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Items Facing,

Our accounting close process recently moved to paperless approvals and recordkeeping. This change has created significant time savings for us, which has enabled us to focus more on performing analyses to support business decisions.

To what extent have you and your practice/company embraced cloud computing?

My company is proud to provide our solutions via software-as-a-service (SaaS), and our solutions exist to help companies optimize their purchasing and logistics functions. We also increasingly use cloud-based vendors for activities to support our business, including for CRM, workflow, and expense reporting.

In what ways have you contributed to your firm/company to make it a better place?

One of my favorite roles is serving as the president of my company's Toastmasters club. Our club is open, which means that it serves both our employees and other members of the Chicago community. Our customers, vendors, employees, and friends have improved their leadership skills, speaking abilities, and overall professional confidence through the activities of our club.

I co-founded the Business Continuity Committee, and we help to ensure that the company is able to sustain our business. I also have planned and participated in several philanthropies with my company, including ones that benefit Cardz for Kidz, Horizons for Youth, American Heart Association, Greater Chicago Food Depository, and Connections for Abused Women and their Children.

In what ways do you participate in either the professional community or your local community to help others?

It is important to give back to the profession and to others. One of my favorite events

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Organizations and at conferences. I most recently taught "The Technology of Trust" with Toby Groves at the AICPA Practitioners Symposium and Tech+ Conference and "Your Body Speaks Your Message" at the AICPA E.D.G.E. Conference. I also publish blogs and articles to encourage the importance of ethics and communication.

I serve as Secretary of the Illinois CPA Society's Ethics Committee, and I look forward to my term on AICPA Council starting in October 2014. I also serve as the Audit Committee Chairman for Chicago's District 30 Toastmasters.

What major changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5 years)?

The accounting profession will continue to embrace technology and leverage it to better serve our clients and improve our clients' businesses. Technology will also enable more virtual workplaces that do not require physical office locations. The move to virtual workplaces will improve work-life balance, reduce carbon footprint, and reduce the overall costs of doing business.

We will improve our abilities by learning more than just technical accounting skills, and we will experience more interactive learning sessions; the seminar model of teaching will be replaced by sessions with more audience participation and sharing of personal experiences.

How do you see yourself participating in shaping the future of the accounting profession?

Students are the future of the profession, and exciting them about becoming CPAs is important. I serve as a mentor for the College of Business at the University of Illinois, and I talk often about my passion for being a CPA.

My hope is to preserve the strong reputation of CPAs in the marketplace by

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better myself while uplifting others.

Not including your current employer, what company do you most admire and why?

I admire the companies that appear on Ethisphere's World's Most Ethical Companies list each year: <http://ethisphere.com/worlds-most-ethical/>. Doing business with integrity should be the keystone for all businesses, and the companies on this list are some of the ones to look to for modeling meaningful ethical programs for your own businesses.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped change your life.

Steven LaVoie, founder of ArrowStream, is an important mentor who has taught me the meaning of reaching for big dreams while still living a balanced life rich with family and friends. He is an inspirational example of someone who turned his vision into a business that continues to add tremendous value to the marketplace. He encourages everyone in the company to live the entrepreneurial spirit he exudes, and he is one of the most ethical and caring people I know. He encourages my professional and personal development and gives me the time to follow my own dreams. I am a better person for having Steve in my life.

[Read more about this year's 40 Under 40 Honorees.](#)

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