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4,000 active members, making it the largest professional membership organization in Iowa.

Mary Girsch-Bock • Feb. 08, 2024



State CPA Societies in Action is a [series of articles](#) spotlighting the varied educational, advocacy, networking and professional activities in state CPA societies across the U.S.

The [Iowa Society of CPAs \(ISCPA\)](#) was founded in 1915 and currently has more than 4,000 active members, making it the largest professional membership organization in Iowa.

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November's Accounting Opportunities Experience a huge success, with outreach number growing from 1,200 students in 2022 to 2,326 students in 2023 during the monthlong campaign. Member engagement with high schools is expected to continue increasing as the Society continues to promote the profession and inspire more to pursue the CPA designation.

Like other states, Iowa is not immune to the current CPA pipeline issues and finding CPA talent is a top concern for businesses across the state. Member input helps to identify ways to improve the pipeline. To address the issue, the Iowa Society of CPAs embarked on a campaign to explore members' opinions of existing 150 credit hour educational requirements to becoming a CPA in Iowa.

This issue was also addressed in *A Pathways to CPA Licensure Task Force* consisting of ISCPA members, who explored the topic and other barriers to becoming a CPA by conducting focus group discussions followed by an online survey. With 500 participating in the focus groups and 900 responding to the survey, it was found that more than 90 percent of participants believe there should be alternative pathways to CPA licensure in Iowa. The final task force recommendation approved by the ISCPA Board of Directors combines the support for alternatives with the importance of preserving mobility for Iowa CPAs.

Thoughts from leadership

Both ISCPA board chair Alison VanOtterloo CPA and CEO Dawn Latham shared their thoughts on ISCPAs current mission and the future of the CPA profession.

“I am proud to have the opportunity to lead ISCPA as the chair of the Board of Directors this year,” said ISCPA Chair Alison VanOtterloo, CPA and Senior Vice President with Pharmacists Mutual Insurance Group in Algona, Iowa.

“We have been focused on aligning our mission, vision, and strategic priorities to set

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ISCAs CEO Dawn Latham added “under the newly designed vision statement of, ‘Trusted advocate transforming the future of the profession,’ the Iowa Society of CPAs strives to be the go-to organization for CPAs in the state, helping our members succeed in their careers and advancing the accounting profession among policymakers and other key stakeholders.

Latham also understands how important it is to engage with younger people to bring them into the profession. “Recognizing the need to elevate this profession among the next generation and showcase the value accountants and CPAs bring to businesses and the community, we continually engage with students and introduce them to this innovative field.”

What are the top objectives for the upcoming year?

ISCPA has identified four strategic initiatives for this year and beyond.

- Enrich the skills and knowledge of CPAs to confidently prepare for and respond to evolving professional practices
- Encourage more students to major in accounting and more candidates to pursue the CPA in Iowa
- Increase and improve member engagement and experience
- Serve as Iowa's primary organization representing the industry and shaping policies affecting the CPA profession

ISCPA's long term objective can be summarized by its mission statement: To be Iowa's premier organization for the accounting profession by harnessing the collective power of the members to promote, protect, grow, and enhance the industry through advocacy and service.

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