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Taija Sparkman • Dec. 11, 2012



The [Missouri Society of CPAs](#), in partnership with the [American Institute of CPAs](#) recently awarded four CPAs from St. Louis the 2012 “Women to Watch” Award. The awards were presented during the Annual MSCPA Awards Gala.

The “Women to Watch” Awards highlight the accomplishments of women in the accounting profession in two categories: Experienced Leaders and Emerging Leaders. Experienced Leaders refer to professionals that generally have more than 10 years of experience or are senior partner while Emerging Leaders are professionals with less than 10 years of experience.

“These honorees have excelled in their professional endeavors and are outstanding role models for all women in the accounting profession,” said Jim O’Hallaron, CAE, MSCPA President and CEO.

The AICPA started the “Women to Watch” program in 2005 and the Missouri Society of CPAs started its joint program in 2006, after seeing a need to honor women’s accomplishments within the profession. Women are nominated by their peers based on their mentorship of other professionals, participation in community and/or public service, unique contributions to the CPA profession, involvement with their

local alma mater or university and improvements they have helped make within

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- Holly M. Breuer, CPA, Director, Purk & Associates, PC, St. Louis
- Ruth M. Saphian, CPA, Partner, Ernst & Young LLP, St. Louis

### **Emerging Leaders:**

- Kara A. Meister, CPA, Senior Manager, Ernst & Young LLP, St. Louis
- Linda A. West, CPA, Senior Manager, Stone Carlie & Associates, LLC, St. Louis

“To hear the amount of nominations that they had and to hear that I was selected was truly an honor,” said Meister, who currently works with several organizations and diversity initiatives at Ernst & Young. “It makes me want to empower the women that I already work with to decide what their goals are for themselves and help them figure out how to get where they want to be. It also makes me want to make it a point to reach out to the younger women here to establish that relationship so they know I am a resource for them to ask questions. I want to help them deal with the issues that I dealt with when I was moving through the ranks.”

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