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clients across the country in 2022, CEO Tom Watson said in a keynote address to employees at the firm's recent annual Leadership Conference held in St. Louis. Watson, who ...

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**BKD CPAs & Advisors** is poised to further enhance the ways in which it serves its clients across the country in 2022, CEO Tom Watson said in a keynote address to employees at the firm's recent annual Leadership Conference held in St. Louis. **Watson**, who stepped into the CEO role in June, noted several areas of strategic focus for this fiscal year.

Chief among these is a continued commitment to people initiatives, innovation and new services being guided by a dynamic "next generation" of firm leaders. Watson

said BKD also will prioritize investment in growing value-added advisory services

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- A new **accounting advisory services** practice will provide high-level advice to public companies and others to help them deal with complex accounting problems and audit readiness.
- BKD's new **ESG (environmental, social and governance) practice** will help clients navigate this increasingly important aspect of doing business as it relates to their ability to raise money and secure financing while also being socially responsible.
- Additional investment in a **grants management practice** following recent success helping clients comply with the federal CARES Act and other grant funding.
- **BKD Private Client** continues to grow in its second year, providing strategic financial planning, tax strategy and wealth management for high-net-worth individuals, families and foundations.
- **BKD Edge**, the firm's innovation program, continues to focus on new services and products, including proprietary software tools to help clients meet their goals.

In a midyear financial update, Watson said BKD has seen significant net revenue growth that exceeds its year-to-date growth targets. He said most of this incremental revenue is being reinvested in the firm's people, technology and strategic growth initiatives.

Watson closed by answering a question he says he hears often when traveling the country and speaking with other leaders in the industry as the profession and the nation navigate unprecedented change: "How are you feeling?" In short, Watson said he is feeling inspired by BKD's path forward as it looks ahead to its 100th anniversary in 2023.

"I'm inspired because I get to look across a room like this and see a group of people who are professionals, who are leaders, coaches, influencers and, frankly, difference makers," he said. "I'm inspired because I know everyone in here is ready to hold each other accountable to achieve our mission and fulfill our purpose of making a positive impact on our people, our communities and our clients."

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