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for pay equity transparency and accountability. Firms have a chance to make pay equity a point of strength and trust. Networking and business development training

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In its sixth year, the [2015 Accounting MOVE Project](#) reports a significant boost in the proportion of women partners and principals at the 47 CPA firms participating in the project—an average of 22%, up from 17% five years ago.

That means the bar is rising for candidates for the annual MOVE Project Best Public Accounting Firms for Women list, released by the [Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance](#) (AFWA) and [American Women's Society of CPAs](#) (AWSCPA).

“The emerging generation of partners has grown up with Forum W, so they've seen the benefits and they know the difference it makes,” said Jen Wyne, director of

human resources at [Moss Adams](#), where women now comprise 26% of partners.

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“The MOVE Project continues to report improvement for women in the accounting field, but we still have much more work to do as an industry,” said Ericka Harney, executive director of the AFWA. “AFWA and the MOVE Project are dedicated to efforts that empower women in the industry and assist in advancing women to senior roles with equal pay.”

### Top Trends From the 2015 Accounting MOVE Project

- Pay equity is the topic that won't go away. Celebrities and politicians are advocating for pay equity transparency and accountability. Firms have a chance to make pay equity a point of strength and trust.
- Networking and business development training is becoming more democratic at CPA firms as firms include millennials and senior staff earlier in their careers with scaled training and networking opportunities.
- Firms that have gained momentum in their advancement of women use their women's initiatives as strategic growth drivers.

“Women are a differentiating factor for firms competing intensely for new clients,” said Joanne Cleaver, president of [Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc.](#), the content and communications firm that manages the Accounting MOVE Project. “Most employers are concerned with advancing women, and they want to do business with CPA firms that share those values.”

### 2015 BEST CPA FIRMS FOR WOMEN

The 10 firms named to the Best CPA Firms for Women list demonstrate three characteristics:

- Consistent, measurable progress in advancing women.
- Proven and continually evolving programs that retain and advance women.

- Evidence that the firm's advancement of women is intrinsic to its growth and

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Office and managing partners are using the [CohnReznick](#) women's initiative for finding and developing rising talent, integrating the initiative with the firm's client service goals. The firm has gained a bird's-eye view of culture change by asking about the perception and results of women's development programs via a firm-wide culture survey and ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders.

**Lurie Besikof Lapidus, Minneapolis**

Managing partner Beth Kieffer Leonard detects a tipping point: "There's such a shortage that firms are getting much more realistic about what it takes to invest in millennials and women," she says. [LBL](#) has a very high retention rate with its innovative "futurecasting" program for promising associates.

**Mahoney Ulbrich Christiansen Russ PA, Minneapolis**

Newly appointed managing partner Roz Allyson recently merged back into a full-time schedule after years of flexible hours and alternative schedules, illustrating that the firm offers numerous success tracks. [The firm's](#) default work arrangement is flexible, with each staffer deciding annually on his or her custom plan for the next 12 months.

**Moss Adams, Seattle**

With women comprising 26% of its partners, [Moss Adams](#) is reaping the benefits of its seven-year investment in Forum W, its firmwide initiative to advance women at all levels. Recent innovations include integrating accountability into partners' goals by specifically asking partners whom they will sponsor. This demonstrates a deeper investment in Forum W and the firm's overall diversity and inclusion efforts.

**OUM & Co., San Francisco**

About 10 years ago, [OUM & Co.](#) partners made three changes that resulted in its

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Plante Moran office has a champion for its women, and that women across the firm network internally and externally.

**Rehmann, Troy, Michigan**

[Rehmann](#) is not the only firm where women comprise over half of senior managers, but it's one of the few that propels many of them to partnership thanks to an intensive, one-year development program. Firm leaders ensure that women with alternative arrangements have scaled opportunities for advancement.

**The Bonadio Group, Pittsford, New York**

Alternative work arrangement? That's no barrier to the partner track at [The Bonadio Group](#). Women on part-time schedules and nontraditional career paths aren't precluded from participating in firm leadership, and some have achieved partner level. In fact, women comprise 31% of the firm's partners and principals.

**Yeo & Yeo CPAs & Business Consultants, Saginaw, Michigan**

Career paths are not do-it-yourself at [Yeo & Yeo](#), thanks to maps and structures that show employees multiple proven routes to success. Yeo & Yeo's Career Advocacy Team and mentor program provide robust career coaching to help employees grow as future leaders.

## 2015 ACCOUNTING MOVE PROJECT EQUITY LEADERSHIP FIRMS

The Accounting MOVE Project also recognizes 14 firms on its Equity Leadership list—firms with at least 50 employees and a minimum of 32% female partners and principals.

- RoseRyan; Newark, California; 100%; [www.roseryan.com](http://www.roseryan.com)
- Kerkering, Barberio & Co.; Sarasota, Florida; 58%; [www.kbgrp.com](http://www.kbgrp.com)

- Kositzka, Wicks & Company; Alexandria, Virginia; 54%; [www.kwccpa.com](http://www.kwccpa.com)

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- BeachFleischman PC; Tucson, Arizona; 32%; [www.beachfleischman.com](http://www.beachfleischman.com)

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