



Women's Initiatives Executive Committee

Educating, advocating, advancing



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The progress of women in the accounting profession

Women have represented about 50%¹ of new CPAs in the accounting profession since the late 1980s. Yet today, women account for less than 9%² of all CFOs and 24%³ of partners in CPA firms nationwide.

A business imperative

Shifting demographics make the progress of women a key issue for organizational sustainability.

- Profession demographics are changing and baby boomers will retire in significant numbers in the next 10 years.
- Sustainable growth models are at risk if a significant portion of the accounting profession is not maximizing its potential.
- Viable exit strategies are affected as women represent on average 50% of the profession but less than 25% of the owners.
- Research shows a need for diverse talent to effectively address increased complexity in business.
- Demographics in the marketplace are shifting to increased numbers of female business owners and decision-makers and requests for proposals requiring a diverse team.
- Firms are losing a significant portion of their eligible, talented candidates for partnership and succession.
- A firm's inability to create a family- and gender-friendly environment is known to be detrimental to both staff and client retention.

The Women's Initiative Executive Committee believes that **educating** the profession on real issues our profession faces and **advocating** for women's initiatives will lead to the **advancement of women into leadership positions.**

¹ 1AICPA 2017 Trends in Supply and Demand

² Catalyst, unpublished data, 2011

³ 2017 AICPA CPA Firm Gender Survey

AICPA focus on women

The Women's Initiatives Executive Committee's roots in the AICPA date back to 1989 when the AICPA created the Upward Mobility of Women Task Force. Over the years, that task force evolved into what is now the Women's Initiatives Executive Committee (WIEC), the AICPA's driving force for women's progress in the profession.

Today, WIEC consists of 15 volunteers, both women and men, who work with and in the CPA profession in a variety of ways. This group is dedicated to executing WIEC's mission.

The WIEC's mission is to promote and support the success of women for the broader purpose of sustaining the profession by creating an inclusive environment and increasing talent engagement and leadership opportunities for women.

Guiding principles

- Be cutting-edge, proactive and innovative in our ideas and approaches
- Be integrated into all the issues with which our profession grapples
- Promote the accounting profession in such a way that encourages women to join
- Provide resources to women in our profession to help them achieve high levels of success
- Engage and educate both men and women to build a robust, full-service profession

Women in the profession

50%

of new CPAs since the 1980s

9%

of CFOs

22%

of partners in CPA firms



Educating

The WIEC raises awareness to both men and women regarding the gap in the progress of women in the accounting profession. The WIEC also provides solutions to close this gap. Offerings include:

- Credible research regarding ongoing issues that have an impact on women in the accounting profession
- Visible female role models through interviews, articles and awards (e.g., Women to Watch)
- Detailed solutions for policies, programs and initiatives that assist in organizational culture
- Virtual and on-site education for women in critical skill areas, such as business development, networking, mentoring and broad-based business skills (follow the “CPE & Upcoming Events” link from our main web page to see the webcasts offered)
- Providing speakers for firms, associations, state societies and other discussion forums (see the Additional Resources section for a list of topics)

Advocating

The WIEC attempts to empower women within the accounting profession by:

- Supporting the business case for broad-based diversity in the profession
- Influencing the cultures of firms and organizations to support the advancement of women
- Providing resources to support the successful integration of personal and professional lives
- Building alliances that are influential in sharing our mission and providing a channel for our solutions, tools and programs



Advancing

A diverse profession is a sustainable profession

The WIEC contributes to the progress of women in the profession by:

- Providing current research, webcasts, education and culture-shift resources to support the advancement of women to ownership and leadership roles
- Delivering a clear model to assist firms in implementing strategies for advancing women in their firm or organization
- Providing operational tools, consistent with the model, that result in advancement of women within firms and organizations

Women to Watch Awards

Be inspired by the success stories of other dynamic female CPAs. The AICPA Women to Watch Awards, which WIEC developed in partnership with state CPA societies nationwide, celebrate achievers and create a platform to discuss and promote the challenges and opportunities for women in the profession. Visit aicpa.org/womenlead for more information.

Annual summit

- 2018 AICPA Women's Global Leadership Summit
Plan now to attend the 7th Annual AICPA Women's Global Leadership Summit, which will be held Nov. 14–16 in New York City. The summit is designed to focus on leadership and best practices, enhancing the skills of both senior and emerging women leaders. Networking opportunities will connect you with a community of female professionals. For more information, visit aicpa.org/womenlead. The AICPA Not-for-Profit Section and PCPS members and CGMA® designation holders can receive \$50 in savings off the already discounted AICPA member price.

AICPA Women in the Profession LinkedIn group

Network with peers. Connect with experienced professionals. Get advice to expand and enhance your skills. Whether you're looking for community or insights for business development and career management, you'll find all this and more by actively participating in the Women in the Profession LinkedIn group. Visit aicpa.org/womenlead for more information.

AICPA Online Mentoring Program

AICPA Online Mentoring Program allows participants to seek a mentor outside of their organization, who can help level the playing field for women, minorities and young professionals. The platform makes communication convenient, creating beneficial and successful outcomes. Visit aicpa.org/mentoring for more information.

AWSCPA Task Force

On Sept. 19, the AWSCPA membership overwhelmingly approved an agreement to transfer its name and other intellectual property to the AICPA under a plan to dissolve the organization. WIEC will lead a task force of former AWSCPA members to provide insight into the institute's continuing efforts to develop communities and programming for women in the accounting profession.



Join our LinkedIn group "AICPA Women in the Profession" and check out the latest updates and comments.

Additional resources

To view the guides, research tools and other helpful resources, visit aicpa.org/womenlead.

Guides

- *Building Bridges: Guide to Building a Successful Off-Ramping Program*
- *Mentoring Program Guidelines*

Start a women's initiative program:

- Business case
- Strategic goals for supporting a gender initiative
- Frequently asked questions
- Women's initiative action plan and timeline

Research

- *AICPA 2017 CPA Firm Gender Survey*
- *2017 Trends in the Supply of Accounting Graduates and the Demand for Public Accounting Recruits*

Nov. 14–18, 2018

Women's Global Leadership Summit

Join us for our live event in New York City.

For information and registration updates, visit aicpa.org/womenlead.

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P: 888.777.7077 | W: aicpa.org/womenlead

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