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Washington Award at Xerocon New Orleans.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Aug. 25, 2022



Mary T. Washington Wylie was the first Black woman to earn the CPA license.

[Xero](#), the global small business platform, presented scholarships to student members of two industry associations it supports in the United States: the [National Association of Black Accountants \(NABA, Inc.\)](#) and the [Association of Latino Professionals For America \(ALPFA\)](#). The scholarships demonstrate Xero's efforts to mentor the next generation of accounting talent, specifically through providing increased opportunities for underrepresented communities.

The new Mary T. Washington Award is named in honor of the first Black woman certified public accountant, Mary Thelma Washington, CPA. Part of an ongoing collaboration between Xero and NABA, Inc., the Mary T. Washington Award helps

bolster NABA, Inc.'s mission to provide a platform for Black professionals to succeed

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President of Winthrop University's NABA, Inc. chapter, Arriaga holds senior-level credits as a junior while also serving in many leadership roles for eight other student organizations at her university.

"This scholarship means everything to me," said Arriaga, who is interning with PwC this summer and plans to pursue a Master's degree in accounting upon receiving her Bachelor's degree. "Thanks to this award from NABA, Inc. and Xero, I now have the opportunity to explore how I want to make the biggest impact I can in the accounting world."

Also at Xerocon New Orleans, Xero presented scholarships it sponsored to two students actively involved in ALPFA chapters at universities across the country. The scholarships come on the heels of Xero's partnership [announcement](#) with ALPFA earlier this year in an effort to help develop Hispanic professionals in accounting and finance, and expand Xero's own pipeline of talent.

"Xero's support of our scholarship program helps ALPFA continue to open doors for Hispanic professionals in business," said Adriana Maria Ortiz, Manager, Student Chapter Operations & Initiatives at ALPFA. "The submission pool for this year's scholarship program reflects the varying backgrounds and strengths of our ALPFA members; candidates represented 23 majors across 66 schools, with two-thirds of them being undergraduates and one-third being graduate students."

Dayron Garcia, the first of two recipients of the ALPFA scholarship this year, is a sophomore at Monroe College majoring in accounting and taxation. Garcia, who identifies as disabled, hopes to shine a light on misconceptions surrounding disabled individuals in the workplace.

"My hope is that I can show people that those with disabilities are just as capable of success in the business world as anyone else," said Garcia. "We deserve the same

opportunities to grow and develop as those without disabilities. I am grateful to

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with peers and future students,” said Saucedo. “It took me some time to decide on my career path. Thanks to this scholarship from ALPFA and Xero, I have more confidence in my future and look forward to making my mark on the industry.”

“Xero is thrilled to honor these three deserving students for their dedication to changing the accounting and business industries for the better,” said Ben Richmond, US Country Manager at Xero. “We believe in the importance of representation, equity, and inclusion. Our collaborations with NABA, Inc. and ALPFA are just two of many partnerships aimed at helping to diversify the pipeline of talent and creating opportunities for those of all backgrounds.”

Accounting

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