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Avani Desai, CPA

2023 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

CEO

Schellmann & Company, LLC

How do you envision the accounting profession evolving in the foreseeable future for women?

While the accounting profession has made significant strides in gender diversity and inclusivity in recent years, there's still a lot of work to be done—in an ideal world of the future, I envision an industry that not only welcomes and values the contributions of women but also provides them with equal opportunities to advance and excel. To do that, we'll need to continue breaking down the established systemic barriers that prevent women from reaching leadership positions, promoting cultures of diversity and inclusion within accounting firms, and investing in programs that support the professional development and advancement of women. I believe that by working together and committing to these goals, we can create a future where women are not just part of the accounting profession but are helping to lead the way toward a more equitable and inclusive future for all.



What advice would you give to women college students about preparing for a career in the accounting profession?

Believe in yourself and your ability to make a difference, and trust that the

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I would say avoid lip service and truly prioritize transparency, inclusivity, and flexibility instead. By investing in programs that support women's professional development, creating opportunities for optimal work-life balance, and embracing diversity and the different perspectives that come with it, firms can build a successful culture of innovation and excellence that attracts and retains top talent.

What is your favorite professional mobile app, and why?

My favorite professional app is probably the one that reminds me to take a break occasionally. I mean, we all need a little nudge to step away from our screens and stretch our legs, right? So, thank you, reminder app, for keeping me healthy and sane amidst all the number-crunching madness.

What do you like to do when you have time away from work?

As a mom of three, I've learned that the most precious moments in life often come from simple pleasures – like going for a hike in the woods, visiting a new museum, or just exploring our neighborhood together. I love seeing the world through my kids' eyes and discovering new things alongside them. Whether it's a new adventure or a quiet evening at home, spending time with my family is the ultimate joy and fulfillment for me. As much as I love my work, there's nothing more valuable than the time I get to spend with them as we make memories and grow together as a family.

What are your favorite podcasts?

One of my top picks is the WorkLife with Adam Grant podcast. I appreciate Adam's insight into workplace dynamics and leadership, and his guests always bring a fresh perspective to the table. Another podcast that I love is Women at Work, which delves deeper into issues surrounding gender and diversity in the workplace. The

conversations are always thought-provoking and empowering, and it's inspiring to

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