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The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) has recognized seven educators from colleges and universities across the country with the 2017 Effective Learning Strategies (ELS) Awards. The ELS Awards are given annually to professors who employ innovative teaching practices and curriculums in three distinct levels of accounting coursework.

“With these awards, the AICPA is recognizing educators who are thinking outside of the box and developing new, creative, and inspiring curriculum to engage their students,” said Joanne Fiore, AICPA vice president, professional media, academic and student engagement. “The work of these educators is crucial to the accounting profession continuing to develop innovative thinkers who are able to solve the problems of tomorrow.”

The AICPA's Pre-certification Education Executive Committee's (PcEEC) ELS Educator Awards Task Force selected the winners.

### **Bea Sanders/AICPA Innovation in Teaching Award**

The recipient of the 2017 Bea Sanders/AICPA Innovation in Teaching Award for innovative teaching practices in the first sequence of accounting – (1st and 2nd year studies) - was Dr. Wendy Tietz, CPA, CMA, professor at Kent State University.

Her submission, “*Create Customized Financial Accounting Case Assignments with the Accounting Case Template (ACT)*,” is a web tool that allows instructors to quickly build custom assignments relevant to the specific needs of their course by choosing from a number of options. As part of the coursework, students analyze two

companies to determine which of the two is the financially healthier and provide the

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The 2017 George Ryan/State Thornton Teaching Innovation Award for the innovative teaching of junior- and senior-level accounting courses was awarded to Dr. Jeffrey Miller, CPA, CIA, associate professor at Sam Houston State University; and Dr. Grace Lixuan Zhang, assistant professor at Weber State University.

They were awarded for, "*Student Distinctive Consolidated Financial Statement Assignment*," which challenges students completing the assignment to determine the appropriate, relevant, and reliable measures in preparing consolidated financial statements, through the utilization of technology to document the work they've performed.

### **Mark Chain/Federation of Schools of Accountancy Teaching Innovation Award**

The winners of the 2017 Mark Chain/FSA Teaching Innovation Award for innovative graduate-level accounting teaching practices were: Dr. Maureen Butler, CPA, associate professor at University of Tampa; Dr. Kimberly Swanson Church, assistant professor at University of Missouri; Dr. Gail Hoover-King, CPA, professor at Purdue University Northwest; and Dr. Angela Wheeler Spencer, CPA, associate professor at Oklahoma State University.

Their award-winning entry, "*AICPA Core Competencies – An Experiential Learning Case to Increase Student Awareness of Professional Competencies for Accounting Career Success*," challenged students to explore the functional, personal, and business perspectives needed for successful entry into the accounting profession. Students came away with an increased awareness of the necessary professional competencies and improved critical thinking skills. In addition, they were tasked with taking initiative and ownership of acquiring necessary skills to begin their careers.

Each winner or team will receive \$2,500 and a plaque. The winners will have the chance to present their curriculum and receive their awards at the American Accounting Association's (AAA) annual meeting in August 2018.

“The AICPA would like to thank the AAA for the opportunity for these outstanding

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faculty and engage accounting students while furthering their knowledge of the profession. Access to the tool is limited to AICPA members.

More information about the AICPA educator awards, including submission criteria, can be found online.

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