TOP 100
MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN ACCOUNTING

The thought leaders and change-makers who are shaping the profession
Harnessing the waves of unprecedented change

By Danielle Lee

As the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic crystallize into the “next normal,” the 2021 Top 100 Most Influential People are sharpening their focus on the most urgent of these major economic shifts.

Last year’s influencers encouraged accounting firms to make remote and flexible work a permanent policy for the drudges of accounting professionals who proved they were not only capable of finding work-life balance, but were capitalizing on it. This year, their attention turns to keeping those professionals, regardless of work environment, as the Great Resignation threatens to deplete a profession that was already facing a branding problem, a diversity deficit, and questions about the long-term value of the CPA license.

These are among the many issues cited by the Top 100 as requiring urgent attention, though this year’s class has been pushing for progress on many of these fronts for years. (More directly pandemic-related, it’s worth noting that all of the Top 100 who answered our survey and disclosed their status have been vaccinated, except for one medical exemption.)

This year’s Top 100 People, as with past years, are all honored for their high-profile roles in advancing the profession, but are far from a comprehensive listing of accounting’s biggest difference-makers. Instead, they have made an exceptional impact over the past year and are primed to exert that influence in the year ahead.

The Top 100 People’s thoughts on the profession, their careers, and advice to the next generation of influencers can be found by clicking on “See all influencers” on this page, with answers to even more questions available on AccountingToday.com.

Offering wise words at a time of great uncertainty, we present the 2021 Top 100 Most Influential People.

Joe Adams
Managing partner and CEO, RSM US

As the need to find and retain staff grows more critical, Adams has continued to prioritize diversifying his team and the profession as a whole, hiring executives with DE&I expertise, establishing task forces, and joining industry programs committed to improving these efforts.

Born: Chicago, 1955
College: DePaul University (bachelor’s and MBA)
First full-time job: Audit associate, McGladrey & Pullen
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Alan Anderson
Founder and president, Accountability Plus

Anderson’s push for auditors to quite literally leave the past behind and move into real-time, transaction-based auditing is paying dividends for a profession in need of innovation.

Born: Canby, Minnesota, 1955
College: Southwest State University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, McGladrey Hendrickson (now RSM)
Favorite recent binge watch: “NCIS”

Erik Asgeirsson
President and CEO, CPA.com

From the very start of the pandemic, Asgeirsson dedicated himself and his team to giving accountants the support they needed in terms of up-to-the-minute information and guidance to support their clients, a role he continues to play even as CPA.com begins to dial up the initiatives it plans to resume in the “new normal,” particularly around revolutionizing the audit.

Born: Falmouth, Massachusetts, 1968
College: George Washington University (B.S.); New York University Stern School of Business (MBA)
First full-time job: Manager, AT&T

Ron Baker
Founder, VeraSage Institute

More and more accountants are subscribing to Baker’s decades-long cause of shifting the profession to value pricing — as well as subscribing to the podcast he co-hosts to address this and other profession-wide innovations, judging by its 1.7 million downloads in over 40 countries.

Born: Santa Rosa, California, 1962
College: San Francisco State University; Cato and Disney University (postgraduate)
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Peat, Marwick, Mitchell
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Man in the High Castle”

Andreas Barckow
Chair, International Accounting Standards Board

Having helped shape IFRS for years, the German standard-setter and accounting professor took over at the IASB from long-time chief Hans Hoogervorst in July, and is aiming to make the board more agile, to keep up with a rapidly changing environment, and to help it tackle the enormous impact of digitization.

Born: 1966, Oldenburg, Germany
College: Paderborn University (undergrad and Ph.D.)
First full-time job: Project lead, DG Bank
Favorite recent binge watch: “Picard”

Joanne Barry
Executive director and CEO, New York State Society of CPAs

As the head of one of the largest state CPA societies, Barry has embraced the responsibility of leading change not just for her members but for a profession that is passing the baton to the next generation, which she will be doing next year as she retires from an organization radically transformed by her 12 years of service.

Born: Jersey City, N.J.
College: Montclair State University (B.A. English/journalism); The New School for Social Research (M.S. urban policy and not-for-profit management)
First full-time job: Public relations assistant, New York City School Volunteer Program Inc.
Favorite recent binge watch: “Foyle’s War”

Wayne Berson
CEO, BDO USA

Berson operates by the standard that “doing good is good enough,” meaning his Top Eight Firm’s great strides in the areas of diversity and inclusion, ESG and flexible work are designed to be sustainable efforts contributing to the firm’s long-term, purpose-driven growth.

Born: Cape Town, South Africa, 1961
College: University of Cape Town (bachelor’s); University of South Africa (graduate)
First full-time job: Audit staff, Mazzars
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions”

Chandra and Sharada Bhansali
Co-founders, AccountantsWorld

Though the Bhansalis’ long-term mission of putting cloud-based technology at the service of accountants might seem simple, reaching that goal requires them to constantly keep ahead of firms’ rapidly changing processes, tasks and service
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

The pandemic has been just as tumultuous for Black's state and local government constituents as it has been for everyone else, and he's been working to help them manage the financial and accounting issues that came along with COVID while continuing to pursue GASB's long-term standards-setting mission.

First full-time job: Staff accountant, KPMG
Favorite recent binge watch: "Ted Lasso"

First full-time job: Staff level I accountant, WithumSmith+Brown
Favorite recent binge watch: "Ted Lasso"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Ted Lasso," "Peaky Blinders," "Yellowstone" and "The Mandalorian"

First full-time job: Intern, Cove Awning and Tent Co.
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, KPMG
Favorite recent binge watch: "Ted Lasso"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"

First full-time job: Staff auditor, AICPA
Favorite recent binge watch: "Clickbait"

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

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: "Bluey"

First full-time job: Staff accountant, Price Waterhouse
Favorite recent binge watch: "Billions"
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

The 2021 Ones to Watch

Because 100 isn’t enough, here are a score more people who are helping shape accounting

Influence is rarely immediate; it is more often cumulative, as a person reaches an expanding group of people, and gains a voice at higher and higher levels. Judging the moment at which someone becomes one of the 100 people who wield the most current influence in accounting is more art than science; that said, each year our editors identify anywhere from a dozen to 20 or so people they think may be approaching that threshold — our annual Ones to Watch.

Ordinarily, the head of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board would be a shoe-in for the Top 100, but this year saw a major shakeup at the board with the firing of past chair William Duhnke, Duane DesPorte stepped in as acting chair, and just as we went to press the SEC appointed Erica Williams to fill the role full-time — we’ll be keeping an eye on both.

Other people who are relatively new to their roles, but who we expect to wield significant influence going forward, include Elizabeth Beastron, who became president of Thomson Reuters Tax & Accounting earlier this year, and Denise LeDuc Froemming, who was recently installed as president and CEO of the California CPA Society. And as 2022 unfolds, two new names to keep an eye out for are Seth Siegel and Brian Becker, who will be taking the reins at Grant Thornton and RSM US, respectively.

On the firm front, we’ll call out Avari Desai of Schellman & Co. and Charles Weinstein of the Eisner Advisory Group, both of whom led their respective Top 100 Firms in exploring deals with private equity firms — a strategy we expect more firms to be adopting going forward.

Another sector of the profession seeing major changes is the burgeoning field of ESG and sustainability standard-setting, where every week seems to bring a new combination among different organizations. We don’t know who will emerge as the major players in the end, but for now we recommend these three leaders to your attention: Jeffrey Hales, chair of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board; Janine Guillot, CEO of the Value Reporting Foundation; and EY partner Marc Siegel, an active board member at SASB.

Also making names for themselves by focusing on topical subjects are Jamie Yesnowitz, principal for SALT services at Grant Thornton, whose annual predictions around state and local taxes are highly anticipated, and Shehan Chandrasekera, a CPA and head of tax strategy at CoinTracker, and one of the foremost subject matter experts on cryptocurrency taxation — a subject of keen interest to accountants and their clients.

Communication is a key vector of influence, and on that front, we expect to hear more from Randy Crabtree, the host of the popular biweekly podcast “The Unique CPA” (and co-founder of Tri-Merit Specialty Tax Professionals), and CPA Jason Staats, who’s using Twitter, video and his Realize community to reach his fellow accountants. Also getting the word out — about growth in general, CAS in particular, and a number of other important topics — is consultant Carrie Steffen, president of the Whetstone Group.

Finally, we could fill the pages of this report just with the senators, congressmen and -women, and Biden administration officials who are having an impact on the tax environment, either in the short term or the long, but that would leave no room for anyone else; instead, we’ll just add these names as ones worth paying attention to: Sens. Joe Manchin, Kyrsten Sinema, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

subscribe to her philosophy are even better positioned to capitalize on her growth mindset — and the rest would be wise to start listening up.

Born: Cleveland, 1951
College: University of Akron
First full-time job: Staff auditor, Arthur Andersen
Favorite recent binge watch: ’Outlander’

Kevin Cumley Senior director, Sage Intacct Accountants Program, Sage

Behind the statistics of accounting firms achieving significant growth by implementing client accounting services are facilitators like Cumley, who partners with these practices not only by providing the cloud-based tools but by guiding them through planning and executing a detailed CAS strategy.

Born: Alpine, Texas, 1961
College: Eastern Washington University
First full-time job: Staff accountant
Favorite recent binge watch: “House of Cards”

Kevin Dancey CEO, IFAC

Dancey has made climate change a central issue for IFAC, supporting the creation of the International Sustainability Standards Board, while also offering practical advice for accountants on financial reporting around climate issues.

Born: Oshawa, Ontario, Canada, 1950
College: McMaster University
First full-time job: Economics department, McMaster University
Favorite recent binge watch: “Money Heist” and “Borgen”

Sarah Dobek President and founder, Inovatus Consulting

Inovatus’ new micro-learning sales training program is just one of the many projects in one of the many organizations that Dobek has her hand in, as she continues to serve as a leader of the CPA Consultants’ Alliance, the Association for Accounting Marketing and CPAsNET.

Born: Dallas, 1981
College: Purdue University
First full-time job: Marketing coordinator, John R. Waters & Co.
Favorite recent binge watch: Anything historical fiction

Kimberly Ellison-Taylor CEO, KET Solutions

It is impossible to overstate the importance of Ellison-Taylor’s positivity, enthusiasm, insight and wisdom, as she brings them to bear more and more on some of the profession’s most intractable problems, particularly those around DE&I.

Born: Baltimore, 1970
College: University of Maryland Baltimore County; Loyola University (MBA, decision science concentration); Community College of Baltimore County; Carnegie Mellon University (information technology management)
First full-time job: Procurement specialist, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
Favorite recent binge watch: “Criminal Minds”

Lisa Fitzpatrick President, Bloomberg Tax & Accounting

While Fitzpatrick works to more fully integrate Bloomberg’s powerful software and research arms to simplify accountants’ workflows, she uses those same capabilities to conduct forecasting and measure progress for the Bloomberg DE&I action plan she designed to improve its pipeline of future leaders.

Born: Bethesda, Maryland, 1967
College: UMBC (B.A. mathematics); University of Maryland Smith School of Business (MBA)
First full-time job: Circulation manager, Hobby House Press
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Crown”

Lee Fredericksen Managing partner, Hinge

Fredericksen applies a scientific lens to the art of marketing, to the relief of accountants everywhere who are still trying to crack the code on promoting their services and themselves, and need the help of Fredericksen’s arsenal of data-based strategies and results.

Born: Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, 1949
College: Augustana College (B.A. psychology); Ohio University (Ph.D. clinical psychology)
First full-time job: Assistant professor, University of Mississippi Medical School

Because 100 isn’t enough, here are a score more people who are helping shape accounting
CAS was then

CAS 2.0 is now

Over a decade ago, we introduced you to Client Advisory Services. Now, we bring you CAS 2.0 - a holistic approach that will provide the vision, insights and solutions you need to expand the way you advise your clients.

Discover the next evolution of CAS at:
CPA.com/CAS2

CPA.com
Client Advisory Services 2.0
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Gary Gensler
SEC chairman
Gensler’s commission is making plenty of influential moves — not least on climate disclosures and crypto enforcement — but his impact on the accounting profession may be felt most directly in the sweeping leadership overhaul he instituted at the PCAOB, defenestrating the chair and replacing most board members.
Born: Baltimore, 1957
College: University of Pennsylvania
First full-time job: Goldman Sachs

J. Russell George
Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration
While George has had a lower personal profile of late, the inspectorate general that he leads continues to produce countless reports that point directly to improvements both incremental and essential at the IRS, while also offering a scorecard for how well the tax service is doing in implementing the many stimulus programs it has been charged with spearheading over the past 18 months.
Born: New York City
College: Howard University (B.A.); Harvard University Law School (J.D.)
First full-time job: Assistant district attorney, Queens County

Julio Gonzalez
CEO, Engineered Tax Services Inc.
Gonzalez continues to expand the range of ways he can help accountants help their clients — this year, that included launching a company to help them get employer tax credits — all while working with insiders inside the Beltway to influence this year’s tax legislation.
Born: Denver, 1966
College: University of Colorado
First full-time job: Accountant, Arthur Andersen
Favorite recent binge watch: “Squid Game”

Kelly Grier
U.S. chair and managing partner & Americas MP, EY
In addition to leading EY at a time of rapid transition, Grier has worked to improve audit quality both at the Big Four firm and professionally as chair of the Center for Audit Quality, where she collaborates with the standard-setters and investors critical to achieving this mission.
Born: Avon, Minnesota, 1969
College: Saint Mary’s College
First full-time job: Controller, Triple A South Bend White Sox

Angie Grissom
Owner, chief relationship officer, The Rainmaker Companies
As firms evolve into unexplored niches and new business models, more and more are turning to Grissom and Rainmaker for leadership and business development training and consulting to help them excel.
Born: Nashville, Tennessee, 1977
College: Middle Tennessee State University (undergraduate and postgraduate)
First full-time job: Business development associate, Career Ascension
Favorite recent binge watch: “This is Life with Lisa Ling”

Roger Harris
President, Padgett Business Services
Besides helping set the future direction for Padgett’s hundreds of offices across the U.S., Harris is also deeply involved in representing them and their small-business clients to the IRS and Congress.
Born: Athens, Georgia, 1950
College: University of Georgia
First full-time job: Usher, movie theater
Favorite recent binge watch: “Counting Cars” and “Duck Dynasty”

Will Hill
Customer proposition strategy lead, Thomson Reuters
Hill not only helps drive the product strategy for Thomson Reuters according to the needs of the many accounting firms he consults with on a day-to-day basis, he also delivers professional insights via his weekly podcast and regular blog posts.
Born: London, Ontario, 1979
College: Alma College (B.A. business administration and economics); Baker College (MBA, leadership studies)
First full-time job: Product support representative, Creative Solutions (now Thomson Reuters)
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions” and “The Queen’s Gambit”

Tom Hood
EVP business engagement and growth, AICPA-CIMA
While Hood’s influence always far surpassed the regional scope of his previous role as head of MACPA, his recent transition into a leadership position with the AICPA has expanded that reach globally, where he continues to teach leadership and future-readiness while promoting the latest AICPA credentials and programs to an even larger audience.
Born: Baltimore, 1959
College: Loyola University (B.A. accounting); Johns Hopkins University (master’s)
First full-time job: Junior accountant, Finance Company of America
Favorite recent binge watch: “What We Do in the Shadows”

Darryl Jackson
Director of diversity, equity and inclusion, IMA
The Institute of Management Accountants recently co-sponsored a groundbreaking study on the abysmal state of diversity in accounting, and it’s Jackson’s job to find ways to fix that, starting with establishing deeper relationships with historically Black colleges and universities.
Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1977
College: Virginia State University (bachelor’s); University of Maryland (MBA)
First full-time job: Loan officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Favorite recent binge watch: “Chicago Med/Chicago PD”

Kacee Johnson
Senior director, strategy & innovation, CPA.com
As the leader of CPA.com’s many research and innovation initiatives, Johnson educates the profession about the emerging technologies that will be driving their practices in the years ahead.
Born: Los Angeles, 1980
College: University of Arizona (B.A. English literature and political science); University of Phoenix (MBA)
First full-time job: Director of operations, Rialto Theatre
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions” and “The Queen’s Gambit”

Randy Johnston
CEO and founder, EVP, NMGI and K2 Enterprises
To the many who look forward to Johnston’s presentations on technology trends, his expert forecasting is less about abstract ideas and more about actionable insights that help arm them with the tools and processes they need to succeed.
Born: Hutchinson, Kansas, 1955
College: Hutchinson Community College, Kansas State University; Wichita State University (postgraduate)
First full-time job: Programmer and system designer, Farmland Industries
Favorite recent binge watch: “Signed, Sealed, Delivered”

Richard Jones
Chair, FASB
Taking charge in the midst of a once-in-a-century pandemic can’t have been easy, but Jones has successfully managed the Financial Accounting Standards Board’s COVID response, and moved forward on his goals of bringing in a range of financial standards.
Born: Winona, Minnesota
College: University of Wisconsin, Madison
First full-time job: U.S. & Whirlpool
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

The AICPA’s point man on tax issues in Washington, Karl continues to work to improve the federal tax process — particularly on tax administration and councils, and speak at numerous events.
Born: Washington, D.C., 1979
College: University of Arizona (B.A. literature and political science); University of Phoenix (MBA)
First full-time job: Director, firm technology strategy, Sage
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Having worked with program managers across the country and in Key Account Management, Wolfswinkel has a range of stakeholder voices to improve the federal tax process.
Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1966
College: Pace University, White Plains
First full-time job: Loan officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Favorite recent binge watch: “This is Life with Lisa Ling”

Edward Karl
Director, firm technology strategy, Sage
As the leader of CPA.com’s many research and innovation initiatives, Johnson educates the profession about the emerging technologies that will be driving their practices in the years ahead.
Born: Los Angeles, 1980
College: University of Arizona (B.A. English literature and political science); University of Phoenix (MBA)
First full-time job: Director of operations, Rialto Theatre
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions” and “The Queen’s Gambit”

The AICPA’s point man on tax issues in Washington, Karl continues to work to improve the federal tax process — particularly on tax administration and councils, and speak at numerous events.
Born: Washington, D.C., 1979
College: University of Arizona (B.A. literature and political science); University of Phoenix (MBA)
First full-time job: Director, firm technology strategy, Sage
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Having worked with program managers across the country and in Key Account Management, Wolfswinkel has a range of stakeholder voices to improve the federal tax process.
Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1966
College: Pace University, White Plains
First full-time job: Loan officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Favorite recent binge watch: “This is Life with Lisa Ling”

A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Streaming favorites
In past years, we’ve polled the Top 100 Most Influential People on their favorite books, but this year, given the unsurprising spike in streaming viewership, we asked which series everyone is enjoying binge-watching. Turns out many of our Top 100 have an affinity for Jason Sudeikis — and an Apple TV+ subscription — as “Ted Lasso” was the clear favorite. “Billions” tales of wealth and corruption also resonated with this year’s Top 100, as did competitive chess drama “The Queen’s Gambit.”

A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Keeping the best and brightest

The war for talent was the Top 100’s most commonly cited issue facing the profession, with several ancillary issues also top of mind. (Find full responses at AccountingToday.com)

Two top issues that remain consistent in their impact on the accounting profession are the ability to attract and retain talent — especially diverse talent — and the ability to innovate and adapt in a changing environment.

— Joe Adams

The Great Resignation! I don’t believe most firm leaders are really worried about it, but they should be.

— Sandra Wiley

Finding and retaining talent is without a doubt the most important issue.

— Tom Hood

The profession — along with regulators and policymakers — is being tasked with determining how to best disclose material nonfinancial information, such as ESG data on climate change, human capital management and more.

— Wes Bricker

Finding the balance between the financial statement user’s desire for more granular information with the costs of providing it.

— Richard Jones

The biggest issue facing us is the attractiveness of the profession as compared to other career options.

— Jennifer Wilson

The pending tax reform.

— Julio Gonzalez

We recently polled 500 accountants and bookkeepers on that exact question, and there was a very clear answer: keeping up with demand.

— René Lacerte

As the world becomes smaller, those who work in the profession must reflect the communities they serve and be inclusive and equitable in opportunity.

— Darryl Jackson

The profession’s mental health and business model. People are leaving in droves.

— Sarah Dobek

Companies are struggling to build a pipeline of qualified diverse talent due to biased recruiting processes and a decline in interest in the accounting field among high school and college students.

— Guylaine Saint Juste

Relevancy. Excessive regulation remains a close second.

— Ron Baker

To retain the best and the brightest team members, and to ensure that audit remains relevant, we need to shift to a model that empowers team members to think innovatively about using technology in the audit.

— Alan Anderson

We risk losing the local/small firm if we don’t create more of a supply of small-firm entrepreneurs.

— Jeff Phillips

Firm leaders must adapt to a client base that is changing as rapidly as the global economy itself.

— Joanne Barry

Competition from VC-funded “accounting” companies and private equity purchasing traditional firms.

— Jody Padar

We must focus on how we can help make the accounting profession an attractive destination for college students — and do what we can to remove barriers to entering it.

— Kelly Grier

I think the mindset and mental health issues are the biggest ones.

— Dawn Brolin

The profession is still struggling to create and deliver advisory services and client accounting services.

— Randy Johnston

The volume, quality and diversity of our CPA talent and pipeline.

— Sue Coffey

Everyone knows staffing is the most critical current issue. But the bigger issue is lack of strategic future-think, due to lack of bandwidth.

— Gale Crasley

Keeping up with what federal tax changes might be enacted is critical and complicated.

— Scott Peterson

Capacity. We hear it time and again, and yet firms have been slow to adopt new technologies that automate repetitive tasks.

— Kacee Johnson

Continuing to instill trust with stakeholders by demonstrating extraordinary integrity, professionalism and quality.

— Paul Knopp

Ensuring that the information provided to financial statements users is relevant and useful in making investment and capital allocation decisions.

— Hillary Salo

The advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion, and strengthening the pool of diverse talent.

— Joe Uczaszek

Most urgent: Burnout and morale.

— Michelle Golden River

Our biggest challenge right now is a societal one — and that’s a labor shortage and a hypercompetitive market for talent in the U.S.

— Tim Ryan

accountingtoday.com
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Paul Knopp
U.S. chair and CEO, KPMG
Knopp is leading KPMG forward on a number of fronts, from exploring new practice areas by investing $1.5 billion in ESG training and solutions, to major commitments around DE&I with its Accelerate 2025 initiative, which includes audacious goals like doubling Black representation at the partner and managing director level within five years.
Born: Fredericksburg, Texas, 1959
College: University of Texas at Austin (B.B.A. and MBA)
First full-time job: Assistant accountant, KPMG
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Allan Koltin
CEO, Koltin Consulting Group
Many, many of the steadily increasing number of mergers and acquisitions in the profession are driven by Koltin’s guidance, but beyond facilitating these sometimes blockbuster transactions, he also provides the kind of strategic advice that keeps these practices humming along organically.
Born: Milwaukee, 1957
College: University of Wisconsin – Madison/University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
First full-time job: Director, Nankin, Schnoll (now BDO)
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso” and “The Morning Show”

Rene Lacerte
CEO and founder, Bili.com
In the competitive software landscape, Lacerte’s Bili.com is consistently referenced as a standout part of the technology stack for the many accountants and businesses who rely on its ability to streamline their payments processes.
Born: Fairfax, Virginia, 1967
College: Stanford University (M.S. industrial engineering, B.A. economics)
First full-time job: Senior consultant, PwC
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Bob Lewis
President, The Visionary Group
Value comes in many forms, and Lewis aims to help accountants find it however he can, whether it’s helping them grow their firms organically, advising on a growing number of M&A deals, or sharing his insights into the core drivers of value.
Born: Chicago, 1959
College: DePaul University (B.S., MBA)
First full-time job: Internal auditor, DoALL
Favorite recent binge watch: “Kim’s Convenience”

Julie Bell Lindsay
CEO, Center for Audit Quality
Auditing and the audit are rapidly changing, and it’s part of Lindsay’s job as head of the Center for Audit Quality to chart those changes and communicate them to clients, regulators, and the profession itself, in areas ranging from new areas of disclosure like climate change and new fields for auditors to explore, like ESG, to the opportunities technology offers for improving quality.
Born: Sidney, Ohio, 1970
College: Ohio State University (B.A.); Vanderbilt University Law School (J.D.)
First full-time job: Associate, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Charles Maniace
VP, regulatory analysis & design, Sovos
Sovos has been on something of an acquisition tear this year, both in the U.S. and abroad — growth that’s making Maniace even more influential as he works to keep the company’s customers compliant, and keep the profession up to date on rapidly changing sales tax regimes.
Born: North Andover, Massachusetts, 1968
College: Bentley College (B.S.); Boston University School of Law (J.D. and L.L.M.)
First full-time job: New business representative, Keyport Life Insurance Co.
Favorite recent binge watch: “American Horror Story: 1984”

Stephen Mankowski
Co-chair, National Tax Policy Committee, NCCPAP
Through his frequent interactions with and deep understanding of the IRS and the tax pro community, Mankowski is an important go-between to help them better serve their mutual client, the taxpayer.
Born: Philadelphia, 1965
College: La Salle University
First full-time job: Staff auditor, Coopers & Lybrand
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Gene Marks
President, The Marks Group
A prolific author and speaker, Marks offers accountants his own unique take, as well as invaluable advice, on the business, financial and economic trends and challenges that they and their clients face on a daily basis.
Born: Philadelphia, 1965
College: Lehigh University
First full-time job: Audit staff, KPMG
Favorite recent binge watch: “What We Do In The Shadows” and “Ted Lasso”

Jason Marx
President & CEO, Tax & Accounting North America, Wolters Kluwer
With tens of thousands of accountants relying on his company’s platforms and solutions, Marx is committed to continuously improving them — but also to helping chart out the future his users will be operating in.
Born: Detroit, 1966
College: University of Michigan; DePaul University (MBA)
First full-time job: Account executive, Household Finance Corp.
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Robert Materazzi
CEO, Lukka
As accounting firms ramp up their services around cryptocurrencies and cryptoassets, reporting and compliance tools like those created by Lukka are essential, as CPA.com recognized when it partnered with Materazzi’s company to bring cryptotax solutions to the profession.
Born: Virginia, 1981
College: Florida State University
First full-time job: Officer and pilot, U.S. Marine Corps

Mitch McConnell
Senate minority leader, R-Kentucky
With the Senate so narrowly divided, McConnell has almost as much power as when he was majority leader, and will be using it both to influence the current mammoth legislation working its way through Congress, and shape the environment for the midterm elections in 2022.
Born: Sheffield, Alabama, 1942
College: University of Louisville; University of Kentucky College of Law
First full-time job: Senator’s aide

Barry Melancon
President and CEO, AICPA; CEO, Association of International Certified Professional Accountants
Often called the voice of the profession, Melancon’s words were never more essential than over the past 20-plus months, as he continued to oversee the AICPA’s multiple bodies and initiatives to promote and protect the role of the CPA, and advise accountants on how to lead change into the “next normal.”
Born: Houma, Louisiana, 1958
College: Nichols State University (bachelor’s, MBA, honorary doctorate)
First full-time job: Accountant, small firm

Ed Mendolowizt
Emeritus partner, WithumSmith+Brown
Combining the wise counsel of an experienced practitioner with the zeal usually only found in a newly minted CPA, Mendolowitz packs an enormous amount of advice in an impressive flood of columns, blogs, lectures, books and online resources.
Born: New York City, 1942
College: Baruch College
First full-time job: Junior accountant, J. J. Turner CPA

Ariege Mishergi
VP expert segment leader, small business self-employed, Intuit
Few relationships in the profession are more valuable than the one between accountants and small businesses, and Mishergi is firmly planted at that intersection, ensuring that Intuit’s accountant and bookkeeping users get the support and training they need to be better served, and grow, their clientele.
Born: San Jose, California
College: Stanford University
First full-time job: Customer service specialist, PayCycle
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Rep. Richard Neal
D-Massachusetts
While names like Sinema and Manchin may be grabbing headlines, the Ways & Means chair has played a major role in the House, providing solutions for a long list of provisions, and will continue to do so.
Born: Boston, Massachusetts
College: Harvard College (B.A.; L.L.B.)
First full-time job: Instructor, college history, high school
Favorite recent binge watch: “Do In The Shadows” and “Ted Lasso”
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Words from the wise

We asked the T100 what guidance they would give future influencers of the profession.
(To see their full responses, visit AccountingToday.com)

Be bold. Say the quiet stuff out loud. Rattle the cages of the powerful, the entrenched, the institutional.
— Rick Telberg

Be willing to challenge the status quo and find ways to communicate your message in an impactful way.
— Angie Grissom

Embrace a proactive business model and continue to educate the profession on why it’s critical to long-term success.
— Darren Root

Figure out what you’re passionate about and then figure out where there is a blue ocean for you to lead and define that area for the profession.
— Donny Shimamoto

Accountants have to be critical thinkers as well as accomplished technicians.
— Andreas Barckow

Stay connected to the front lines — to the practical issues and challenges facing the accounting profession.
— Joe Woodard

Never stop listening and learning. We have much to learn from others, especially those who have different backgrounds, experiences and skills.
— Lisa Fitzpatrick

The speed of change and the importance of reacting quickly and positively is paramount.
— Ken Bishop

Look outside the accounting profession for inspiration, trends, ideas and role models.
— Michelle Golden River

It’s your responsibility to deliver the hard truths.
— Jim Boomer

Be open-minded. Listen. Weigh all factors. Keep in mind the critical role small firms play in the health and success of the profession’s ecosystem.
— Carl Peterson

Look around corners to anticipate evolving client requirements and leverage technology where feasible, but please don’t forget the most important part of the people, process, technology equation — people.
— Kimberly Ellison-Taylor

Think not in terms of what the profession expects of you, but what you expect of the profession.
— Joanne Barry

Pursue new opportunities and experiences whenever you get the chance.
— Jennifer Burns

Work hard, be a lifelong learner, and always take time to enjoy your personal life and interests.
— Michael Bernard

Be courageous and bold, and hold true to your values.
— Sue Coffey

Embrace change, challenge everything, and get comfortable with risk.
— William Piroli

Get to know all your peers and adjacent competitors so you can provide value beyond your box.
— Gale Crosley

Build a new generation of partners who are passionate about empowering entrepreneurs to become more successful.
— Chandra Bhansali

To listen and empathize with other people’s points of view no matter how much they may differ from your own.
— Gene Marks

Be strategic but nimble.
— Edward Karl

Strive to be the best at what you do to serve your clients, but be cognizant of what is happening outside of our profession that could change it.
— Roman Kepczyk

Always focus on people. Always.
— Marc Rosenberg

Don’t doubt yourself or what you contribute to the world. We need to hear everyone’s voice, no matter how different it might be.
— Geni Whitehouse

The guidance that I would give future influencers of the profession is that we all have an inherent responsibility to leave the profession in a better position than when we joined it.
— Stephen Mankowski

Despite the changes we deal with in the profession every day, this is and always will be a people business.
— Mark Steuart

Teach yourself to stay curious.
— Julie Bell Lindsay

Get involved early, whether through your state society or the AICPA.
— Lisa Simpson

My advice would be to prioritize genuine relationships with your peers, beyond a LinkedIn connection.
— Candace Wright

CEOs, members of the House, and in crafting proposals on everything from new Child Tax Credit provisions to plans to require banks to report account information to the IRS.

Pardon is probably due for a very satisfying “I told you so” as the changes she’s been warning her fellow accountants about and the adaptations that she’s been promoting for years under her “Radical CPA” brand are all coming to seem much less radical.

Patil wrote the book on client accounting services — literally: His 2021 guide is a must-read on this hot practice area, but it’s only one of the many avenues he’s taking to explain why CAS is central to the future of accounting firms.

Whatever deal finally comes out of the wrangling in Congress this year, Pelosi’s fingerprints will be all over the tax changes that will, in the short term, determine how much of a nightmare next tax season is for practitioners, and, in the longer term, how much planning they’ll have to help their clients do.

Jody Padar
VP, partner development & strategy, Botkeeper

Baruch College
New York City, 1942

Hitendra Patil
Head of customer success, AccountantsWorld

Nicholls State University (bachelor of business administration), Houma, Louisiana, 1958

Born:

Mendlowitz packs an enormous amount of experience and energy into his role at Intuit, ensuring that Intuit’s accountants are firmly planted at that intersection, more valuable than the one between the accountant and client.

Few relationships in the profession are as essential than over the past 20-plus years, Melancon’s words were never more true.

Favorite recent binge watch:

— Michelle Golden River

— Andreas Barckow

— Lisa Fitzpatrick

— Donny Shimamoto

— Ken Bishop

— Jim Boomer

— Carl Peterson

— Kimberly Ellison-Taylor

— Joanne Barry

— Jennifer Burns

— William Piroli

— Chandra Bhansali

— Gene Marks

— Erik Asgeirsson

— Terrence Putney

— Edward Karl

— Roman Kepczyk

— Marc Rosenberg

— Geni Whitehouse

— Stephen Mankowski

— Julie Bell Lindsay

— Lisa Simpson

— Candace Wright

To see their full responses, visit AccountingToday.com

accountingtoday.com

December 2021 accounting today 19
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Carl Peterson
VP, small firm interests, AICPA

Peterson provides what he calls “360 degrees of advocacy” — ensuring that the voices of small firms are heard at the highest levels, but also making sure that developments at the highest levels are reported back to small firms.

Born: Peoria, Illinois, 1958
College: Kansas State University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Berc & Fox
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Flight Attendant”

Scott Peterson
VP, U.S. tax policy and government relations, Avalara

With sales taxes on everyone’s mind, Peterson is a ubiquitous and invaluable source of information (and reassurance!) on changing state tax regimes, new nexus rules, and all the other complex elements of the post-Wayfair world.

Born: Mobridge, South Dakota, 1955
College: Black Hills State University (B.S.); University of South Dakota (M.S.)
First full-time job: Research analyst, South Dakota Legislative Research Council

Jeff Phillips
CEO, Padgett Business Services

As the war for talent hits a crisis point, Phillips continues to preach the benefits of fully remote employees, the principle behind the recruiting platform he founded, Accountingly, and a central tenet of the guidance he now provides in leading Padgett and his role as president of the CPA Consultants Alliance.

Born: Pensacola, Florida, 1976
College: Baylor University (B.B.A.); Southern Methodist University (MBA)
First full-time job: Campus recruiter, Trilogy Software
Favorite recent binge watch: “Succession”

William Pirroli
Chair, AICPA; co-chair, Association of International Certified Professional Accountants

Pirroli has been on the front lines for the profession throughout the pandemic, but he’s also focusing on longer-term issues during his tenure, from the problems with the CPA pipeline to the ongoing struggle to diversify accounting.

Born: Rhode Island, 1958
College: Rhode Island Junior College (A.S.); Bryant College (B.A.)
First full-time job: Working in his father’s floor-covering business
Favorite recent binge watch: “Dopesick”

Charles Rettig
Commissioner, IRS

Rettig is an unabashed cheerleader for the IRS, fully acknowledging the difficulties and service delays it has faced during the pandemic, but also trumpeting the tremendous job it has done in delivering round after round of stimulus funds and Advanced Child Tax Credits with historically low staff numbers and serious budget constraints.

Born: Los Angeles, 1956
College: University of California, Los Angeles (B.A.); Pepperdine University School of Law (J.D.); New York University School of Law (LL.M.)

Ric Rosario
President and CEO, CAMICO

As chief of one of the major liability insurers for the profession, Rosario is all about getting ahead of trouble — helping accountants identify risks and manage them through proactive solutions long before they lead to claims.

Born: Bitburg, Germany, 1958
College: Saint Mary’s College
First full-time job: Auditor, John F. Forbes & Co
Favorite recent binge watch: “CSI”

Marc Rosenberg
President, The Rosenberg Associates

If he had done nothing other than author his ongoing magazine series on managing accounting firms (16 volumes and counting), Rosenberg’s status as an influencer would have been assured — but he’s also a prolific blogger, consultant and mentor to accounting students.

Born: Chicago, 1948
College: University of Illinois at Chicago
First full-time job: Staff, Ernst & Young
Favorite recent binge watch: “Breaking Bad” and “Designated Survivor”

Ben Richmond
U.S. country manager, Xero

Richmond draws on his background in public accounting to achieve Xero’s goal of empowering U.S. accounting firms of various sizes to enhance their advisory work through the cloud.

Born: Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand, 1987
College: University of Canterbury
First full-time job: Accountant, Brown Webb Richardson Chartered Accountants

Michelle Golden River
Owner/president, Fore

In teaching the pricing methodology she developed to steer firms away from hourly billing and into a value-based revenue model, River brings a holistic perspective on the profession based on her past and present roles as a business owner, consultant and firm partner.

Born: Long Beach, California, 1966
College: Columbia College
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Coopervision
Favorite recent binge watch: “Bosch”

Donnelly Meiners & Jordan CPAs

As chief of one of the major CPA firms, Meiners has made not just over the past two decades.

Born: interviews with clients and to the profession as a whole.
College: University of Kansas (B.S.B.); Bryant College (B.S.)
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte Meiners & Jordan CPAs
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Anthem Pugliese
President and CEO, IA

Though he only took the helm at the Institute of Internal Auditors this March, Pugliese brought a vast depth of experience from other accounting membership organizations, so he was able to hit the ground running in terms of both preparing his members for the many business transformations coming their way, and reimagining the institute itself to be more nimble and agile.

Born: Jacksonville, Florida, 1967
College: University of North Florida
First full-time job: Audit associate, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Darren Root
GM, Rootwork

Root’s efforts at helping firms modernize their practices have gone through their own modernization over the years, as podcasts and virtual events join his hands-on training sessions in educating future-minded accountants.

Born: Bedford, Indiana, 1960
College: Indiana University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte Haskins and Sells
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions”

Guylaine Saint Juste
President and CEO, NABA

As head of the National Association of Black Accountants, Saint Juste is uniquely positioned to help the profession make good on the unfulfilled commitments to diversity and racial equity that it has made not just over the past two turbulent years, but the past two decades.

Born: Kankakee, Illinois
College: Eastern Illinois University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte Haskins and Sells
Favorite recent binge watch: “Modern Family”

Anthony Pugliese
President and CEO, IA

Though he only took the helm at the Institute of Internal Auditors this March, Pugliese brought a vast depth of experience from other accounting membership organizations, so he was able to hit the ground running in terms of both preparing his members for the many business transformations coming their way, and reimagining the institute itself to be more nimble and agile.

Born: Jacksonville, Florida, 1967
College: University of North Florida
First full-time job: Audit associate, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Terry Putney
CEO, Transition Advisors

Along with his partner, Joel Sinkin, Putney is one of the leading advisors on firm succession and owner-

ship transitions in accounting, bringing the wisdom of hundreds and hundreds of transactions and engagements to his clients and to the profession as a whole.

Born: Kansas City, Missouri, 1954
College: University of Kansas (B.S.B.)
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Donnelly Meiners & Jordan CPAs
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Timothy Ryan
Chair and senior partner, PwC US

In a profession that prides itself on the trust placed in it by clients and markets, Ryan and PwC are taking trust to a whole new level — literally reorganizing the firm around the idea, launching the PwC Trust Leadership Institute to help business leaders build trust, and continuing to lead by example on issues of racial justice and uneven opportunity.

Born: Dedham, Massachusetts, 1965
College: Babson College (B.S. accounting and communications)
First full-time job: Grocery store clerk
Favorite recent binge watch: “Modern Family”

Julia Salo
President, The Rosenberg Associates

Whether representing groups or individuals in the field, Salo plants the information for accounting professionals to be focused on and understanding stakeholders.

Born: Chicago, 1965
College: Northwestern State University (master’s, accounting)
First full-time job: Assistant accountant
Favorite recent binge watch: “Breaking Bad” and “Designated Survivor”

Madeline Rosario
President, Rosario & Associates

As leader for the IRS, fully acknowledging the difficulties and service delays it has faced during the pandemic, but also trumpeting the tremendous job it has done in delivering round after round of stimulus funds and Advanced Child Tax Credits with historically low staff numbers and serious budget constraints.

Born: Los Angeles, 1956
College: University of California, Los Angeles (B.A.); Pepperdine University School of Law (J.D.); New York University School of Law (LL.M.)

Full-time job: Auditor, John F. Forbes & Co
Favorite recent binge watch: “Dopesick”

Diane Salo
President, The Rosenberg Associates

If he had done nothing other than author his ongoing magazine series on managing accounting firms (16 volumes and counting), Rosenberg’s status as an influencer would have been assured — but he’s also a prolific blogger, consultant and mentor to accounting students.

Born: Chicago, 1948
College: University of Illinois at Chicago
First full-time job: Staff, Ernst & Young
Favorite recent binge watch: “Breaking Bad” and “Designated Survivor”

Jeremy Salo
President, The Rosenberg Associates

If he had done nothing other than author his ongoing magazine series on managing accounting firms (16 volumes and counting), Rosenberg’s status as an influencer would have been assured — but he’s also a prolific blogger, consultant and mentor to accounting students.

Born: Chicago, 1948
College: University of Illinois at Chicago
First full-time job: Staff, Ernst & Young
Favorite recent binge watch: “Breaking Bad” and “Designated Survivor”

Jeffrey Salo
President, The Rosenberg Associates

If he had done nothing other than author his ongoing magazine series on managing accounting firms (16 volumes and counting), Rosenberg’s status as an influencer would have been assured — but he’s also a prolific blogger, consultant and mentor to accounting students.

Born: Chicago, 1948
College: University of Illinois at Chicago
First full-time job: Staff, Ernst & Young
Favorite recent binge watch: “Breaking Bad” and “Designated Survivor”

11/22/2021 11:02:46 AM
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

Donny Shimamoto
Managing director, IntrapriseTechKnowlogies
A frequent speaker and writer on everything accountants need to know about how technology is impacting them, Shimamoto is a reliable guide to accounting’s emerging trends.
Born: Honolulu, Hawaii, 1975
College: University of Hawaii at Manoa
First full-time job: Associate, Coopers & Lybrand
Favorite recent binge watch: “How to Get Away With Murder” and “Glee”

Gary Shamis
CEO, Winding River Consulting
Having built his own tremendously successful accounting firm, Shamis brings firsthand experience — and a sharp eye for important new trends — to his work consulting with and educating the next generation of firm leaders.
Born: Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 1953
College: Tulane University (B.S.); Ohio State University (master’s, accounting)
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Touche & Ross
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Lisa Simpson
VP, firm services, AICPA
Over the course of the pandemic, Simpson has become familiar to countless accountants through her role in the AICPA’s town halls, dispensing invaluable guidance and clarity at a time when they are sorely needed; she’s also deeply involved in the association’s DE&I efforts.
Born: Danville, Kentucky, 1965
College: Eastern Kentucky University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Ernst & Whitney
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Joel Sinkin
President, Transition Advisors
With partner Terry Putney, Sinkin is one of the preeminent advisors to accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.
Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1958
College: State University of New York at Brockport
First full-time job: Sales representative, Kern Manufacturing
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Mandalorian”

Alex and Ed Solomon
Co-founders, Net at Work
Net at Work has been a pioneering accounting software reseller and tech consultancy for decades, but the Solomons have gone beyond that with their Partner Alliance Program, which lets member firms leverage Net at Work’s deep tech expertise to deliver the solutions clients need quickly.

Alexander Soloman
Born: Ukraine, 1973
College: NYU Stern School of Business
First full-time job: Co-founder, Net at Work
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Last Kingdom”

Edward Solomon
Born: Ukraine, 1970
College: Baruch Business School (MBA, finance)
First full-time job: Real estate analyst, Republic National Bank
Favorite recent binge watch: Rewatching “Game of Thrones”

Stan Sterna
Vice president, Aon
Every time you look, it seems like some new risk has popped up to bedevil public accountants, and Sterna is often the person they turn to first for advice and guidance on how to understand the threat and then start managing it, whether in his work directly with firms, or in his many speaking engagements and articles.
Born: Chicago, 1965
College: DePaul University (undergraduate); University of Illinois-Chicago School of Law
First full-time job: Associate attorney, Baker & Mar霆er

Rick Telberg
President and CEO, The Rosenberg
Telberg is one of the preeminent advisors to accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.
Born: Chicago, 1979
College: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (BSBA and master’s)
First full-time job: Postgraduate technical assistant, FASB
Favorite recent binge watch: “Ted Lasso”

Stewart’s National Conference of CPA Practitioners is not just a voice for its tens of thousands of members at small accounting firms — it’s also a voice for the millions of small businesses they serve, a role that has been crucial as they all try to face the challenges of the pandemic.
Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1979
College: State University of New York at Brockport
First full-time job: Sales representative, Kern Manufacturing
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Mandalorian”

Thomas’ society is a model for both accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.
Born: Hartford, Connecticut, 1959
College: Southern Connecticut State University
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Touche & Ross
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Queen’s Gambit”

Jeffrey Thomson
President and CEO, Institute of Management Accountants
With 140,000 members in over 150 countries, Thomson’s influence is clearly broad, but it’s also deep, offering them resources, guidance and leadership on everything from strategic planning and technology to diversity and ethics.
Born: Paterson, N.J., 1955
College: Montclair State University
First full-time job: AT&T Analytical Support Center
Favorite recent binge watch: “Dancing with the Stars”

Joe Ucuzoglu
CEO, Deloitte US
Under Ucuzoglu, Deloitte is literally putting its money where its mouth is when it comes to diversifying, upskilling and otherwise supporting staff, investing $75 million in a major DE&I initiative and $30 million in helping young people get their CPA license, and launching two major training programs in future skills.
Born: Los Angeles
College: University of Southern California
First full-time job: Junior audit associate, KPMG
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Americans”

Excerpts from Accounting Today’s Top 100 People Survey

Forbes
The world’s most valuable companies

Financial Times
How the world uses analytics

AICPA
The Code of Professional Conduct

The CPA Journal
The Association’s flagship publication and the leading voice of the accounting profession, the CPA Journal provides the latest news and analysis on emerging issues that affect the accounting profession.

AICPA’s town halls, dispensing invaluable guidance and clarity at a time when they are sorely needed; she’s also deeply involved in the association’s DE&I efforts.

Guylaine Saint Juste
President and CEO, NABA
In a profession that prides itself on trust, and continues to prioritize diversity and racial equity that it be focusing on, and on communication and outreach to its many different stakeholders.

Marc Rosenberg
President and CEO, CAMICO
As the leader of the CPA profession’s largest and oldest insurance company, Rosenberg is one of the preeminent advisors to accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.

Lisa Simpson
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Last Kingdom”

Ralph Thomas
CEO and executive director, New Jersey Society of CPAs
Thomas’ society is a model for both accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.

Rick Telberg
Favorite recent binge watch: “Rewatched "The Wire""

Ralph Thomas
CEO and executive director, New Jersey Society of CPAs
Thomas’ society is a model for both accounting firms on M&A, ownership transitions and retirements, backing up his keen sense of the market with his deep knowledge of what makes a firm valuable.

Jeffrey Thomson
President and CEO, Institute of Management Accountants
With 140,000 members in over 150 countries, Thomson’s influence is clearly broad, but it’s also deep, offering them resources, guidance and leadership on everything from strategic planning and technology to diversity and ethics.

Joey Ucuzoglu
CEO, Deloitte US
Under Ucuzoglu, Deloitte is literally putting its money where its mouth is when it comes to diversifying, upskilling and otherwise supporting staff, investing $75 million in a major DE&I initiative and $30 million in helping young people get their CPA license, and launching two major training programs in future skills.

Alexander Soloman
Favorite recent binge watch: “Rewatched "The Wire""

Edward Solomon
Favorite recent binge watch: “Rewatching ‘Game of Thrones’”

Stan Sterna
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Oval”

Jeffrey Thomson
Favorite recent binge watch: “Dancing with the Stars”

Joe Ucuzoglu
Favorite recent binge watch: “Rewatched "The Wire""
A supplement to Accounting Today: Top 100 People

The influencers

Barry Melancon was once again voted the profession’s most influential person by his Top 100 peers, with candidates crediting his AICPA leadership and stewardship of the accounting community during the pandemic as major sources of his continued impact. Beyond his high-profile position, his fellow influencers praised how he wields that power, with one noting: “Barry is driving a significant shift toward business transformation as the primary role of the CPA.” Also working to help accountants future-proof their advisory roles is second-highest vote-getter Tom Hood, whose transition into a new role at the AICPA only strengthened his prominence in the profession.

Rounding out the top three influencers, according to their fellow influencers, is Kimberly Ellison-Taylor, who was commended by many for leading the charge on diversity and inclusion and even applauded for her welcome ubiquity, with one candidate proclaiming, “She’s everywhere!”

Unsurprisingly, the consulting work and expertise of value pricing guru Ron Baker, tech-minded advisory services practitioner Jim Bourke, technology expert Randy Johnston and next-gen thought leader Jennifer Wilson helped them retain positions of great influence for their Top 100 peers for another year.

First full-time job: Audit intern, Deloitte & Touche
Favorite recent binge watch: “Billions”

Geni Whitehouse
Countess of communication, Even a Nerd Can be Heard

Whitehouse is a pathfinder for firms looking to make the move to advisory services, with hands-on experience of the mindset and procedural changes they need to make, as well as unique insights into the communications skills they’ll need to succeed.

Born: Atlanta, 1959
College: University of North Carolina
First full-time job: Staff accountant, Deloitte, Haskins & Sells
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Voice” and “The Great British Baking Show”

Joe Woodard
CEO, Woodard Events

With his Scaling New Heights conference, Woodard has almost single-handedly kept live accounting conferences going through the pandemic, all the while also coaching, guiding and preparing tens of thousands of accountants for the technology-dominated future.

Born: Savannah, Georgia, 1967
College: Mercer University
First full-time job: Associate, Allen & Baxter
Favorite recent binge watch: “Foundation” and “Clickbait”

Sandra Wiley
President, Boomer Consulting

Wiley is one of the profession’s primary resources for best practices and strong strategies for facing enormous issues like the Great Resignation, the war for talent, and DE&I.

Born: Stafford, Kansas, 1960
College: Friends University
First full-time job: Working at the local grain elevator
Favorite recent binge watch: “Yellowstone,” “Ted Lasso” and “Ozark”

Jennifer Wilson
Co-founder and partner, ConvergenceCoaching

When it comes to helping firms attract the next-gen talent they so desperately need, Wilson tirelessly spreads the gospel on key aspects of the 21st century workplace like remote work through countless public appearances, articles, livestreams, surveys and consulting gigs.

Born: Hahn Air Force Base, Germany, 1964
College: University of Nebraska Omaha (B.S. marketing)
First full-time job: Regional sales manager, Pro Systems
Favorite recent binge watch: “Harrow” and “Clickbait”

Ron Wyden
D-Oregon

Wyden remains one of the leading voices in the Democratic party on taxes and the IRS, and one of the most prolific generators of new ideas and legislation in the area.

Born: Wichita, Kansas, 1949
College: UC Santa Barbara; Stanford University; University of Oregon
First full-time job: Assistant professor of economics, Harvard University
Favorite recent binge watch: “An American Saga”

Janet Yellen
U.S. Secretary of Treasury

Yellen has been at the forefront of the Biden administration’s support for international negotiations to overhaul the global corporate tax regime and create a global minimum tax for companies, as well as finding new ways to bring in more revenue, whether through empowering the IRS or going after the wealthy.

Born: Brooklyn, N.Y., 1946
College: Pembroke College in Brown University; Yale University
First full-time job: Assistant professor of economics, Harvard University
Favorite recent binge watch: “Wu-tang: An American Saga”

Candace Wright
Chair, Private Company Council

Recently appointed for a third term, Wright makes sure the voices of private business and small companies are heard in the standard-setting process; she’s also involved in several audit-related initiatives with the AICPA.

Born: Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1962
College: McNeese State University
First full-time job: Accountant, pharmaceutical sales company
Favorite recent binge watch: “Foundation” and “Clickbait”

Diane Yetter
President and founder, Yetter Consulting Services & Sales Tax Institute

Yetter is more than just one of the preeminent experts in the field of sales tax — she’s also working to raise the profile of sales tax professionals, so they get the respect they deserve for the crucial role they play in an increasingly complex field.

Born: Chicago, 1963
College: University of Kansas (B.S.); DePaul University (M.S. taxation)
First full-time job: Sales tax auditor, Kansas Department of Revenue
Favorite recent binge watch: “The Crown”

Martin Zych
CEO, Jirav

Zych’s budgeting, forecasting and analytics platform Jirav is emblematic of the kind of tools that are empowering accountants to offer forward-looking advisory services, and as a preferred CPA.com provider, he’s in a great position to partner with firms across the profession.

College: University of Washington
First full-time job: Associate director, GMI
Favorite recent binge watch: “Clickbait”