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should embrace change – and do it fast – to ensure a bright future, attract the best talent and be in the strongest position to serve the public interest.

Oct. 22, 2015

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The governing council of the [American Institute of CPAs](#) has selected Tim Christen as the new chairman of the board of directors for the organization. Christen is chairman and CEO of the Top 15 accounting and advisory firm [Baker Tilly Virchow](#)

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vote for the driver's seat."

Christen, 56, was elected to the one-year volunteer post by the AICPA governing council, which concluded its annual fall meeting on Wednesday, October 21.

[Kimberly Ellison-Taylor](#), CPA, CGMA, executive director of Oracle USA, was voted in as vice chair.

Christen, who says his strengths are in strategy and communications, said the profession must take four steps to ensure relevancy:

1. *Modernize its services.* Beyond adopting new technology, this means being a step ahead of what the marketplace demands.
2. *Increase "the speed of everything,"* from service delivery to competency building to the development of new fields of expertise.
3. *Increase collaboration with others outside the CPA profession.* "CPAs and other qualified professionals are playing more strategic, interconnected and critical roles in business than at any time in history," Christen said. "Today, we talk less about 'CPA firms' and more about 'firms led by CPAs.'"
4. *Create the professional environment of choice for the most trusted advisers of the 21st century.* CPAs of the future will demand a more dynamic personal and professional experience, and the profession must be prepared to provide it to attract the best and brightest job candidates, Christen said. Innovative firms such as Baker Tilly, with its philosophy of "Care and Teach," are moving in this direction, but the entire profession must evolve to change the way accounting professionals learn and achieve work/life integration.

Christen spent the past year as AICPA vice chair, and is a past member of the Institute's board of directors and Council. He is a former chairman of an AICPA group that addresses major firm interests, and also served as a member of the AICPA's

compensation and political action committees, as well as the institute's member

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American Regional Advisory Council and chairs its remuneration committee.

Christen is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. He serves as a board member of Chicago's Lyric Opera company (his favorite opera is 'Carmen') and a member of both the city's Commercial Club and Economic Club.

He and his wife, Pam, split their time between Chicago and Madison, Wis. The couple have four children and five grandchildren.

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