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Recipients of CPA.com's 2018 Innovative Practitioner Award, which recognizes ...

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Two pioneering CPA firm leaders – one an early champion of blockchain services, another an advocate of artificial intelligence in the audit process – have been named recipients of CPA.com's 2018 Innovative Practitioner Award, which recognizes innovation in process, services or technology implementation in public accounting.

The honorees are:

- **Samantha Bowling, CPA, CGMA, a partner with Garbelman Winslow in Maryland.** Samantha and her team of small firm practitioners are successfully integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in auditing for small businesses, nonprofits and local government. Using an external AI platform, the firm has improved the audit process and helped reduce the risk of material misstatements for its clients. As an early adopter, Samantha is providing valuable input to help make the technology more usable for other firms.
- **Jagruti Solanki, CPA, CGMA, senior manager for Aprio, LLP, a CPA-led professional services firm.** Jagruti helped launch the firm's blockchain services

group and has been instrumental in developing best practices for accounting and

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either improve an existing service or launch a new one, and then successfully position the practitioner's firm as a leader in that area," said Erik Asgeirsson, president and CEO of CPA.com. "Both blockchain and AI stand to make a big impact on the profession and our honorees are both advancing strategies around these technologies for their firm."

The two co-winners will be invited to attend the 2018 Digital CPA Conference as guests. This year's event will be held Dec. 3-5, 2018, at the Gaylord National Resort and Conference Center outside Washington, D.C.

CPA.com also named the second-place winner of the award: Matt Armanino, chief operating officer and CFO advisory services practice lead for Armanino LLP. To help small and midmarket clients deal with disruptive change, Matt launched a Strategy and Transformation practice area in the firm. His team taps the firm's cross-functional expertise in audit, tax and consulting to create recommendations to spur client improvement in strategy, operations, process and technology. In its first full year, the Strategy and Transformation practice area produced over \$1 million in revenue, with additional opportunities created in other practice areas. Matt will become CEO of Armanino LLP in 2019.

Award winners were chosen in part through the vote of their peers. Some 1,839 people cast votes online for finalists. An advisory panel of CPA.com and the American Institute of CPAs also gave their recommendations for winners. The voting and internal review each carried equal weight in the final selection process.

To read more about the winning practitioners, please visit the [award page](#). More information about the Digital CPA Conference can be found at [digitalcpa.com](#).

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