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Kimberly Ellison-Taylor, CPA, CGMA, CISA

2018 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

Global Strategy Leader, **Oracle Corporation**

Past Chairman, AICPA

What advice would you give to female college students about the opportunities for women in the accounting profession?

There is no “box”. Let’s dream big and reimagine our future. In order to leverage and maximize the many opportunities that are available, we must refute stereotypes and

“can’t” from our thinking. In locations throughout the United States and around the

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In today’s environment of 5 generations in the work place- Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z—one size fits one. The standard across board management approach will not maximize the strengths of the team. Both men and women will require different resources, mentoring, and coaches at different times during the course of their careers. The firms that can provide assistance and support throughout the many career seasons will be much more likely to retain their top talent. Also, proactive and frequent communication are very important to illustrate a clear blueprint of leadership succession and developmental leadership assignments. Modified work schedules and flexible work locations are just 2 areas where many firms are noting success. Firms may also consider reaching out to talented team members and asking them to accept new leadership roles as opposed to waiting for the team member to volunteer or apply.

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

As a 3rd grader, I fell in love with the accounting profession. I understood that it was great foundation for whatever I wanted to do in my life. Since that time, that notion has been reinforced over and over again. Our colleagues are in Public Practice, Business & Industry, Government, Education, Non Profit, and Consulting. Accounting Firms, Technology, Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Sports Management are a just a few of the areas where we add value. Our profession provides many paths to achievement and I am delighted to note these options in my own career where I’ve been a CPA in Public Practice, in Government and now in Business and Industry.

What are you currently reading?

Each day, I review various articles, alerts from regulators, business news, accounting

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at a pace never before seen and it's fundamentally changing the way we live, work and think. Accounting is "what" we do but Technology is "how" we do it.

New skills and learning competencies are needed to further embrace the opportunities brought by technology and to also best position ourselves for the future. Leveraging our earned reputation as trusted advisors, CPAs and CGMAs are best and uniquely positioned to provide the guidance and services that the public and businesses require.

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

As a Past Chairman of AICPA, Past Chairman for the Association of Certified Professional Accountants and also as a Past Chairman for the Maryland Association of CPAs, I will absolutely continue to work on behalf of the profession. I am excited to work in any number of areas but especially any areas related to Technology, Transformation, and Next Generation Leadership.

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.

I have many mentors—both younger and older than me however, parents are my most influential mentors. My mom was a stay at home mom and my dad worked in a factory across 3 shifts. He would catch 2 metro buses to work and never missed a day. Mom made sure we did our school work and was the Chief of our home. I learned compassion, hard work, integrity, team work, accountability and the drive to make

myself better tomorrow than today. I treasure these core values and appreciate

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

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