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Accounting MOVE Project report.

Jun. 07, 2018



Expectations have never been higher for women's advancement in the workplace. The 2018 Accounting MOVE Project, released today, showcases innovations that propel women to success and that inform firm leaders about related strategies for overall diversity initiatives. Approaches outlined in the report ensure that the profession's much-needed emphasis on diversity and inclusion also furthers momentum for women.

The Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance has announced the **Best CPA Firms for Women** list and the **Best Firms for Equity Leadership List**, based on the 2018 Accounting MOVE Project report.

“The national conversation about diversity is taking many of its cues from what is proven to work to advance women. The Accounting MOVE Project equips accounting firms with proven strategies that deliver what everybody wants: more opportunities

for women and more growth for firms,” said Joanne Cleaver, President of Wilson-

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“The challenge for firms lies outside our comfort zone of the spreadsheet. It’s really in how we define success—past success and future success,” said Risa Lavine, CohnReznick principal and chief of staff. “This year’s Accounting MOVE Project Report identifies how we can expand ‘success’ to truly include all, within our firms and within our communities.” CohnReznick is the national sponsor of the Accounting MOVE Project.

The 2018 Accounting MOVE Project found that women comprise 25% of the management committees at participating firms—a huge advance from the 19% reported in the 2014 report. Still, progress is incremental overall, with women remaining at 24% of partners and principals at CPA firms.

“As with anything in business, we must evaluate, adapt, and evolve to ensure continued success. This holds true for women’s initiatives. This year’s Accounting MOVE Project demonstrates how far women have come in the industry, but also expresses the need to keep pushing forward,” said Cindy Stanley, executive director for the Accounting & Financial Women’s Alliance (AFWA). “And while the report takes a look specifically inside accounting firms, the practices discussed are relevant for any organization who values the advancement of women, including AFWA.”

Insights from the report include:

- A philosophy of aligning wins for women with wins for leaders and for firms overall creates common ground for shared wins.
- Firm aspirations are set by top leaders but middle managers actually convert to culture change
- Men add invaluable insight as women’s initiatives sharpen their focus on barriers unique to women.
- When men ask that programs designed for women be opened to them, too, firms have a chance to reinforce the unique value of women’s programs and to explore

what the women's programs are doing that overall training programs are not.

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- Consistent, measurable progress in advancing women to leadership.
- Proven and continually evolving programs that retain and advance women.
- Clear and compelling integration of the business case for advancing women with business results.

BPM (*San Francisco*)

The firm's diverse women partners realize and capitalize on their abilities to bring in new clients, which has resulted in a burst of revenue from its recently promoted women.

Brown Smith Wallace (*St. Louis*)

The firm assigns performance managers to work with younger employees to craft personalized career advancement strategies that provide guidance during early career decisions and their ramifications.

Clark Nuber PS (*Bellevue, Wash.*)

With 47.5% women shareholders as proof of its success, the firm's monthly feedback meetings emphasize accomplishments in real time, not just annually, so employees see immediate results of and from their actions.

CohnReznick LLP (*New York*)

The established success of the firm's WomenCAN efforts are being leveraged to mentor leaders of its new diversity and inclusion councils.

Kerkering, Barberio & Co. (*Sarasota, Fla.*)

Flexibility is a core part of the firm's culture with 23% of employees on a flexible

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The firm's upcoming all-firm women's conference adds to its commitment to women's growth within the firm by creating opportunities to network, learn, and spend time with one another; MCM is also focused on allying with other women's business groups as part of its new-market strategy as it expands regionally.

Moss Adams (*Seattle*)

Detecting and resolving small barriers to women's advancement adds up to accelerated retention and promotions, and delivers on this firm's "long game" vision for advancing women internally and in its community.

Novogradac & Company LLP (*San Francisco*)

Success here is driven by metrics...and metrics are driven by experiments with career paths, flexibility, and business development; Novogradac doesn't shy away from setting precedents with alternative career paths.

Plante Moran (*Southfield, Mich.*)

Persistence is paying off as the firm's long-established Women In Leadership (WIL) program is raising its profile with major events as well as integrating learnings and concepts into the firm's core training programs.

Rehmann (*Troy, Mich.*)

Business development is about more than golf and other traditionally male-focused activities, and the women's initiative catalyzes conversations that directly drive new approaches by women for business development.

The Bonadio Group (*Pittsford, NY*)

With 38% female partners and principals and 50% of the new 2018 partners female,

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where women comprise at least 31% of partners and principals.

The Best CPA Firms for Equity Leadership list is also based on MOVE survey results and recognizes firms with at least 33% women partners and principals, as 33% is widely recognized as the tipping point for members of any identity group to have individual impact. The Equity Leadership list recognizes firms that have achieved that milestone through any combination of culture, programs or initiatives.

Raffa, P.C. (Washington D.C.) 63.2% women partners and principals

With over 70% of its entire staff comprised of diverse employees, Raffa stokes the momentum with integrated flexibility and development programs, including an option for staff to mentor rising women leaders in other countries.

Kerkering, Barberio & Co. (Sarasota, Fla.) * Also a Best CPA Firm for Women, 60% women partners and principals

KWC CPAs (Alexandria, VA) 60% women partners and principals

To continue helping support women in their careers, the firm's newly formed women's initiative plans to include many networking opportunities with local women owned business to help younger women in the firm learn business development skills while also bringing new clients to the firm.

HBE LLP (Lincoln, Neb.) 50% women partners and principals

Every Fall, employees prepare for the coming year by committing to planned hours

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that's found in Silicon Valley to create a unique culture that has resulted in 50% female partners.

Clark Nuber PS (*Bellevue, Wash.*) * Also a Best CPA Firm for Women, 47.5% women shareholders

Hood & Strong LLP (*San Francisco*) 40% women partners and principals

Hood & Strong crafts remote work arrangements, especially in its growing tech practice, to attract and retain employees, both on the accounting side as well as hard-to-find tech talent.

MCM CPAs and Advisors (*Louisville*) * Also a Best CPA Firm for Women, 39.7% women partners and principals

Frazier & Deeter (*Atlanta*) 38% women partners

By having lower charge hour expectations for professionals, Frazier & Deeter encourages our people to balance all aspects of their lives while still growing the firm.

The Bonadio Group (*Pittsford, NY*) * Also a Best CPA Firm for Women, 37.6% women partners and principals

Brown Smith Wallace (*St. Louis*) * Also a Best CPA Firm for Women, 36.2% women partners and principals

BeachFleischman (Tucson) 33.3% women partners and

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Formalizing the firms flexible work policy, adopting unlimited PTO and starting a women's initiative keep OUM with a strong pipeline of women at all levels.

Registration for the 2019 Accounting MOVE Project will open in August. Additional details are at www.wilson-taylorassoc.com. Firms of all sizes are invited and encouraged to participate.

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ABOUT THE ACCOUNTING MOVE PROJECT

The Accounting MOVE Project is based on the MOVE methodology, developed by research partner Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc., which investigates the factors proven to be essential to women's career success:

M – Money: fair pay practices;

O – Opportunity: advancement and leadership development;

V – Vital supports: work-life programs that remove barriers;

E – Entrepreneurship: operating experience for managing or business ownership

Since 2010, the Accounting MOVE Project has measured and supported the advancement of women at accounting and consulting firms. MOVE is the only annual benchmarking project that both counts and advocates for women in the profession.

The MOVE Project advisory board includes leaders from association partner the

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to March 2018.

For more information about the Accounting MOVE Project and see prior years' results, please visit the [Accounting MOVE Project](#) web page.

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