equity and inclusion — and has not only led its largest ESG engagements, but become a thought leader and pioneer of what this work will look like in the future.
Born: Seoul, South Korea, 1982
College: University of South Carolina
First full-time job: Junior accountant, Finance Company of America

No other credentials have the privilege of dual accreditation.
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Kacee Johnson
VP of strategy and innovation, CPA.com

Johnson plays an integral role in many of CPA.com’s most prominent programs, including its Startup Accelerator (which is helping develop crucial tools for the profession); the AICPA Town Hall (which has retained its pandemic-era popularity); major symposiums on blockchain and ESG; and a host of other initiatives.

Born: Las Vegas, 1980
College: University of Arizona
First full-time job: Director of operations, Rialto Theatre

Richard Jones
Chair, FASB

Even as the Financial Accounting Standards Board continues to produce a constant flow of proposals and updates, Jones has reset its research and standard-setting agendas this year, pausing some projects and taking on others in areas like ESG and digital assets.

Born: Washingtonville, New York, 1965
College: SUNY Binghamton
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Ernst & Whitney
Favorite podcast: "Business Wars"

Edward Karl
VP, tax policy & advocacy, AICPA

As one of the institute’s point people on tax, Karl is an important liaison between the profession and Washington, pushing Congress and the IRS to do better in terms of smarter legislation, better administration, and improved service.

Born: Washington, D.C., 1954
College: University of Maryland
First full-time job: Junior accountant, Lewis Kist CPA
Favorite podcast: "Simply Tax"

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Born: Washington, D.C., 1954
College: University of Maryland
First full-time job: Junior accountant, Lewis Kist CPA
Favorite podcast: "Simply Tax"

Roman Kepczyk
Director of firm technology strategy, Right Networks

Think of Kepczyk as a sort of outsourced IT director for the profession, offering guidance to hundreds of firms on digital best practices and technological opportunities through his work at Right Networks, his frequent speaking engagements, and his many articles and publications.

Born: Berlin, Germany, 1961
College: Arizona State University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Wolfsinkel Group Inc.
Favorite podcast: "AICPA Town Hall"

Bob Lewis
President, The Visionary Group

Lewis and his team have only added to the roster of large firms they work with on topics ranging from advisory services to capacity planning to M&A, and his speaking engagements have similarly expanded as new challenges arise.

Born: Chicago, 1959
College: DePaul University
First full-time job: Internal auditor, DoALL

Julie Bell Lindsay
CEO, CAQ

Lindsay leads the Center for Audit Quality in its twofold mission: promoting quality within the profession, and promoting the profession to the world, whether that’s through public reports on important trends in auditing, or developing high school curricula to encourage more young people to study accounting, or any of a number of other initiatives to expand the talent pipeline and help with diversity.

Born: Sidney, Ohio, 1970
College: Ohio State University; Vanderbilt University Law School
First full-time job: Associate, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati

Tamera Loerzel
Partner, ConvergenceCoaching

While remote working and work-life balance, which Loerzel and team have long championed, may no longer be radical concepts, she continues to fly the flag for a number of similarly challenging ideas that need to be normalized to build the next-generation firm.

Born: Hammond, Indiana, 1966
College: University of North Dakota
First full-time job: Business solutions sales associate, Gaffney’s Office Solutions
Favorite podcast: “Everything Happens"

Rene Lacerte
CEO and founder, Bill

Accountants are only as strong as their relationships — with clients, with colleagues and, more critically than ever, with their technology providers — a fact that Lacerte understands as the orchestrator of many partnerships with accounting firms and with other software vendors, helping Bill remain an in-demand staple of every tech-savvy practitioner’s ecosystem.

Born: Fairview, Virginia, 1967
College: Stanford University
First full-time job: Senior consultant, PwC
Favorite podcast: “How I Built This"

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Chair, FASB

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Born: Washingtonville, New York, 1965
College: Pace University
First full-time job: Junior management advisory services consultant, Hoffman Raich Fine CPA Group
Favorite podcast: "EconTalk"

Bob Lewis
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Born: Fairview, Virginia, 1967
College: Stanford University
First full-time job: Senior consultant, PwC
Favorite podcast: “How I Built This"

Status check

We asked this year’s candidates: Where do you feel we are in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic?

In the middle of it
Mostly out of it
73%
51%
25%
Completely out of it
Of 124 candidate responses

Antonio Machado
Chair, CEO, Partner, Deloitte

Machado never discusses the idea of a post-COVID future, and he’s not alone in his pessimism. The pandemic, he believes, has forever changed the way people work, and the profession is poorly prepared for what’s to come.

Born: Niterói, Brazil, 1972
College: Stanford University
First full-time job: Associate, Price Waterhouse
Favorite podcast: "Everything Happens"

Paul Knopp
Chair and CEO, KPMG

Knopp is demonstrating his commitment to technology and innovation with major investments in areas ranging from new audit tools to the collaboration hub in the metaverse that KPMG launched in June, and similarly demonstrating a commitment to the firm’s people with a $160 million investment in salaries earlier this year.

Born: Fredericksburg, Texas, 1959
College: University of Texas at Austin
First full-time job: Assistant accountant, KPMG

Allan Koltin
CEO, Koltin Consulting Group

If you are reading about a merger, chances are high Koltin was the man behind the curtain, helping orchestrate transactions and advise firms along the way, even as his acumen remains in demand for guiding leaders through myriad other practice issues.

Born: Milwaukee, 1957
College: University of Wisconsin – Madison/University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
First full-time job: Director, Nankin, Schnoll (now BDO)

Charles Maniaci
VP, regulatory analysis and design, Sovos

Maniaci is making it his mission to guide everyone through the current minefield of sales tax issues — by keeping Sovos’ tools up to date on the latest regs, but also by educating sales tax pros and advocating for clear, reasonable and implementable rules from states and other regulatory bodies.

Born: Akola, India, 1960
College: Bentley College; Boston University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Science Systems
Favorite podcast: "Hidden Brain"
Solving the people problem

When asked what the most important issue facing the profession is, the war for talent was by far the most common response — but it wasn’t the only one.

Our talent shortage and ability to attract and retain the volume and quality of professionals needed to serve clients the public, and assure the profession’s success.

— Susan Coffey

We need to upskill the profession and our future members in a way that goes beyond where the current college curriculum takes them.

— Anthony Pugliese

Talent! The “talent drain”, especially in advisory, is extremely concerning.

— Jim Bourke

The profession has a diversity issue — our profession does not look like society at large.

— Julie Bell Lindsay

The decreasing number of candidates seeking to become CPAs.

— Ken Bishop

While many in the profession feel that staffing is the most important issue facing the accounting profession, I still feel that cybersecurity remains paramount.

— Stephen Mankowski

Talent shortage and requisite skills; both are interrelated

— Tom Hood

There is a fundamental disconnect between the business model that has been implemented by firms and the lifestyle and culture that their current or prospective team members want.

— Darren Root

Mindset. We recognize that change is happening at an exponential rate, but organizations are still focusing on the safe center — their core — and not truly investing in the edge.

— Kacee Johnson

The audit profession is underappreciated, or perhaps misunderstood.

— Kevin Dancey

The most important issue facing the accounting profession is relevance… As I have said many times, “Solve the relevance issue and you’ll solve the pipeline.”

— Todd Shapiro

Until we change the nature of the services we deliver, we will continue to be overworked, understaffed and underappreciated by our clients.

— Geni Whitehouse

In prior years, I might have suggested staffing, or technology, or innovation. But, today, the word is “resilience.”

— Rick Telberg

As a result of the critical role trust plays in business, the profession — along with regulators and policymakers — is being tasked with determining how to disclose material nonfinancial information, such as ESG data on climate change, human capital management and more.

— Wes Bricker

The audit profession is at a pivotal moment. Our profession will undergo more transformative change in the next five years than in the past 50.

— Lara Abrash

The IRS is facing unprecedented service challenges that have overlapped three tax filing seasons.

— Edward Karl

Assurance services for sustainability reporting are a major issue.

— Tracey Niemotko

Although talent and managing complexity are clearly top issues, the evolution of the practice and services through technology advancement continues to be the greatest opportunity for the profession — and the best way to manage the talent and complexity challenges.

— Erik Asgeirsson

Removing the barriers around accessibility and affordability is a top priority for our firm and for the profession.

— Julie Boland

It’s still the profession’s business model. This is being challenged dramatically by the PE investments, consulting firms breaking off from traditional CPA firm services, and massive consolidation.

— Sarah Dobek

Its antiquated business model of selling time. It is the root cause of almost every other issue including but not limited to the (number) of folks with accounting degrees who do not pursue careers in public accounting

— Ed Kless

Oftentimes, we hear digital transformation but it’s really business transformation. Business transformation includes people — all people. How we attract, onboard, advance and retain the best and brightest is well aligned with inclusion objectives.

— Kimberly Ellison-Taylor

CPAs need to do a better job of articulating the various opportunities that the CPA license affords.

— Ralph Thomas

The explosion of digital assets and the related tax issues have taken center stage.

— Wendy Walker

Born: North Andover, Massachusetts, 1968
College: Bentley College; Boston University School of Law
First full-time job: New business representative, Keyport Life Insurance Co.
Favorite podcast: “Hidden Brain”

Stephen Mankowski
Co-chair, National Tax Policy Committee, NCCPA

Mankowski is a crucial conduit between small tax and accounting practitioners and the federal government, bringing the concerns of the members of the National Conference of CPA Practitioners to the IRS and Congress, and bringing back important intelligence on tax laws, regulations and the legislative environment.

Born: Philadelphia, 1965
College: La Salle University
First full-time job: Staff auditor, Coopers & Lybrand

Jason Marx
President & CEO, Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting, North America

Marx and his team combine their innovation chops with a deep understanding of the needs, habits and workflows of tax and accounting professionals to continually improve one of the most widely used suites of tools in the field.

Born: Detroit, 1966
College: University of Michigan; DePaul University
First full-time job: Account executive, Household Finance Corporation
Favorite podcast: “12 Geniuses”

Anoop Mehta
Chief strategist, chair, AICPA; chair, Association of International Certified Professional Accountants

With pandemic restrictions loosening as he took up his post, Mehta was determined to share his passion for the profession with as many people in person as possible, and he’s making it happen: In his first five months as chair, he spoke to over 2,000 students, 50 faculty members, and over 700 members — and counting.

Born: Akola, India, 1960
College: University of Maryland
First full-time job: Intern, Science Systems and Applications Inc.
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Barry Melancon  
President and CEO, AICPA  
Melancon sees further and more acutely into the future than anyone else in the profession — and then has the means, through his leadership of the largest combined membership group of accountants in the world, to create the programs, initiatives, guidance and resources that the profession will need to adapt.  
Born: Houma, Louisiana, 1958  
College: Nicholls State University  
First full-time job: Accountant, small CPA firm

Ed Mendlowitz  
Emeritus partner, WithumSmith+Brown  
Mendlowitz's output — including blogs, articles, books, webinars, practice aids, his weekly Accounting Today column and much more — has remained sky-high over the years, and his acumen for identifying best practices that really matter to accountants is as sharp as ever.  
Born: New York City, 1942  
College: Baruch College  
First full-time job: Junior accountant, J. J. Turner CPA

Elena Mortimer-Zhika  
CEO, Iris Software Group  
With a series of high-profile acquisitions over the last two years (like cloud accounting pioneer Accountants-World at the start of 2022), Mortimer-Zhika has made a big entrance into the U.S. market, and has everyone watching to see what she'll do — or buy — next.  
Born: Albania, 1979  
College: University of Reading  
First full-time job: Audit and assurance, Arthur Andersen  
Favorite podcast: “The Diary of a CEO”

Tracey Niemotko  
Associate professor of accounting, Marist College  
While she's an academic, there's nothing of the ivory tower about Niemotko, from her roles on the AICPA's Governing Council and with the New York State Society of CPAs, and her focus on the future of accounting education, to her recently published book on sustainability accounting and her engagement with shaping climate disclosure standards.  
Born: Monticello, N.Y., 1961  
College: Fordham University; Fordham University School of Law  
First full-time job: Tenured, associate professor of accounting, Mount Saint Vincent College  
Favorite podcast: Health and nutrition podcasts

Jeremy Osborn  
Global head of ESG, AICPA & CIMA  
With a deep background in sustainability issues, both in public practice and at standard-setters, Osborn is well-qualified to lead ESG strategic initiatives at the AICPA and CIMA, working to build the profession's skill set in these areas while establishing them as a leading voice in reporting standards.  
Born: Bristol, U.K., 1972  
College: Lincoln College, University of Oxford  
First full-time job: Commercial management trainee, Unilever

David Osborne  
CEO, Caseware  
Long a mainstay of the auditor's toolkit, Caseware under Osborne has been staying at the forefront of the technologi- cal revolution going on in audit, not least by powering tools like the AICPA’s forthcoming Dynamic Audit Solution.  
Born: Toronto, Canada, 1969  
College: Colorado State University; University of Georgia  
First full-time job: Sales, IGATE Global Solutions  
Favorite podcast: “The Daily”

Jody Padar  
VP of tax strategy & evangelism, April  
Wherever she turns, Padar finds new ways for accountants to rethink, retool and reimage their practices, usually with a strong dose of new technology mixed in. Right now, she's focused on what's next for tax practices, from devising new advisory models to the emerging role of artificial intelligence in the field, and much more.  
Born: Chicago, 1972  
College: Saint Mary's College; Northern Illinois University  
First full-time job: Tax technology associate, Price Waterhouse  
Favorite podcast: “The Learning Leader Show with Ryan Hawk”

Hitidra Patil  
Author, “The Definitive Success Guide to CAS”  
Patil made his name with his evangelical fervor for CAS (he literally wrote the book, after all, along with a host of research-based articles, presentations and podcast appearances), but he's expanding beyond that to address firmwide practice enhancement, tech-stack transformation, and growth strategies.  
Born: Mumbai, India, 1967  
College: Sathaye College; University of Mumbai; Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies  
First full-time job: Senior officer, Reliance Consultancy Services  
Favorite podcast: “Ultimate Entrepreneur”

Carl Peterson  
VP, small firm interests, AICPA  
A small-firm veteran himself, Peterson is dedicated to their success, advocating for them at all levels to make sure their voices are heard in the halls of power, and sharing best practices and valuable guidance with them through in-person meetings, presentations, and the AICPA’s Small Firm Update series.  
Born: Pearson, Illinois, 1958  
College: Kansas State University  
First full-time job: CPA, Perfetti & Kopischke  
Favorite podcast: “Welcome to the Metaverse”

Scott Peterson  
VP of U.S. tax policy and government relations, Avalara  
Peterson isn't just a renowned expert on all things related to sales and other indirect taxes — he's also a staunch advocate of businesses partnering with accountants and tax professionals to get better advice and ensure compliance.  
Born: Mabridge, South Dakota, 1955  
College: Black Hills State University; University of South Dakota  
First full-time job: Research analyst, South Dakota Legislative Research Council

Anthony Pugliese  
President and CEO, IIA  
A seasoned association executive in the accounting space, Pugliese has hit the ground running by developing the Institute of Internal Auditors' first global strategic plan to unite 220,000 internal auditors around the world, and is embarking on an ambitious overhaul of global internal audit standards.  
Born: Jacksonville, Florida, 1967  
College: University of North Florida  
First full-time job: Audit associate, Deloitte & Touche  
Favorite podcast: “Dose of Leadership”

Terry Putney  
Managing director, Whiting Transition Advisors  
Putney is one of the most highly sought-after sources of advice and guidance on M&A and internal succession planning, and the combination of his and his partner Joel Sinkin's group with Phil Whitman will only amplify their influence.  
Born: Kansas City, Missouri, 1954  
College: University of Kansas  
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Donnelly Meiners & Jordan CPAs  
Favorite podcast: “Inspirited Ideas”

Kristen Rampe  
Managing partner, Rosenberg Associates  
Rampe's partnership with Marc Rosenberg in April will only increase both of their abilities to help more owners grow their firms. Besides her frequent articles and public appearances, Rampe is also influencing the next generation of firm leaders through the Millennial Managing Podcast.  
Born: Long Beach, California, 1966  
College: University of North Florida  
First full-time job: Manager, Deloitte  
Favorite podcast: “The Learning Leader Pod”

Ben Richmond  
U.S. country manager, Xero  
Richmond's passion is to empower accountants and bookkeepers to support small businesses, delivering them the tools and guidance they need to deepen their roles as trusted advisors.  
Born: London, Ontario, 1966  
College: University of Waterloo  
First full-time job: Manager, Deloitte  
Favorite podcast: “The Learning Leader Pod”
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

What would you change in accounting?

The T100’s most common answers were more effectively marketing accounting careers and stepping up DEI.

I would like to see the profession embrace automation, outsourcing and gig work more.

— Donny Shimamoto

Beside losing our monopoly on the audit, the most important change the profession needs to make is to innovate its business model. The old “We sell time” model is dead, but many firms refuse to hold the funeral.

— Ron Baker

The profession is going to have to address and remedy the perception (and reality) of improving opportunities for work/life balance.

— Ken Bishop

The perception of all of the crazy hours that are worked.

— Stephen Mankowski

Compression of workload and burnout of people due to deadlines. Build firms with a mix of CPAs, consultants, MBAs and data analysts. Then adapt the previous business model, so people have fulfilling careers, less burnout, and are happy.

— Angie Grissom

The standard age of retirement. I think for the most part, most people are living longer and want to continue to work past the age of 62.

— Julie Gonzalez

I think it’s important for accountants to speak the language of their clients. Accounting is the language of business, but accounting is so much more than the nitty-gritty of the numbers.

— Rene Lacerte
**A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donny Shimamoto</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Founder and managing director, IntrapriseTechKnowlogies LLC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shimamoto is a go-to speaker and thought leader on all things technology, which he also tackles as an outsourced CIO; what’s more, through his Center for Accounting Transformation he’s working to provide a framework for accountants to leverage innovation to advance the profession on many fronts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born: Honolulu, Hawaii, 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>College: University of Hawaii at Manoa</td>
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<tr>
<td>First full-time job: Associate, Coopers &amp; Lybrand</td>
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<tr>
<th>Seth Siegel</th>
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<td><strong>CEO, Grant Thornton</strong></td>
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<td>Siegel took the helm just as his Top 10 Firm was reporting 17% growth, and he intends to perpetuate that by sharpening Grant Thornton’s focus on its integrated offerings across audit, tax and advisory services, while staying on the cutting edge of innovation with a steady release of new technology solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born: Danville, Kentucky, 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>College: Eastern Kentucky University</td>
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<tr>
<td>First full-time job: Staff accountant, Ernst &amp; Whitney</td>
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<tr>
<th>Lisa Simpson</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VP of firm services, AICPA &amp; CIMA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A familiar face to many through her involvement in the institute’s Town Hall series, Simpson and her team are encouraging firms to reevaluate their business models, and guiding them through the necessary transition with the Private Companies Practice Section’s wealth of resources; she also leads the AICPA and CIMA’s DEI team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>College: SUNY Brockport</td>
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<tr>
<td>First full-time job: Sales representative, Kem Manufacturing</td>
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<tr>
<th>Joel Sinkin</th>
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<td><strong>Managing director, Whitman Transition Advisors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sinkin and his partner Terry Putney are well known as trusted sherpas on the perilous paths of firm M&amp;A and succession planning, so it’s no surprise they managed their own successful merger this year, creating a partnership with Phil Whitman that will boost their reach and influence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born: New York City, 1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>College: SUNY Brockport</td>
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<td>First full-time job: Staff accountant, Touche Ross; Staff accountant, Touche Ross</td>
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<th>Todd Shapiro</th>
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<td><strong>President and CEO, Illinois CPA Society</strong></td>
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<td>Shapiro may have announced his retirement for early next year, but it’s a certainty that he will remain an important voice pushing the profession to come up with innovative solutions to both long-term problems and brand-new challenges right up until his last day — and likely beyond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born: Kankakee, Illinois, 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>College: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; DePaul University</td>
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<tr>
<td>First full-time job: Internal auditor, Continental Illinois National Bank</td>
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<th>Influencing the influencers</th>
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<td>For another year, AICPA CEO Barry Melancon was voted the most influential figure by this year’s Top 100 People candidates, with many praising his years of steady and effective stewardship of the profession — not only in spite of rapid change, but by leaning into the opportunities born of these disruptions. Similarly, Melancon’s AICPA colleague Tom Hood, retaining last year’s position as the second-highest vote-getter, was lauded for his ability to not only lead accountants into the future, but for his role in helping shape it. Prolific M&amp;A facilitator Allan Koltin, who also tackles as an outsourced CIO, remains popular this year, even moving up a few spots to claim the No. 3 position, for his tireless work and guidance in this arena. Kimberly Ellison-Taylor remained a power player for Top 100 People voters, with words like “trailblazer” and “joyful advocate” used to describe the accounting ambassador who promotes the profession while pushing for necessary changes within it. Meanwhile, many government officials and regulators retained their sphere of influence, including SEC Chair Gary Gensler and outgoing IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig, while newcomers like the PCAOB’s Erica Williams and ISSB Chair Emmanuel Faber were deemed just as prominent. The AICPA and CPA.com’s Erik Asgeirsson and Sue Coffey were widely noted for their groundbreaking work in the technology and audit spaces, while fellow perennial vote-getter Jennifer Wilson was repeatedly endorsed for her expert coaching, and Ron Baker remained a value- pricing visionary to his peers.</td>
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<th>Of 127 candidate responses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Melancon</td>
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<td>Tom Hood</td>
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<td>Allan Koltin</td>
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<td>Seth Siegel</td>
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<td>Gary Gensler</td>
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<td>Ron Baker</td>
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<td>Jennifer Wilson</td>
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<td>Ray Baker</td>
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<td>Erica Williams</td>
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<td>Sue Coffey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Reich</td>
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<td>John Telbger</td>
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A supplement to Accounting Today: **Top 100 People**

Charles Weinstein  
**CEO, Eisner Advisory Group**  
Lang respected for his leadership at EisnerAmper, Weinstein achieved greater prominence this year as a pioneer of a new type of firm driven by an infusion of private equity capital. Along with his counterparts at other firms that have allied with PE, like Citrin Cooperman, Schellman and Cherry Bekaert, Weinstein will be a model for leveraging this opportunity — and avoiding any pitfalls.  
**Born:** Brooklyn, N.Y., 1957  
**College:** SUNY Binghamton  
**First full-time job:** Staff accountant, Maxwell Schmerler & Co.  
**Favorite podcast:** “Maxwell Leadership”

Erica Williams  
**Chair, PCAOB**  
Williams has brought new energy to the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board. In her first year, the audit overseer has overhauled its agenda, begun work on updating standards, made significant progress in negotiations over access with Chinese regulators, relaunched important advisory groups, and — perhaps most tellingly — levied a record amount of penalties against audit firms.  
**Born:** Raleigh, N.C., 1973  
**College:** University of Virginia  
**First full-time job:** Litigation associate, large law firm  
**Favorite podcast:** “This American Life”

Geni Whitehouse  
**Countess of communication, Even a Nerd Can Be Heard**  
Whitehouse shows accountants how to be the most impactful advisors they can be at a time when their clients desperately need this kind of holistic guidance.  
**Born:** Atlanta, 1959  
**College:** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
**First full-time job:** Staff accountant, Deloitte Haskins & Sells  
**Favorite podcast:** “Earmark Accounting”

Jennifer Wilson  
**Co-founder and partner, Convergence Coaching**  
Besides facilitating leadership retreats, teaching courses on optimizing workplaces, creating frameworks for change management, and conducting an industry-leading survey on flexible and remote work, Wilson somehow finds time to personally coach a large swath of managing partners and future leaders.  
**Born:** Hahn Air Force Base, Germany, 1964  
**College:** University of Nebraska Omaha  
**First full-time job:** Regional sales manager, Pro Systems  
**Favorite podcast:** “We Can Do Hard Things with Glennon Doyle”

Phil White  
**CEO, Whitman Transition Advisors**  
White’s merger with Terry Putney and Joel Sinkin’s Transition Advisors has taken his influence to a new level, even as he’s emerging as a go-to expert on one of the big trends of the day: the growing interest in investing in the profession from private equity firms and other deep pockets.  
**Born:** Brooklyn, N.Y., 1962  
**College:** Rutgers University  
**First full-time job:** Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse & Co.  
**Favorite podcast:** “7 Good Minutes Daily”

Sandra Wiley  
**President, Boomer Consulting**  
Leaders navigating the ongoing transformation of the profession need the kind of confidence and wisdom Wiley can instill as they adopt new models to improve their bottom lines and, crucially, their recruitment and retention efforts.  
**Born:** Stafford, Kansas, 1960  
**College:** Friends University  
**First full-time job:** Working at the local grain elevator  
**Favorite podcast:** “Maxwell Leadership”

Candace Wright  
**Chair, Private Company Council**  
Wright is the voice of private businesses in the setting of accounting standards, putting their concerns and issues before FASB so they can be reflected in future GAAP, while also being active in the ongoing revolution in auditing being led by the AICPA.  
**Born:** Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1962  
**College:** McNeese State University  
**First full-time job:** Accountant, pharmaceutical sales company

Janet Yellen  
**U.S. Secretary of Treasury**  
An uncertain economy and the specter of a serious downturn would put the former Fed chair in the spotlight anyway, but her assurances about how the $80 billion slated for the IRS in the Inflation Reduction Act will be spent mean she’ll play an important role in a subject of keen interest to tax practitioners.  
**Born:** Brooklyn, N.Y., 1946  
**College:** Pembroke College in Brown University; Yale University  
**First full-time job:** Assistant professor of economics, Harvard University

Diane Yetter  
**President and founder, Yetter Consulting Services & Sales Tax Institute**  
Yetter is not just educating a whole generation of sales tax professionals — the self-proclaimed “Sales Tax Nerf” is also helping raise their profiles as valuable players both inside companies and as advisors to businesses.  
**Born:** Chicago, 1963  
**College:** University of Kansas; DePaul University  
**First full-time job:** Sales tax auditor, Kansas Department of Revenue  
**Favorite podcast:** “Renegades: Born in the USA” and “Smartless”

Barbara Vanich  
**Chief auditor and director of professional standards, PCAOB**  
Though she was only officially made chief auditor in October, Vanich has been serving in an acting capacity for almost two years, and has been with the board for over a decade, so she’s familiar with the challenges she and her team face as they look to modernize the PCAOB’s standards in line with its ambitious new standard-setting agenda.  
**Born:** Pittsburgh, 1969  
**College:** Point Park  
**First full-time job:** Bookkeeper, Iconnex

Wendy Walker  
**Solutions principal, Sovos**  
In addition to her day job growing Sovos’ tax and regulatory reporting business, Walker has emerged in the media and elsewhere as a sought-after expert on the tax implications of a number of emerging technologies, including blockchain, digital currencies and nonfungible tokens.  
**Born:** Portland, Oregon, 1973  
**College:** Franklin University; Ohio Dominican University  
**First full-time job:** Project manager, Abercrombie and Fitch  
**Favorite podcast:** “The Tax Files”

Joe Woodard  
**CEO, Woodard**  
Woodard is familiar to many as the man behind Scaling New Heights, one of the biggest technology events in the profession, but he’s expanding well beyond that, helping tens of thousands of practitioners through one-on-one and group coaching, a regular podcast, the widely read “Woodard Report,” webinars, fireside chats, and much more.  
**Born:** Savannah, Georgia, 1967  
**College:** Mercer University; University of New Orleans  
**First full-time job:** Associate, Allen & Baxter  
**Favorite podcast:** “The Soul of Enterprise”

President and founder, Yetter Consulting Services & Sales Tax Institute

Yetter is not just educating a whole generation of sales tax professionals — the self-proclaimed “Sales Tax Nerf” is also helping raise their profiles as valuable players both inside companies and as advisors to businesses.  
**Born:** Chicago, 1963  
**College:** University of Kansas; DePaul University  
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