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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Aug. 08, 2014

Mark K. Rich, CPA, the director of investments for the [Kimbell Art Foundation](#), has been selected by the [American Institute of CPAs](#) (AICPA) as the 2014 winner of the Maximo Mukelabai Award. Rich was honored for his work with the Fort Worth chapter of the Texas Society of CPAs (TSCPA) and his service to his local community.

The Maximo Mukelabai Award recognizes a young CPA who personifies an unwavering commitment as demonstrated through their successful practices, involvement and contributions for the interest of the accounting profession. The award was presented to Rich by Jeremy Dillard, CPA, Partner, Rivera, Jamjian & Dillard, LLP, at the AICPA's E.D.G.E. Conference for leadership development in New Orleans. Dillard was last year's recipient of the [Maximo Mukelabai Award](#).

“One of the hallmarks of a CPA is their willingness to volunteer their time to give back to their profession,” said [Cheryl Reynolds](#), AICPA Vice President, Communications, Advertising & Brand Management. “Mark’s impressive success spearheading programs to promote accounting careers to students in the Fort Worth area serves as an inspiration to others and made him a fitting selection for the Maximo Mukelabai award.”

A member of the AICPA and the TSCPA, Rich has been an active volunteer in the profession. In 2011, Rich utilized AICPA data on the number of students who began their accounting careers at community colleges to design a program called “Pathway to CPA.” The goal of the program was to raise awareness of the benefits of a career in accounting at a local community college. Energized by his experience, Rich began

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Rich has continued to expand his outreach in the community, serving as chair of the ACE committee since 2012-2013. Rich was honored by the Fort Worth Chapter of TSCPA as Young CPA of the Year 2012-2013. He was also named a TSCPA Rising Star in 2014, an award given to a select group of CPAs under 40 who have demonstrated exemplary leadership skills and active involvement in their community.

Expanding upon his outreach to students at community colleges, Rich began a new program to reach out to undergraduate business students who were attending their required accounting course. Rich and TSCPA volunteers crafted personalized presentations designed to educate students about the different career possibilities earning a CPA offers. The program generated positive feedback and reached more than 570 students in its first year.

“Being honored with the Maximo Mukelabai award validates the work we are doing in Fort Worth as we reach out to students and encourage them to earn the CPA license. It has been a team effort and I'm excited for us to continue to look for new ways to attract students of all backgrounds, educate them about the great opportunities available in the accounting profession, and facilitate their path in becoming CPAs” said Rich.

The primary criteria used to judge nominations for the Maximo Mukelabai award are:

1. Demonstrates passion and eagerness to encourage and pique students' interest in accounting as a career
2. Contributes recommendations and best practices toward improving processes and/or activities
3. Performance in committee and/or other volunteer activities that relate to the engagement and advancement of the profession

4. Involvement in community-based organizations to improve the lives of citizens.

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Those with questions on the nomination process may contact YoungCPANetwork@aicpa.org. The application period for next year's award will open in early 2015.

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