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Lisa D. Traina, CPA, CITP, CGMA

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Treasurer.

Hobbies: Tennis, pilates, swimming & other fitness activities, reading, traveling, sports.

**[Click here to see the other honorees of
the 2012 “Most Powerful Women
in Accounting” awards.](#)**

Q&A:

Studies show that more women than ever are graduating with accounting degrees, but few are pursuing, or staying in, public practice careers. What do you think may be causing them to think public accounting careers are not as attractive as other careers?

The history of very long hours, particularly during tax season, is likely keeping many away. That combined with the lengthy path toward partnership/ownership are deterrents.

What advice would you give to these college students about the opportunities for women in the accounting profession?

The sky is the limit for current opportunities in the field of accounting. My organization is a great example. We are a CPA firm but we do not do traditional accounting work. We provide IT security audit services rather than doing taxes, attest work and financial statement preparation. We are auditors, but we audit electronic systems and technology rather than finances. Accountants today have opportunities to provide more non-traditional

services.

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beautifully for us.

Creating a very flexible work environment will help attract and retain the best and brightest women and men, but it will be particularly helpful for women who are most often those that deal with the many challenges of working and raising families.

Do you think that there is still a glass ceiling in accounting firm senior management and partner levels, or that the profession has moved to a mostly gender neutral state?

I do not believe there is much of a glass ceiling even though the numbers of women in senior management and partner positions is not equal to the numbers of women in the profession. I know many successful women that have become partners, but I also know some that just don't aspire to that position because of the long hours typically involved.

Do you think being a woman in the accounting profession has made career advancement more challenging than it might have been for a male in the same situation?

I do not think the challenge is greater just because of being a woman, but more because of working and establishing a career while parenting.

What solutions have you found successful in managing work-life integration. the balancing of your career with your personal, family and social life?

Earlier in my career, I chose to work part time while my children were very young and that was very helpful and worked well for me. I think sometimes it is difficult for both the organization and female employee to manage that situation without negatively impacting career advancement though.

Most recently, technology is what has made this a non-issue for me. Our firm transitioned to being 100% cloud-based in 2011. That combined with everyone using iPhones, iPads and

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at a client's office.

What single piece of technology could you absolutely not live without, and why?

My iPad, without a doubt. It has truly changed how, when and where I work. It allows me to do things like answer a few emails while drinking a cup of coffee in the morning or review audit work while waiting for an appointment or traveling (with someone else driving of course). To some, this may sound like it makes work more encompassing, but it just makes it more efficient and spreads it out. When I actually sit at my desk, there is less to do! And I do 'turn it off' in the evening and on weekends, so I'm not a slave to having to do work that might appear. Some people have a difficult time with that part of it.

What is your favorite professional mobile app, and why?

The App from Workpapers.com by ACL is great. We use workpapers.com for 100% of our audit work and it has increased our productivity by about 25%. The App allows me to review audit work on my iPad, but more importantly, I can get an immediate status of any engagement in process at any time. It is a great management tool.

I hate to not mention my second favorite, which is TapForms. This App allows you to create an electronic form that can be completed on the iPad and the data can then be shared or uploaded into Excel or other systems.

What do you like to do when you actually have free time without any obligations to work or family?

I like just about any fitness activity, but mostly tennis. I love reading also. And travel is becoming more fun and more of an option, because being away from the firm is easier thanks to my great staff and new technology.

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