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## ACCOUNTING

# Illinois CPA Society President and CEO Signs Diversity Pledge

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With the stroke of a pen, Todd Shapiro has reinforced the Illinois CPA Society's longstanding commitment to increasing diversity and embracing inclusion

throughout the entire CPA profession. As the Society's President and CEO, he has proudly joined more than 800 chief executives from leading companies and business organizations across the world who have signed the [CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion Pledge](#).

By signing the pledge, which is the largest CEO-driven business commitment to advance diversity and inclusion within the workplace, the Illinois CPA Society will continue cultivating a trusting environment where all ideas are welcomed and where all staff members are supported and empowered to discuss diversity and inclusion.

“By joining this strong alliance of leaders, we are partnering with organizations who share the same values and dedication to diversity and inclusion that we have always encouraged,” Shapiro said. “Our continuous focus on evolving and enhancing D&I strategies in the profession is a key component of our advocacy efforts on behalf of all our members.”

The case for greater diversity within the profession, as well as resources for students and professionals, are available on the Society's [Diversity & Inclusion web page](#).

Among the Illinois CPA Society's diversity initiatives is the [Mary T. Washington Wylie Internship Preparation Program](#). This award-winning, annual program prepares students from diverse backgrounds with key skills needed to obtain and succeed in accounting internships. Participants receive resume advice, interview coaching, opportunities for onsite interviews, and a \$500 scholarship.

Earlier this month, the Society hosted the newest class of 26 program scholars who participated during their winter breaks from classes. Since its inception, 201 students completed the program and more than 85 percent have accepted internships or full-time positions as a result.

Mary T. Washington Wylie, a Chicagoan who graduated from Northwestern University, began her own accounting practice in a basement on the city's South Side in 1939. She became the first African-American female CPA in the U.S. in 1943 and was a trailblazer for minorities entering the accounting profession. This program bearing her name advances diversity within the profession by building skills and presenting new opportunities for minority accounting students to be successful.

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