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DeAnn Hill, CPA, CGMA, PFS

2018 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

Chief Financial Officer, State of Kansas

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What would you suggest to accounting firms that are interested in retaining and advancing more qualified female staff?

The firms must be all in. They must create very visible paths to varied levels of leadership. It cannot be all or nothing. They cannot make it up as they go along. Transparency and consistency is the key. I believe this applies to be successful in retaining and advancing all staff, not just female.

Why did you choose to work in – and stay in – the accounting field?

I took an accounting course early in high school and it just clicked. I knew from then on, it was my calling. I worked for a couple of firms after college that were attempting to be forward thinking, but just couldn't make it happen. I took a major leap of faith at 24 years old and started my own firm, not realizing this was not "appropriate" in the accounting profession in the early 80's. I wanted to live my work life how I imagined it, not someone else's image. So, here I am, still doing just that....

What are you currently reading?

Lately, I have been catching up on accounting publications stacked up during busy season. Exciting read, right?? As soon as I return from Engage, I am starting on "Let Me Tell You About Jasper". This is a fun read about a certain dog, animals and stress management. I am a huge animal lover; my pets keep me grounded and are a major factor in managing my stress.

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

The pace of change will only gain speed. Automation of nearly every piece of data will be the norm. Big data will reign supreme. Compliance services will be but a

small piece of the puzzle with fees at the bottom of the scale for these services.

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the past that have had an impact on the profession. (PCPS Exec, KSCPA Chair, FRF SME drafting, AICPA Board of Directors, etc.). Almost 2 years ago, I rolled off the AICPA Board of Directors. The first-year post board, I stepped back and relished in some down time. I am now recharged and have been assessing what I want to do with the last years of my career; what I want to be when I grow up for the final frontier. I have not decided a concrete path, but have several things I am interested in. I am keeping my eyes and ears open for opportunities that intrigue me.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped shape the direction or focus of your professional life.

During my career, I have been fortunate to have many mentors from differing walks of life. The common thread between them is their individual successes. The common theme among them that has impacted me most is they have all practiced self-fulfillment. If they were not fulfilled personally and professionally in their current situation, they would either work feverishly to make it better or seek a new opportunity. I have made it my personal goal to do the same.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

Be true to yourself. Each day do your best. When your head hits the pillow at night, it is a great feeling to know you have done it up right without compromising your person.

[See the full list: 2018 AICPA / CPA Practice Advisor Most Powerful Women in Accounting.](#)

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