

CPAs of Color

Celebrating
40 Years

AICPA®



Celebrate with us!

The AICPA's Minority Initiatives Committee (MIC) assists underrepresented minorities in becoming CPAs and encourages their advancement and retention in the accounting profession.

In honor of the MIC's 40th anniversary, we invite you to join us in looking back at the committee's history and accomplishments...and forward to the future of the profession and the opportunities that lie ahead.

As you page through this volume, you will meet the MIC members as well as 41 featured minority CPAs — accomplished professionals who work in fascinating fields and occupations, from educational institutions to Big Four companies to nonprofit associations. You'll learn about their challenges, goals and dreams, and see their words of advice for the CPAs who will follow in their footsteps.

While these highly talented minority CPAs may not grace the pages of *The Wall Street Journal* or appear on the talk show *du jour*, they are an integral part of the profession.

And although we have a long way to go, we are encouraged to know that the number of minorities entering and advancing in the profession continues to increase.





“There is nothing more majestic than the determined courage of individuals willing to suffer and sacrifice for their freedom and dignity.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

2009 is an historic year for this country, thanks to the inauguration of the first African-American president of the United States of America. The AICPA also is making history this year: we are proud to announce the 40th anniversary of the Minority Initiatives Committee.

We founded the MIC in 1969, during a time when the country was navigating its way through the civil rights movement. Over the course of its 40 years, the MIC has made great strides — from scholarships to fellowships, leadership conferences to strategic partnerships — in proactively addressing the needs of minorities in the accounting profession.

However, we recognize the need for continued encouragement of the MIC's efforts.

CPAs of Color: Celebrating 40 Years celebrates the talent of minority CPAs, and the success of these individuals represents exciting possibilities for our profession.

As CPAs, we are trusted professionals who enable people and organizations to shape their future — and the MIC continues to make strides in our changing, complex world. The AICPA is enthusiastically committed to supporting the MIC along the way.

Barry C. Melancon, CPA
President and CEO, AICPA

Ernie Almonte, CPA
Chairman, AICPA Board of Directors

Bill Ezzell, CPA
President, AICPA Foundation

The early years

The AICPA in 1969 passed a resolution to integrate the accounting profession. The MIC was formed to carry out that resolution, which included:

- Encourage minority men and women of high potential to attend college and major in accounting.
- Provide educational opportunities for minority men and women to prepare them to enter the accounting profession.
- Encourage hiring of minority men and women in order to integrate the accounting profession in fact as well as ideal.

By 1979, the number of minority CPAs increased from 150 to 1,000. Although this was a dramatic increase, the number of accountants that would be needed annually for the subsequent five years (1979-1984) was estimated at 51,000.

With such a small number of minorities in the CPA pipeline and profession — just 4.3% — there was still much work to be done.



Strategic Alliance Partners

- **Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA)**
alpfa.org
- **Ascend** (formerly known as National Asian American Society of Accountants)
ascendleadership.org
- **Howard University Center for Accounting Education**
pkellibrew@howard.edu
- **INROADS**
inroads.org
- **International Society of Young Filipino Accountants (ISYFA)**
isyfa.org
- **National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. (NABA)**
nabainc.org
- **National Council of Philippine American Canadian Accountants (NCPACA)**
ncpaca.org
- **The PhD Project**
phdproject.org
- **State CPA societies**

Four decades of accomplishment

In the decades since, the MIC has reached numerous important milestones, such as:

- “Be a Star in Business — Be a CPA” Campaign
- Filled-to-capacity Scholar’s Leadership Conferences
- Memorandums of Understanding and many years of successful collaborations with Strategic Alliance partners
- Ph.D. fellowship program with record-setting completion rates and success
- Undergraduate scholarship program applications far exceed funding (by 3:1)
- Increase in volunteer outreach to underrepresented populations (e.g., minority high school and college students, Native American tribes and conferences)
- Increased diversity in the *Journal of Accountancy*
- Support, via volunteers and grants, of Strategic Alliance Partners
- Emphasis on AICPA student membership via the Minority Accounting Scholarships program
- Greater number of diverse CPA members rejoining the AICPA
- Creation of web-based Leadership Alumni Network

The road ahead

Despite the accomplishments of the last 40 years, there is still much work to be done. The MIC will continue its commitment to assisting minorities in becoming CPAs and encouraging their advancement and retention in the profession — and take steps to:

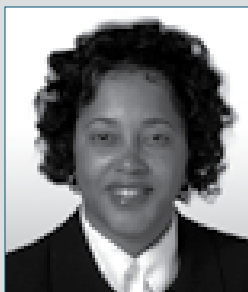
- Increase the number of minority CPAs in the profession
- Embrace cost-effective, measurable and trackable programs
- Leverage strategic partnerships
- Limit duration of financial commitments
- Increase commitment from beneficiaries

This is an ambitious to-do list, to be sure, but the MIC is convinced it is making — and will continue to make — a difference for minority CPAs.



Minority Initiatives Committee Members

MIC Chair



Genevia Gee Fulbright, CPA
President & COO
Fulbright & Fulbright, CPA, PA
Durham, NC

“If you want to have an exciting career as a CPA, consider joining professional organizations to expand your brand and network. You will remain motivated if you take advantage of opportunities to network, write and perform public speaking and charity work.”

Committee Members



James Dannemiller, CPA
Director
SS&G Financial Services, Inc.
Akron, OH



Loretta Doon, CPA
CEO
California Society of CPAs
Los Angeles, CA



Catherine Garcia, CPA
COO
Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting
Los Angeles, CA



Kim Griffin-Hunter, CPA
Partner, National Sector Leader
Deloitte & Touche LLP
Miami, FL



Jeffery L. Hill, CPA
CFO
Habitat for Humanity Detroit
Detroit, MI



Sharon S. Lassar, Ph.D., CPA
Director, School of Accounting
Florida International University
Miami, FL



Sean McCabe, CPA
Managing Shareholder
Anuskewicz & McCabe P.C.
Albuquerque, NM



Dorri McWhorter, CPA
Partner
Crowe Horwath LLP
Chicago, IL



Gail Sparks Pitts, CPA
Controller
Oakland Community College
Bloomfield Hills, MI



Diana Cruz Solash
Director, Human Resources
Ernst & Young
New York, NY



Ronald E. Taylor, CPA
Director of Recruiting
Operations and Diversity
Eisner, LLP
New York, New York



Maria (Mia) A. Thomas, CPA
Principal
LarsonAllen LLP
Orlando, FL



H. James Williams, Ph.D., CPA
Dean, Seidman College of Business
Grand Valley State University
Grand Rapids, MI

AICPA Staff Liaisons



Denny Reigle
Director, Academic
and Career Development
AICPA
Durham, NC



Ostine A. Swan, CPA
Senior Manager, Diversity
AICPA
Durham, NC

Words of advice from the Committee

“Treat every job as if you only have a limited amount of time there to learn and share as much information as you can. As a CPA, you can be plugged in to any line of work you want.”

“Stay flexible and open to changes in your role and responsibilities. The business environment is constantly shifting, and those who are able to adapt quickly will be most successful.”

“Successful CPAs possess the ability to take something complex and make it easy to understand. Take every opportunity to improve your communication skills — this will help ensure a long and prosperous career as a CPA.”

“Strive to become part of something you think is a little bit bigger than you are. It is in this manner that you will stretch yourself and grow into excellence and achievement throughout your career.”



Cheryl L. Allen, Ph.D., CPA

Dr. Allen is an associate professor of accounting and interim dean of the Division of Business Administration and Economics at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, where she also serves on several college-wide and departmental committees. Previously, she spent five years with the public accounting firm Ernst & Whinney, CPAs (now Ernst & Young) in the Atlanta office.

She is a member of the board of trustees of Morehouse College, faculty adviser to its student chapter of NABA, and former adviser to The National Association of Collegiate Scholars. She served as a member of the AICPA's Minority Initiatives Committee and is president and council representative for the diversity section of the American Accounting Association.

“You must be **dependable, trustworthy and possess a high level of integrity.**”

Dr. Allen is a member of the AICPA and the national fraternities Beta Alpha Psi (accounting), Beta Gamma Sigma (business) and Omicron Delta Kappa (leadership). She is a charter member of the African-American Accounting Doctoral Association (now AHNADA) and an AICPA doctoral fellow.

Her research interest is in accounting education and pedagogy and accounting policy, and she is published in the *Journal of Accounting and Finance Research*, *Managerial Auditing Journal* and *Accounting Historians Journal*.

Dr. Allen earned her Ph.D. from the University of Georgia, and her MBA and B.A. from Clark-Atlanta University. She is certified as a CPA in the state of Georgia.

On becoming a CPA...

I was introduced to accounting during my junior year of high school, when my teacher invited a CPA to speak to our class about careers in accounting. I was **drawn to the challenge of accounting** and the obvious opportunity for a black female in the profession. By the end of that session, I had made the decision to become a CPA. I earned my Ph.D. in accounting in order to continue my career as a college professor. This has proven to be my professional calling. It is so rewarding to prepare young minds to pursue a career in accounting.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

The training you receive in accounting prepares you to adapt to a vast number of situations. Accounting skills are transferable. However, training is not enough. In the current financial environment, more so than in any other, you must be dependable, trustworthy and possess a high level of integrity. A CPA with these characteristics will have endless opportunities.



Victor A. Amaya, CPA

A graduate of Colorado State University (CSU), Mr. Amaya recently earned his CPA and is co-chair of PricewaterhouseCooper's diversity recruiting committee in the Denver area.

While at CSU, he served as two-term president of the Beta Alpha Psi chapter and assisted in the development and delivery of a new financial literacy project for high school students. He also was a member of the KPMG/ALPFA Business Case Competition Team, which won the Southwestern Regional Championship and received the First Runner-Up Award in the National Championship in 2006.

Mr. Amaya was awarded the CSU College of Business LEAD distinction as one of CSU's May 2007 Outstanding Graduates. He stays connected to assisting college students with career guidance by serving as director of student affairs for ALPFA's Denver chapter, and as a mentor for the KPMG/ALPFA Business Case Competition team. He recently was nominated to the Beta Alpha Psi board of directors as alumni representative.



On being a minority CPA...

I've found being a minority CPA to be an advantage. The globalization trend occurring in the business world is a major driver for the diversification of the workforce today. I firmly believe our clients are looking for firms that provide services to them to be representative of their workforce and someone they can connect with. In turn, our **firms are actively looking for those individuals who can provide a different viewpoint** or thought process in a culture that values team-driven problem-solving.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

This advice that was given to me, and I tell every student I meet: **get your Master's degree and take the CPA exam before you start to work.** Your chances for success will be greater, you will have an advantage over those who are still working on their CPA while working and you will have more opportunities for promotions.

“ I've found being a minority CPA to be an **advantage.** ”



Tony Argiz, CPA

Antonio L. Argiz has been managing partner of Morrison, Brown, Argiz & Farra, LLP (MBAF) since 1997, and led the company's growth to its status as one of the top 50 accounting firms in the nation and the largest Florida-based accounting firm in the state.

Mr. Argiz has more than 30 years of experience in audit, business planning and evaluation, litigation and wealth management.

He is a nationally recognized practitioner in litigation support services and serves as an expert adviser for law firms nationwide; as such, he has developed a broad domestic and international litigation support practice.

Mr. Argiz also has served on leading industry associations and chaired many key committees, including the AICPA's nominations committee and the PCPS executive committee. In 1986, Mr. Argiz was appointed chairman of the board of Florida's Board of Accountancy, and chaired its Probable Cause Panel.

Mr. Argiz graduated from Florida International University with a B.B.A. and completed graduate studies in auditing and taxation. He also attended the University of Virginia National AICPA Banking School.

“Working alongside well-recognized professional athletes has been tremendously exciting.”

On becoming a CPA...

Prestige and trust were two qualities I always saw present in the accounting profession. At the beginning of my career, I encountered many obstacles, including a termination from a public accounting position. Immediately, I had a job offer from someone who became a real mentor and gave me confidence in my abilities.

Most memorable or exciting CPA job...

Working alongside well-recognized professional athletes like John Elway and Alex Rodriguez has been tremendously exciting. **My community involvement and working with the United Way** to assist the poor and disadvantaged also have been professionally and personally rewarding.



Mario de Armas, CPA

Mr. de Armas is the market managing partner for the Florida offices of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), where he works with private and public clients in South Florida and Latin America. He has experience in industries including travel and leisure, distribution, higher education, entertainment and media, telecommunications and technology.

He joined PwC in 1987 and from 1991-1994 toured Barcelona, Spain, where he served U.S. and British multinationals with operations in Spain. Mr. de Armas was admitted as a partner of PwC in 1998 and named office managing partner in 2005. In 2007, he was named market managing partner for all Florida offices.

Mr. de Armas is a member of the board of trustees and past chairman of Dade Marine Institute, Inc., a United Way agency working with court-supervised youth in Miami-Dade County. He also is a member of the board of directors and past chairman of the Downtown chapter of the Florida Institute of CPAs (FICPA), and a member of the Dean's Council of Florida International University's College of Business Administration. In addition, he is a member of the board of directors of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, a member of the board of trustees and executive committee of the New World Symphony, and a past member of the board of trustees of St. Thomas Episcopal Parish School.

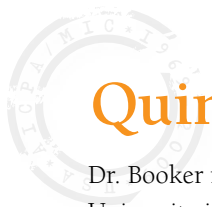
He received a B.A. in accounting from Florida International University and an MBA with a concentration in finance from the University of Florida.



The most memorable or exciting CPA job...

From 1991 to 1994, I had the **opportunity to work in Barcelona, Spain**, for Price Waterhouse. I served mostly UK and U.S. multinationals with operations in Spain. Those were three of the most exciting years in my life, professionally and personally. From a professional standpoint, the environment was completely different from the U.S. It was much less structured, and you never knew what project or opportunity was going to present itself that required bilingual skills as well as a U.S. technical background. **I did some incredibly challenging work in those years.**

“The years I **worked in Barcelona** were three of the most exciting years of my life, professionally and personally.”



Quinton Booker, Ph.D., CPA

Dr. Booker is BankPlus Professor and chairman of the department of accounting at Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi.

He is a member of the AICPA and the Mississippi Society of CPAs, and has served on governing boards of both organizations. He also is a member of the board of directors of the NASBA Center for the Public Trust and the AICPA pre-certification education executive committee. In addition, he for eight years served on the AICPA committee that prepares the Uniform CPA Exam.

Dr. Booker was appointed by two Mississippi governors and served two five-year terms on the Mississippi State Board of Public Accountancy. The Mississippi Society of CPAs named him 2000 Mississippi Accounting Educator of the Year.

He is author or coauthor of more than 25 articles that have appeared in a variety of journals including *Accounting Horizons*, *The CPA Journal*, *Issues in Accounting Education*, *Journal of Accountancy* and *National Public Accountant*.

Dr. Booker holds a B.S., MPA and Ph.D. from Mississippi State University.



On becoming a CPA...

After attending several AICPA seminars, I became keenly aware of the critical shortage of individuals with a doctoral degree in accounting. I also learned of the AICPA's Minority Doctoral Fellowship program; I applied for and was awarded the fellowship. The **Ph.D. degree has enabled me to fully participate in the accounting profession**: I have taught accounting courses at the baccalaureate, master and doctoral levels, and provided service to the profession by participating on several boards of directors, including those of the AICPA, Mississippi State Board of Public Accountancy and NASBA Center for the Public Trust. I also teach continuing education courses to CPAs in several states. Much of this was made possible because of earning the Ph.D. degree.

“ There is a **critical shortage** of individuals with a **doctoral degree in accounting**. ”



Allen Boston, CPA

Mr. Boston is a retired partner and former director of campus and diversity recruiting for Ernst & Young LLP. He is a CPA with more than 30 years of experience in the accounting profession, including serving as the client-service partner to corporations in various industries, including media and entertainment, energy and defense contracting.

He has served as a member of the executive council of the AICPA. Other professional affiliations include the New Jersey Society of CPAs (NJSCPA), NABA, the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance & Accounting and Ascend (formerly known as the National Asian American Society of Accountants). He also has served as a national officer and board member of NABA, a member of the board of trustees of the NJSCPA, and a board member of the Maryland State Society of CPAs. As a governor's appointee to the Maryland Judicial Nominating Commission, Boston assisted in the selection process for state-appointed judgeships.

Mr. Boston serves on dean advisory boards for North Carolina A&T State University and the University of Arkansas and other advisory boards for Michigan State University, Indiana University, ALPFA, Ascend and NABA. He has a B.B.A. from Morgan State University.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

I firmly believe that, once there is a commitment to major in accounting, there should be a corresponding commitment to becoming a CPA. **Interning is a key element but should not be considered the all-inclusive experience that decides careers.** Instead, investigate various options within the profession and gain an understanding of the importance of the CPA certification. Be sure to be CPA-exam ready upon graduation, vs. deferring the educational requirements until later (which tends to be much later...or too late).

On mentoring...

Mentoring other accounting professionals, technical and administrative staff and students is most gratifying. In my experience, these individuals were working hard but did not have the same career guidance as those on structured teams. I was blessed with numerous mentoring relationships over my 36-year career; they helped me grow as a professional and human being.

“To be mentored, you must also mentor others. **It's all about caring.**”



Jeff Chin, CPA

Mr. Chin is a retired partner of Ernst & Young LLP. He spent more than 30 years with the firm, 18 of them as coordinating partner for publicly and privately owned companies. He also served on the Tri-State Diversity Advisory Committee and National Ethnicity Diversity Task Force, and started the firm's Asian American affinity network, EY/ASIA.

He is a founder and the initial president of Ascend, and now serves as the organization's national president. He also is chair of the Asian American Federation of New York; previously, he was for 10 years chairman of Pan Asian Repertoire Theatre. He is a member of the AICPA and the New York State Society of CPAs, where he served on numerous committees.

Mr. Chin holds a B.S. from Pennsylvania State University and an M.S. from St. John's University.



On becoming a CPA...

When I started my public accounting career, there weren't many Asians in the firm or the profession. That did not deter me, but I did have doubts about succeeding in an environment where there were no Asian role models and the concept of diversity was not readily acknowledged. Also, my cultural upbringing was an internal obstacle. I was brought up to believe my hard work speaks for itself and there was no need to self-promote or seek help from others. **I was lucky to have mentors help me maximize my potential by guiding me on adopting and developing skill sets important to advancement.**

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

I believe that you **must develop a relationship with as many mentors as possible**, both internal (within the company) and external so that you can have as much insight and advice as possible regarding whatever life throws at you.

“**Develop a relationship** with as many mentors as possible.”



Ryan Claw, CPA

A member of the Navajo Nation tribe, Mr. Claw has provided his financial services to Native American tribes for more than 13 years.

His past experience includes serving as auditor general for the Navajo Nation and a financial manager for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona. He also was an auditor for the State of Arizona Office of the Auditor General, and currently is treasurer for the Tohono O’odham Nation in Sells, Arizona.

Mr. Claw is a board member of the Native American Finance Officers Association board and its representative on the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council.

He received his MBA from the University of Arizona.

On deciding to become a CPA...

Growing up on the Navajo and Colorado River Indian reservations, opportunities to learn about the accounting profession were limited. I chose the accounting profession in high school, after learning it was one of the **top five professions of the future**. Unfortunately, I did not have family members or friends that knew of accounting, nor did I have a mentor from whom I could seek advice. I like that, today, there are more opportunities for youth to learn about the accounting profession. For example, the Native American Finance Officers Association offers scholarships and internships for Native youth who are exploring the financial and accounting fields.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

Take full advantage of every opportunity that moves you toward your goal and **do not be discouraged if things initially don’t turn out as expected**. For example, I often think I could have passed the CPA exam in my first sitting (it took me three tries), but I did not take the examination seriously. This experience taught me that I could accomplish anything if I put dedication and effort into reaching my goals.



“ I like that, today, there are **more opportunities** for youth to learn about the accounting profession. ”



Quiester Craig, Ph.D., CPA

Dr. Craig taught accounting at South Carolina State University, Lincoln University and Florida A&M University before being appointed professor of accounting and dean of the School of Business and Economics at North Carolina A&T State University in 1972. He served as acting vice chancellor for fiscal affairs from 1980-1981.

“The attributes of a CPA — **excellence, confidence, pride and persistence** — fostered my career in higher education.”

He has received numerous awards, including the NABA Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Educator Award from the North Carolina Association of CPAs (NCACPA).

Dr. Craig has served on numerous committees, including the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools' Minority Recruitment, Standards and Project Service Management committees, and the AICPA's Education and Minority Recruitment committees.

In 1991, he was elected vice president/president-elect of the AACSB. In 1992, he became the first African-American to assume the international presidency. In 1998, he became the first African-American elected to vice president/president-elect of Beta Gamma Sigma and was president from 2000-2002.

He is a member of NABA, the American Accounting Association, the AICPA, the Missouri Society of CPAs, the NCACPA and the Institute of Management Accountants.

Dr. Craig received a B.A. from Morehouse College, an MBA from Atlanta University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. He is a CPA in Missouri and North Carolina.

On becoming a CPA...

In my early years as a student at Morehouse College, I was mentored by J.B. Blayton, one of the few African-American CPAs in 1950s Georgia. He taught accounting courses — and the **importance of the perception of the CPA designation**. I later accepted an accounting-faculty position at Lincoln University, and pursued a doctorate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The critical attributes of a CPA — excellence, confidence, pride and persistence — fostered a lifelong career in higher education.

On being a mentor...

I have had the pleasure of serving as a mentor in formal and informal capacities, and the **rewards of these relationships cannot be measured**. I have learned that individuals respond to different approaches or types of encouragement and support. In many ways, it is similar to the classroom teaching experience — students learn differently. The achievements of mentees and students are extremely gratifying. I am constantly rewarded as I share with others the inspiration my mentors offered me.

Vee Cristobal, CPA

Prior to forming Cristobal & Company, Certified Public Accountants and Business Consultants, Ms. Cristobal was senior manager at a CPA firm in Pacific Palisades, where she worked for 12 years. She has more than 20 years of public accounting experience in areas such as estate, tax, gift, trust and non-profit organizations. She has successfully represented clients on various tax and audit problems with the IRS, Franchise Tax Board and State Board of Equalization.

She is a member of the AICPA and the California Society of CPAs' L.A. chapter, where she was president from 2007-2008 and serves as chairperson of the Accounting Principles and Auditing Standards committee. She is an adviser of the Philippine American Society of CPAs and treasurer and board member of the Filipino American Library Association. She also is a councilor of the National Council of Philippine American Canadian Accountants (NCPACA).

In addition, Ms. Cristobal is past president of Philippine American Society of CPAs — L.A., and a recipient of the California Society of CPAs' 2004 Special Recognition Award. She also was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award of the NCPACA.

Ms. Cristobal received a B.S. and M.S. in business education in the Philippines; she took accounting, auditing, business and taxation courses at UCLA.

“Once you become a CPA, you will **never** be out of a job.”



On becoming a CPA...

Before coming to the U.S., I worked for one of the biggest international shipping companies. My CPA boss encouraged me to go back to school and learn accounting, so I did — and he paid for my tuition. He inspired me to become a CPA. It was very hard because I had two small children to take care of while working full-time and going to school at night. But with hard work and perseverance, and help from my supportive husband, **I followed in my first CPA boss' footsteps.**

Benefits of CPA certification...

You have the world with you — once you become a CPA, you can do everything and you will never be out of a job. You can work in public accounting, you can be your own boss and have your own practice, you can be a CIA, CFA or CFO. Being a leader in the profession will bring you to the top because you'll know many powerful leaders that will lead you to the highest position you can ever imagine in your life.



Manny Espinoza, CPA

Mr. Espinoza is CEO of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, where he previously was national president.

He was a partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) from 1986 to 2001. During that time, his roles included managing partner of the Tucson office, national partner in charge of financial institutions in the Process Management Service Group and country desk for Mexico and Central America. He also served as a member of the PwC Diversity Champion Task Group from 1992-2001, and received the Eagle Award for his commitment to leadership and diversity issues.

Mr. Espinoza is treasurer and on the board of the Vatican Observatory Foundation, a member of the board of trustees of the PCMA Foundation, a member of the Ascend corporate advisory board and a member of MGM's multicultural advisory council.

In 2007, *Diversity Edge Magazine* named Mr. Espinoza to its "Top 20 Diversity Champions" list and, in 2008, *Hispanic Business* named him to its "100 Most Influential Hispanics" list.

What I would've done differently...

As a busy CPA, my networks were focused on the clients I had and the business I was trying to reach. Later, after I'd retired as a CPA and gotten involved with trade associations, I focused on advocating for the benefit of our organization's mission and growth. I can only imagine what impact this might have had on my career, had I joined an organization like ALPFA when I was still practicing. The key is to **think outside of your comfort zone**, because business opportunities can be anywhere.

On being a minority CPA...

I made being a minority an advantage. In my early career, there weren't many Spanish-speaking CPAs. During these years, many opportunities were developing to work with companies in Mexico and South America, which allowed my background to be an asset to the company via my becoming a link to business in Latino markets. Although it was challenging to relate culturally to my professional peers, I learned to **take pride in my uniqueness** and used the experience to make me a stronger professional. This experience also showed me why there is such a strong need for diversity in the business environment.



“My experience has shown me there is such a **strong need for diversity** in the business environment.”



Edward D. Fulbright, CPA

Mr. Fulbright is chairman and CEO of two related firms: Fulbright & Fulbright, CPA, PA (a business, tax and consulting CPA firm) and Fulbright Financial Consulting, PA (a fee-only financial and investment advisory firm).

He also serves as a director and committee volunteer on several boards and trade-groups, including the Self-Help Credit Union, Alliance of Cambridge Advisors and Triangle Community Foundation — Catalyst Project.

Mr. Fulbright, who has more than 20 years of experience as a financial-services provider, also is the host and producer of a syndicated weekly radio program — Mastering Your Money™ — a financial education radio show that helps you “turbo-charge” your way onto the financial-freedom highway through high-profile guest authors, professionals and advisers.

He holds the AICPA’s PFS Credential, and is a registered investment adviser and professional money coach.

“Make sure you select a mentor who has your **best interests at heart.**”

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

Seek a mentor during your college years, and seek additional career mentors in your early professional years. Make sure you select someone who has your best interests at heart, and actually wants to be your mentor (many times, companies set up formal programs that are not successful because they are forced). Try to **find diverse mentors from various backgrounds and ethnic groups** who can provide a global perspective as well as access to niche networks.

On mentoring...

From the beginning of my career, I knew that in order to become successful I would have to **seek the CPA certification to set myself apart.** After college, no one particularly cares whether you had a high GPA — they care about your experience, reputation and certifications.



Frances Garcia, CPA

Ms. Garcia is inspector general of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), which she joined in 1986. She also is campus executive for GAO at two universities. Previously, she was director of the office of recruitment, and received the GAO Distinguished Service Award in 2005.

Ms. Garcia has played a large role in the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) over the last 20 years. She is a lifetime member, serves on the corporate advisory board and was the first female national president. In 1992, she founded the D.C. chapter, and in 2002 was a key player in forming Women of ALPFA, one of the organization's largest programs. She received the National Founders Award in 2002 and the Washington, D.C., chapter's Excellence Award in 2007. She also is on the board of directors for the Hitachi Foundation.

Prior to joining GAO, Ms. Garcia was with Quezada Navarro & Co., a public accounting firm, where she was partner in charge of the Washington, D.C., office. She also was an audit manager with Arthur Andersen & Co. in the financial division.

President Carter appointed Ms. Garcia chair of the U.S. Copyright Royalty Tribunal. She pioneered royalty-rates legislation for the cable, recording, noncommercial broadcasting and jukebox industries.

She has served on numerous AICPA committees and is a lifetime member of MANA, A National Latina Organization, from which she received the Las Primeras Award for Public Service in 2002. She also was treasurer for the Spanish Education Development Center in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Garcia is a graduate of Midwestern State University, from which she received the Distinguished Alumna Award.

“For people who like to make a difference, there is **nothing better** than being a CPA at GAO.”

On being a mentor...

What could be more exciting than being at the Government Accountability Office at this time? **We support Congress with research and evaluation that is critical to the nation's financial recovery**, and provide independent and nonpartisan advice to Congress and the heads of executive branch agencies to improve performance and assure accountability. For people who like to make a difference, there is nothing better than being a CPA at GAO.



Nathan Garrett, CPA

Mr. Garrett earned his CPA certification in 1961 and became the fifth African-American CPA in Michigan (and approximately the 63rd in the U.S.). In 1962, he opened his own practice in North Carolina — the first African-American to do so. He subsequently became controller of the North Carolina Fund and, later, deputy director.

In 1967, he launched the Foundation for Community Development; he became its executive director and led it for four years. He in 1972 returned to CPA practice full-time as managing partner of Garrett, Sullivan, Davenport, Bowie and Grant, CPAs.

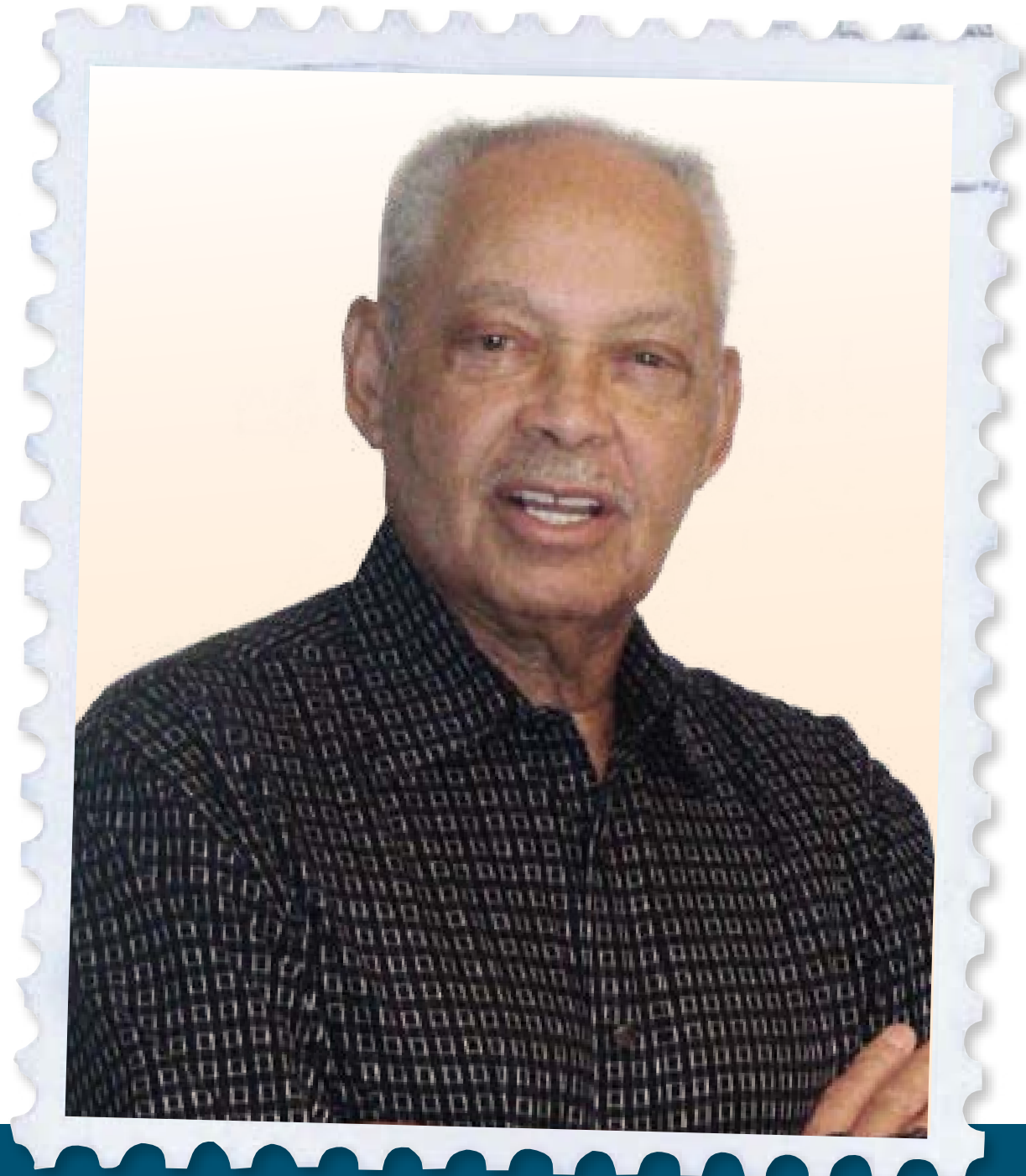
Mr. Garrett is chairman emeritus of the board of directors for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance.

He has served as president of the National Association of Minority CPA Firms, NASBA and the North Carolina Association of Minority Businesses. He also was chairman of the Minority Economic Development Advisory Committee to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

Now retired, he teaches a course, “The Legal Environment of Business,” at North Carolina Central University’s School of Business. He is a member of the Research Triangle Institute and an emeritus trustee of Duke University.

Mr. Garrett earned an A.B. from Yale University, studied accounting and business at Wayne State University, and earned a J.D. from North Carolina Central University School of Law.

“Because of my mentors, I earned my CPA certificate and became the 5th black CPA in Michigan.”



Mentors who provided guidance and inspiration...

I probably would not have become a CPA had it not been for Richard Austin, George Washington and Ernest Davenport: black CPAs and partners in a Detroit firm who hired me in 1958 although they didn’t need additional staff. Unlike nine national and local firms with whom I had sought employment, those three felt I had the potential to become a good professional. **They not only hired me, they mentored me.** Because of them, I earned my certificate in 1961 and became the fifth black CPA in Michigan (and approximately the 63rd in the nation).

Rewards of being a CPA...

Psychological and financial rewards flowed from my CPA practice. But, as important as those rewards were, **my success in the practice resulted in opportunities to contribute my talents to support a variety of worthwhile activities**, including: trustee at Duke University, treasurer of the N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development and chairman of the Parrish Street (Black Wall Street) Advisory Council. As professionals, I feel we have a responsibility to make such contributions.



Bernadine Coles Gines, CPA

In 1954, Ms. Gines became the first African-American female CPA in the state of New York and the 34th African-American CPA in the United States.

She spent most of her career in the employ of the Comptroller of the City of New York, where she held various titles in the accounting service and in the computer programming service. During the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, she worked closely with outside vendors to restructure the city's accounting records.

Since her retirement in 1991, Ms. Gines has been active as a volunteer with Marble Vision, the media ministry of Marble Collegiate Church, and as a tax counselor with the AARP.

In 1946, Ms. Gines received a B.S. in business administration from Virginia State College (now Virginia State University), ranking No. 1 in her class. In 1947 she received an MBA from NYU. She is the sister of Dr. Ruth Coles Harris, the first African-American female CPA in the state of Virginia [see page 40].

On being a minority CPA...

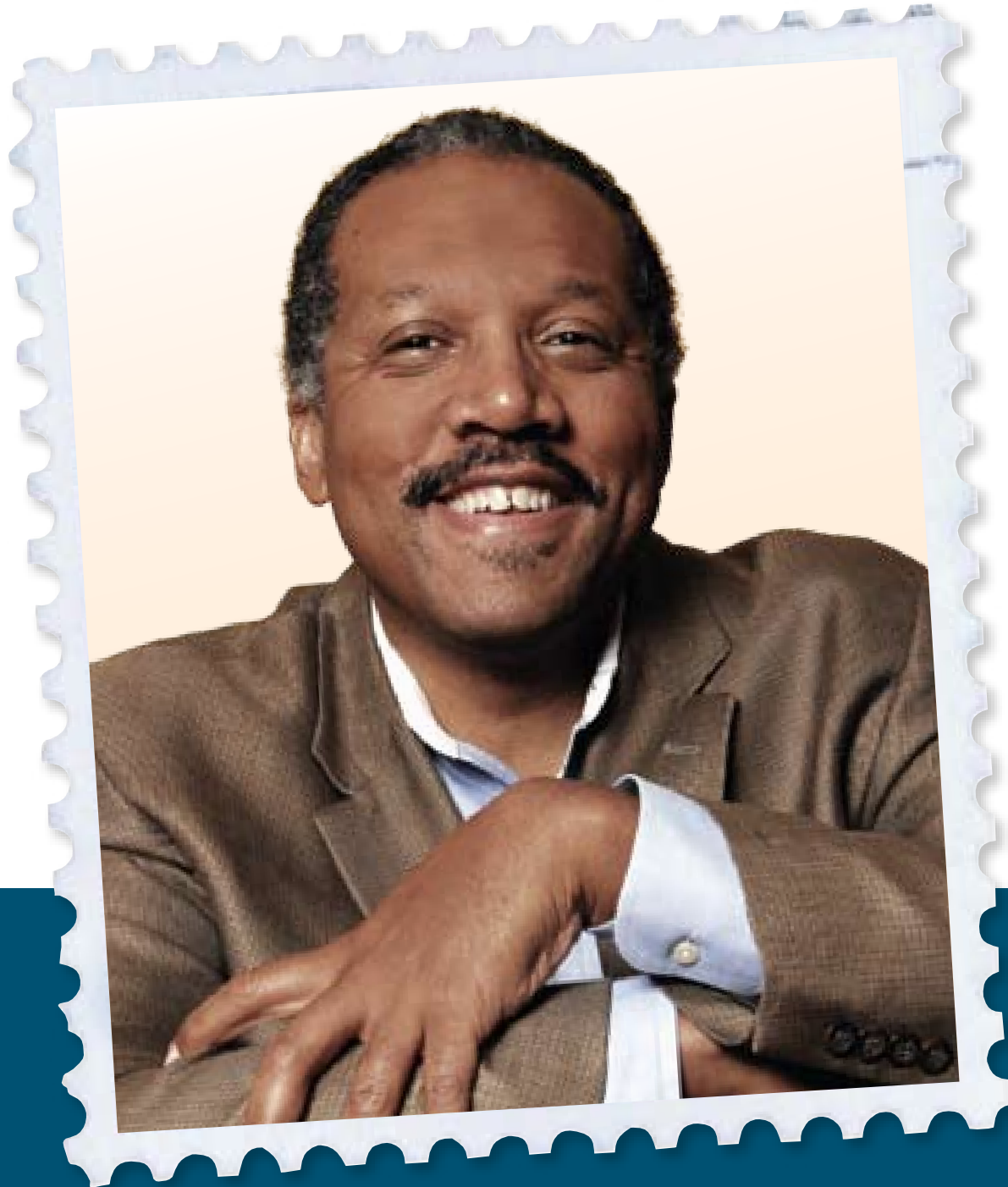
Growing up in the segregated state of Virginia was only the first obstacle I would encounter as I pursued my CPA career. I wished to earn an advanced degree, and the Commonwealth of Virginia was willing to pay my tuition at an out-of-state university rather than admit me to one of its segregated institutions. I earned my MBA from NYU and opted to remain in New York.

For two years, my applications went unanswered. Only after I moved to Queens did it become apparent this was because I'd lived in Harlem. My new address attracted responses, but when I arrived for interviews, the jobs were mysteriously unavailable. **One interviewer told me he could not hire me as an accountant, but his wife was looking for a maid.** I also encountered gender discrimination: the one African-American firm in New York City did not employ women.

I eventually met my experience requirement with two young men who overcame their initial surprise and seriously considered my application.



“Growing up in the segregated state of Virginia was only the first obstacle I would encounter as I pursued my CPA career.”



Hubert D. Glover, Ph.D., CPA

Dr. Glover is president and co-founder of REDE Inc., established in 1998. REDE, a 2003 recipient of the SBA 8a Business Development certification, provides institutional support and consulting services to federal agencies including NASA, USDA, Commerce and Department of Energy. In 2007, REDE was recognized as the NASA Johnson Space Center Minority Contractor of the Year and, in 2008, a Houston Minority Business Council Emerging 10 Business Winner.

He has more than 28 years of experience in management and leadership, including tenure as CEO of a joint venture with Shell Oil and CEO for a subsidiary of PricewaterhouseCoopers. In the public sector, he was chair of the accounting department for the School of Business at Howard University and led small businesses to provide services for major federal agencies and Fortune 500 companies.

From 2003-2008, Dr. Glover was chair of the audit committee for a publicly traded company, Modavox. He serves on the board of directors for Emmaus Services for the Aging and the Institute of Management Accountants' Foundation for Applied Research, and is council-at-large for the American Accounting Association.

Dr. Glover is a Certified Internal Auditor, Certified Management Accountant, and member of the AICPA board of directors.

On deciding to become a CPA...

I learned through my professors and membership in the National Association of Black Accountants that **being a CPA was critical to being successful** and recognized as a leader in the profession. This encouraged me to pursue my CPA, as well as credentials such as the Certified Information Technology Professional, to demonstrate my ongoing commitment to growth and development.

Advice for young accountants...

If you obtain your CPA, the opportunities are without boundaries: you can be a leader in government or in corporate America, or, like me, you can be an educator and business owner. **Join the AICPA, join your state society and give back to the profession and community.** You will develop priceless networks and experience that will continuously reward you for your hard work and commitment.

“ This is one of the **greatest professions in the world** — you truly are valued and measured by your hard work and accomplishments. ”



Ruth Coles Harris, Ed.D., CPA

Dr. Harris, distinguished professor emeritus and the first black female CPA in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is among the first 100 black CPAs in the nation. She was born in Charlottesville, VA, in 1928.

Her 48-year career as a professor and administrator was spent at Virginia Union University, where she was the first director of the Sydney Lewis School of Business. Under her leadership, it grew from a small department into a business school with 400+ students.

She received numerous awards and honors, including the Virginia State Council of Higher Education's Outstanding Faculty Award and the Fox TV Network's Black Achievers Award. In 1991, she was recognized by the AICPA and Virginia Society of CPAs as Virginia's Outstanding Accounting Educator (the first black and first female to be so honored), and later received the Distinguished Career in Accounting Award from the Virginia Society of CPAs. In 1998, Virginia Union University conferred upon her an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

She served on AICPA committees for 11 years, and on committees of the American Accounting Association, American Women's Society of CPAs and NABA. In addition, she was elected to the board of directors of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business and the board of directors of the Virginia Society of CPAs.

Dr. Harris holds a B.S. from Virginia State College (now University), an MBA from NYU and a CASE (Certificate of Advanced Study in Education) and Ed.D. degree from the College of William and Mary. She is the sister of Bernadine Coles Gines, the first African-American female CPA in New York State [see page 36].

“After 13 years of teaching, I decided to sit for the CPA exam, with the hope it would inspire my students.”



On being a minority CPA...

Being a minority in race and gender was the greatest obstacle I faced while pursuing my CPA career. In 1949, there were very few African-Americans or women in accounting. The institution where I pursued my B.S. changed from “Virginia State College for Negroes” to “Virginia State College.” But we were still excluded from certain movie theaters and public overnight accommodations. After 13 years of teaching, I decided the time had come to try to pass the exam, with the hope it would inspire my students.

A few weeks before the exam in 1962, I received a letter from the VA State Board of Accountancy with a list of hotels/motels where the exam was to be administered. I called the Board of Accountancy; my call was passed along until I was connected with the chairman. He admitted there was no place for me to stay — it had never occurred to them a black person would sit for the exam. I would have to commute to the exam site, while other candidates simply walked across the street. As upset as I was, I was determined to take the exam — and pass it. And I did.

Victor I. Igwe, DBA, CPA

Dr. Igwe is the Independent Auditor General for the City of Miami, Florida. He was appointed by the City of Miami Commission and has served in that capacity since May 1999. He has more than 20 years of experience in governmental auditing and accounting and supervises a staff of 11.

As the Independent Auditor General, he directs the activities of the City's Office of the Independent Auditor General (OIAG). The OIAG provides objective oversight through citywide audits of approximately \$1 billion of general, capital projects and special revenue funds processed by all city departments; and component units' financial transactions. The audits performed by the OIAG include financial, attestation, performance, operational, fraud, and single audits of city government, officials and independent agencies.

The audits conducted under the supervision of Dr. Igwe have resulted in several criminal indictments by the United States Attorney's and the State Attorney's offices, and have also resulted in the recovery of millions of dollars in unpaid city taxes and fees.

Dr. Igwe earned his DBA in management at Nova Southeastern University in Florida and his B.B.A. and M.A. in accounting from the University of Houston. He also is a Certified Internal Auditor.



Advice for aspiring CPAs...

Many job openings are never advertised or publicly announced — they are filled through word-of-mouth or networking. **Start developing your network with family, friends, neighbors, teachers, church, trade shows and conferences.**

My most exciting CPA job experience...

Auditing in the governmental environment embodies the concept of accountability for public resources. As the Independent Auditor General for the City of Miami, it has been **extremely rewarding to have participated in and supervised audit field works that provided road-maps for criminal indictments** and successful prosecution of several public officials for misappropriation of public funds and abuse of public trust.

“Many **job openings** are never advertised — they are filled through word-of-mouth or **networking.**”



Gregory Johnson, CPA

Mr. Johnson is executive director and chief operating officer of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. (NABA). He is responsible for managing NABA's operations, including financial management and reporting, membership services, community affairs, program development, marketing and public relations. He works with the national president and CEO to enable the board of directors to fulfill its governance function and provide direction and leadership.

He has more than 20 years of diverse business experience, and has served in key positions in public accounting and at the AICPA. He also is a member of the New York State Society of CPAs, National Black MBA Association and American Society of Association Executives.

Mr. Johnson is a graduate of Adelphi University, with a B.B.A. in accounting and an MBA. He is a CPA in the state of New York.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

In today's ultra-competitive business environment, it is essential to have credentials and skills that set you apart from other professionals. The marketplace values the CPA designation; it says to potential employers and business partners that the individual has strong ethics, technical knowledge, deep skill sets and more. Having the CPA also provides the opportunity to earn a higher salary.

A memorable career occasion...

In 2008, I had the **tremendous honor of representing NABA as a speaker at the annual convention of the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa.** This was my first trip to South Africa, and a milestone for the two organizations. It was a great experience; with my wife, I visited Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years), Soweto, Johannesburg and Durban. Also, it gave me great pride to know people on the other side of the world were galvanized by the impending U.S. presidential election.

“The **marketplace values** the CPA designation.”



Anthony G. King, CPA

Mr. King is a partner in the accounting and consulting firm King, King & Associates, P.A. He has more than 30 years of corporate finance and public accounting experience. His activities performed in the public and private environments include banking and treasury functions, corporate accounting procedures, tax accounting research and compliance, insurance and risk management functions, and evaluation and design of technology-based financial information systems.

He directs the firm's business advisory and consulting practice and is responsible for all of its information technology and management advisory engagements. He also provides CFO, tax compliance and general accounting services for many of the firm's for-profit clients in the construction, hospitality, retail and professional service industries.

Mr. King's professional affiliations include the AICPA, Maryland Association of CPAs, NABA and Information Systems Audit and Control Association.

Mr. King holds M.S. and B.S. degrees. He is a licensed CPA in Maryland, New York, New Jersey and North Carolina.

“The CPA certification is a testament to your commitment to being among the best and brightest in your field.”



Advice for aspiring CPAs...

Obtain certification as soon as possible, after completion of all state educational requirements. The CPA certification is not only an indication of satisfying specific academic requirements, but a testament to your commitment to being among the best and brightest in your field. And, data from the AICPA and state societies shows that CPAs, on average, earn 10% — 20% more than non-CPAs with comparable work experience.

On becoming a CPA ...

A career in the accounting profession was of “natural order” choice for my four siblings and me. My father, the late Benjamin L. King, Sr., was the first African-American CPA in the state of Maryland, and the 38th in the country. **During our teen years, he would encourage us to come to his office and learn “a skill”** — e.g., the 10-key calculator or the typewriter. By the time I finished high school, I was preparing tax returns and providing other services for his small-business clients.

Kenneth A. Macias, DPA, CPA

Mr. Macias is founder and chairman of the board of Macias Gini & O'Connell LLP. He has more than 30 years of experience as a CPA, including auditing corporate, nonprofit and government organizations.

Mr. Macias was in 2002 appointed as one of 15 people nationwide to serve on the AICPA's Auditing Standards Board (ASB); he helped frame the AICPA's new role in post-Enron auditing standards.

He also served on the AICPA's State and Local Government Accounting and Auditing Committee and several Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) task forces. He is an active member of the Government Finance Officers' Association and the American Society for Public Administration.

Mr. Macias continues to work as a liaison with the GASB, U.S. Government Accountability Office, Office of Management & Budget, the AICPA, California Society of CPAs and other agencies.

He currently is chairman of the board of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, which represents 700,000 Hispanic-owned businesses through a network of 65 chambers of commerce.

“I share President Obama's vision and values regarding the importance of the Hispanic business community.”



On Barack Obama...

I was invited to the annual U.S. Hispanic Chambers of Commerce Legislative Conference. I met with many governmental professionals, including President Obama and members of his cabinet and Congress. The President gave a national address on his education policies in which he emphasized the poor graduation rates and high pregnancy rates of our nation's Hispanic youth. He related these trends to Hispanic entrepreneurs and the nation's ability to recover from this poor economy. It is generally agreed that **small business will drive the recovery and Hispanic small businesses will play a huge role**. I share his vision and values regarding education and the importance of the Hispanic business community.

On being a minority CPA...

The CPA profession is conservative and mainly led by non-minority Americans. To progress as a CPA, a new candidate must **build relationships with mentors and be accepted on teams**. As a minority, it was more difficult to build these relationships; it took a great deal of tenacity. As founder of the nation's largest predominantly Latino-owned CPA firm, I feel it is important for the profession and commerce to encourage students of color to become CPAs and share their talent with minority businesses in our nation.



Betty L. Maple, CPA

Mrs. Maple is a retired partner and national director of diversity for Deloitte & Touche. Previously, she worked in the Detroit office of another international public accounting firm and was lead tax partner for various financial institutions, closely held businesses, public-sector companies and individual clients.

She is a frequent speaker on issues of diversity, tax and financial planning, leadership skills and teamwork, and has demonstrated leadership in the design, development and implementation of leading-edge diversity programs and practices that enhanced Deloitte's competitive position in the marketplace.

Mrs. Maple is a member of the AICPA and the Michigan Association of CPAs. A lifetime member of NABA, she is chair of the Accounting Career Awareness Program. She also has held numerous roles in the Detroit chapter of NABA. She serves on the St. John Hospital and Medical Center board of directors and is past vice-chair of the New St. Paul Tabernacle Headstart Agency board of directors.

She has received many honors and awards, including the Deloitte Diversity and Inclusion Initiative Trailblazer Award, the Anti-Defamation League's Woman of Achievement Award and the NABA Member Achievement Award.

Mrs. Maple is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University, where she obtained a degree in accounting.

“I learned how to get help from others and utilize the resources available to me.”

On being a minority CPA...

I recognized early in my career that being a minority makes things harder for you sometimes, but it is certainly **not an excuse for not reaching your goals**. The support I needed was not often afforded because, at the time I joined the accounting profession, only a small percentage of the CPA pool was black and the number of black partners was infinitesimal. This created limited opportunity for me to encounter black role models and mentors. I faced other challenges such as being assigned to key clients and accepted as a peer. I learned how to get help from others and utilize the resources available to me. I stayed focused and was persistent in achieving my goals.



“As a CPA, I feel as though I am **connected with the community** and adding value to society.”

Dennis N. Middleton, CPA

Mr. Middleton has offices in Oakland and Beverly Hills, California. For the last 18 years, he has operated his own independent CPA firm, providing accounting, financial and consulting advice, tax planning and tax return preparation services to businesses, individuals, estates and trusts.

Prior to establishing his own firm, he held positions with major accounting firms and publicly held companies in the areas of financial accounting and tax services. His employers have included Bank of America, Coopers & Lybrand, Ernst & Whinney and the State of California. He also was director of tax administration for American President Companies, Ltd., for four years.

Mr. Middleton is a member of the AICPA, California Society of CPAs and NABA. He holds an MBA in taxation from Golden Gate University and a B.S. in accounting from San Francisco State University.

On mentoring...

Being a mentor makes me feel like I'm **returning the favor given to me** when I was young and struggling to move forward in my career. There were a number of individuals in the profession who I could talk to, and the things I learned from these CPAs — hanging in there when you have self-doubt, finding patience, being dedicated to your work — are things I try to pass on to the people I mentor.

The most exciting CPA job...

Of all the jobs I have held, the most enjoyable is the one I have now as an independent CPA. It's primarily a tax practice, and I also provide estate and trust accounting services; hundreds of clients seek advice about tax compliance and planning. **It is so enjoyable to help clients sort through complex tax issues** and see the cloud of uncertainty lifted from their shoulders. And it's rewarding to know clients and other professionals trust my advice enough to refer other people to me on a daily basis. I feel as though I am connected with the community and adding value to society.



Lou Miramontes, CPA

Mr. Miramontes is a partner in KPMG's San Francisco office. He is the western area leader for the building, real estate and construction practice, where he is responsible for supporting the delivery and expansion of services to clients in this industry sector. He has 32 years of experience with KPMG, including 22 years as a partner.

He is a member of the AICPA, California Society of CPAs and the Construction Finance Management Association. He also is a member of the corporate advisory board for the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, and is on the board of directors for Boy Scouts of America. In addition, he is a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors and the San Francisco Planning & Urban Association.

Mr. Miramontes has a B.S. from California State University — East Bay, and is a CPA in California, Idaho and Oregon.



On becoming a CPA...

I entered the accounting profession because I wanted to go into business and was always good with numbers. My family owned real estate when I was young, and I was allowed to learn the business and to handle the books. I enjoyed this and it influenced my career choice. I also felt I had or could acquire the skills I needed to be successful. And I have **always liked working with people** — I knew the CPA profession was about working with and serving the public. Looking back, I can say this career is all I wished for and more.

On being a minority CPA...

I did not see any obstacles as a result of being a minority pursuing the CPA designation. **Being Hispanic was an asset for me** — my firm leveraged my skills and culture to benefit the firm's clients and staff in Latin America.

“ Looking back, I can say this CPA career is **all I wished for and more.** ”



Dr. Sybil C. Mobley, Ph.D., CPA

Dr. Mobley, dean emeritus of the School of Business and Industry, Florida A&M University, has served on the board of directors of numerous companies, including Anheuser-Busch Companies Inc., Hershey Foods Corporation and Sears Roebuck & Company. She served on U.S. Presidential Commissions on Industrial Competitiveness, Minority Business Development and 1000 Points of Light, and was a member of the consultant panel to the U.S. Comptroller General.

She has served on the board of directors of the International Association of Black Business Educators and the board of trustees of the Committee for Economic Development. She also has served as vice president of the American Accounting Association and the AICPA.

“Certification enabled me to break down barriers for others.”

Dr. Mobley has been special consultant to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) State Department in Africa. She also was team leader providing consultant services for USAID to industrialists in Africa and served on the team to establish Africa University in Zimbabwe.

Her most significant accomplishment has been the development of the School of Business and Industry (SBI) at Florida A&M University, where she was the founding and only dean for 40 years at the time of her retirement in 2003.

Dr. Mobley earned a B.A. from Bishop College, an MBA from Wharton School and a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois. She received honorary doctorate degrees from the Wharton School, Babson College, Bishop College, Hamilton College, Washington University, Princeton University and the University of Illinois.

On mentorship...

Serving as the founding Dean of the Florida A&M University School of Business and Industry (SBI) for 40 years and retiring in 2003 provided numerous opportunities for mentoring. Witnessing student-mentees graduate and attain top-level positions in industry, education and as CEOs and directors on major corporate boards is overwhelming, and provides such a deep sense of pride. I acknowledge that **mentoring is an ideal opportunity, a critical role and a privilege.**

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

My understanding of accounting standards and business concepts enabled me to contribute as a director on corporate boards and distinguish myself as a leader. As a female, I was in a profession dominated by men with very few minority practitioners. I obtained my certification at a time when African-Americans were not recruited by the major accounting firms. Certification enabled me to break down barriers for others and **opened the doors of opportunity** for many to enter public accounting.



Anna W. M. Mok, CPA

As regions leader, risk advisory services for Deloitte & Touche LLP, Ms. Mok works with clients in financial services and high technology; she also has life sciences, health care and consumer business experience. During her 20-year career at Deloitte, she has advised clients in their IPOs, globalization strategies, mergers and acquisitions, enterprise transformation and other corporate initiatives. In addition, she leads the company's U.S.-Southeast Asia program.

She was the first Chinese-American woman admitted to partnership at Deloitte, and has been instrumental in spearheading marketplace, diversity, leadership development and talent initiatives. She is a member of Deloitte's Board Council and CEO Advisory Partner Council and a National Diversity & Inclusion business leader.

Ms. Mok is president of the Asia America MultiTechnology Association and Ascend. She is on the executive committee and board of directors of the National U.S. Hong Kong Business Association, and is immediate past president of the Hong Kong Association of Northern California.

She has been named to the *San Francisco Business Times*' list of Most Influential Women in Business, and received the Society of Asian Women Leaders Award for Community Service, among other honors.

Ms. Mok is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business.



On becoming a CPA...

The study and experiences needed to be a CPA have shaped me as a business executive. I learned early in my career about accounting, financial statements and the contributions of CPAs to financial markets and, most important, to business enterprises. Today, I spend my time consulting with clients on a broad range of business issues including technology, human resources, finance and risk. Regardless of which area of a client's business I am focused on, I find myself going back to the basic business concepts I learned as a CPA. The CPA certification has been **a wonderful foundation** upon which to build my career.

“ The study and experiences needed to be a CPA have **shaped me as a business executive.** ”



Carmelita S. O'Neil, CPA

Mrs. O'Neil began her accounting career with Joaquin Cunanan & Co., PriceWaterhouse & Co., in Manila. After immigrating to the United States in 1973, she became senior accountant at Metromedia Producers Corporation in Hollywood, California. After two years as a general accountant, she was promoted to internal auditor in the corporate office of Metromedia, Inc. In 1986, 20th Century Fox Film Corporation acquired Metromedia's six television stations, and she was promoted to accounting director. She retired from the Fox Network after more than 31 years of service.

“I was blessed to work for firms that insisted on integrity, trust and high standards.”

Mrs. O'Neil remains active in accounting organizations such as the National Council of Philippine American Canadian Accountants (NCPACA), which honored her with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

She is also the founding adviser of the International Society of Young Filipino Accountants (ISYFA); she mobilized its scholarship program and the continuous recruitment of university students, and is a member of its mentoring committee.

Mrs. O'Neil holds a B.B.A. from the University of the East, Manila, Philippines, and is a CPA in California and the Philippines.

On being a minority CPA...

My experience is that **honest and competent accountants are always in demand, regardless of their race, creed, color or national origin.** I was blessed because I always worked for firms that insisted on personal integrity, trustworthiness and high professional standards. In both companies I worked for in the U.S., I was one of the first women of Asian origin to be promoted to a management position.

On appreciating being a CPA...

One day, I invited my daughter and her friend to have lunch with me in our studio commissary, and he was impressed when he saw that I worked in one of the major movie studios. At the time, I had a big corner office with a stunning view of the city. He asked me **what kind of profession deserved such a nice office.** I told him I was a CPA. He looked at me and my daughter and said, “I want to work in an office like this someday.” He went on to become a CPA and worked for one of the major CPA firms. Today, he is a CFO, and he and my daughter are happily married with three beautiful children.



Nerelys Ortiz, CPA

Ms. Ortiz is a manager in accounting policy and controls compliance in the Online Services Division at Microsoft. Previously, she was since 2004 an experienced senior associate in the PricewaterhouseCoopers Seattle office, where she served clients in technology, real estate and information/communication.

She is west region director on the National Board of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA), and is immediate past president and founding president of the Seattle chapter. Since the 2005 inception of that chapter, Ms. Ortiz has helped create the framework for the local board and five committees.

Ms. Ortiz received the 2006 ALPFA Most Promising Business Professional of the Year Award, as well as the Microsoft Global Impact Award. She is a member of the AICPA and the Washington State Society of CPAs.

She earned a B.A. in business administration with an emphasis in accounting, as well as an MPAcc, from the University of Washington Business School. She is a CPA in Washington State.



The most exciting CPA job...

When I was an audit associate at PwC, in Seattle, I was serving an international technology client with subsidiaries around the world. As part of their annual financial statement audit, we had to perform controls testing for Sarbanes-Oxley compliance at their largest foreign subsidiary in London. I was given the opportunity to **travel to Europe and join our lead audit manager for this overseas project**. It was one of the most exciting trips I'd ever been on! My trip to London was one of the most memorable jobs I've experienced as a CPA to date.

“Working in London was one of my most memorable CPA career experiences to date.”



Hector Perez, CPA

Mr. Perez is a director at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) in the Transaction Services Group, which provides financial due-diligence for private equity firms and corporations. He has been with PwC for more than 12 years, during which he has served in PwC's assurance practice and held a national role in the office of the CFO and vice chairman focused on driving strategic initiatives.

He is national president of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA), and has been an ALPFA member for more than 11 years. During that time, his roles have included national vice president, director-at-large on the national board of directors and executive vice president of the New York chapter. He is a member of the AICPA and the New York Society of CPAs, and also serves on the executive committee of the Health Care Chaplaincy.

Mr. Perez received his B.B.A. in public accounting from Pace University in New York. He is licensed as a CPA in New York.

An exciting project...

In 2008, my experience and language skills afforded me the opportunity to work in South America — the first time I was able to leverage my language skills in a business environment. As a CPA, I have the ability to analyze business activities, and, while conducting this work, we identified issues that resulted in our client turning away from a potentially unsound investment. **My language and analytical skills were critical** to serving our client. It was exciting and gratifying.

On being a minority...

I have never considered being a minority an obstacle to becoming a CPA. It takes dedication, hard work, attention to detail and perseverance to become a CPA. All of these factors are within my control. **I am a CPA today because I was determined to be one.** Be sure of what you want and stop at nothing to achieve it. In this profession, as with many others, it takes self-motivation and a can-do attitude.

“Be sure of what you want and **stop at nothing to achieve it.**”



Annette King Pridgen, CPA, Ph.D.

Dr. Pridgen is a CPA and certified government financial manager, and she holds a Certificate of Educational Achievement in governmental accounting from the AICPA. She has more than 15 years of experience in auditing with the Mississippi State Auditor's Office, the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office.

She is a member of the AICPA, Mississippi Society of CPAs, Academy of Accounting Historians, American Accounting Association and Association of Government Accountants. She also has been actively involved in The PhD Project.

“Sometimes, a **small nudge** is all it takes to get a **big idea moving.**”

Dr. Pridgen's primary research and teaching interests are in governmental accounting and auditing. She serves as faculty adviser for the KPMG Future Diversity Leaders Program.

In 2008, she received the Graduate Achievement Award for Ph.D. Degree in Accountancy and the Doctoral Teaching Award from the E. H. Patterson School of Accountancy at the University of Mississippi. Prior to her doctoral studies, she was for three years an instructor at Jackson State University.

Dr. Pridgen earned her Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Mississippi in and joined the faculty there in 2008. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in accounting from Jackson State University.

On being a mentor...

I served as a mentor with the Ronald McNair Scholars Program. It was very rewarding to work with undergraduate students; we developed a close working relationship, and I learned that **encouragement is critical for success**. Sometimes, a small nudge is all it takes to get a big idea moving. Early in my career, individuals like Ramona Hill and William Morehead inspired me to become a CPA. Over the years, we have kept in touch and they have offered guidance and encouragement long after our working relationship ended.

On becoming a CPA...

In the mid-1970s, accounting was a relatively new degree program for our university. The **importance of becoming a CPA was emphasized from the beginning**; however, I knew of very few black CPAs at that time. A few years after graduation, I worked for the state audit agency. Ten years after I graduated from college, I began studying for the exam. It was extremely difficult, but I persevered. Becoming a CPA opened many doors of opportunity and I moved into a management position with the state audit agency, later served as internal auditor at one of the state's largest departments, and then entered academia.

Armando G. Roman, CPA

Mr. Roman is a partner in Johnson, Harris & Goff, PLLC, a Scottsdale, Arizona-based public accounting firm. His responsibilities include tax-minimization strategies for small business owners, firm business development, public relations and marketing.

Previously, Mr. Roman founded Roman & Company CPAs, P.C., a public accounting firm that specialized in Hispanic business owners and Native American tribes. He managed the firm for 14 years prior to merging with Johnson, Harris & Goff in 2007. He also is the founding principal of wealth-management firm AXIOM Advisory Services LLC.

He also is co-founder and board director of Colonia Bank and founder of AXIOM Financial Resources, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in Native American tribes.

Mr. Roman makes frequent media appearances and has been a featured guest on National Public Radio's "Marketplace." He is a frequent guest business columnist in several Hispanic-market magazines and a former columnist for *La Opinion*, the nation's largest Spanish-language daily newspaper. He is a CPA and holds the AICPA's Personal Financial Specialist Credential.

“Networking can be intimidating, but if you step out of your comfort zone, the rewards will be great.”

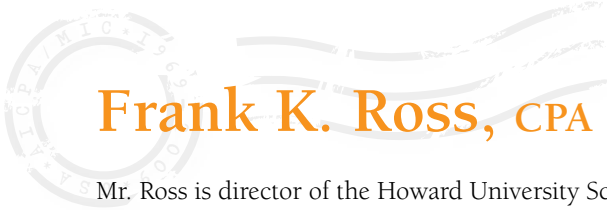


On being a minority CPA...

Being a minority never seemed to be an obstacle for me, which is one of the things I love about this profession. In this great country, everyone has an opportunity to **chase a dream**, get an education and create his or her own life. All these people need a good CPA, an adviser, to help them in their personal, professional and business lives. Clients don't care what color you are; they care that you care about them and have the experience and skills to give them good advice. With the growing numbers of minorities in this country, it makes sense that we should have more CPAs of color to serve our growing population.

On being a minority CPA...

The most enduring philosophy I have run across is that most of the obstacles in the real world come not from the work, but from people. Your success as a CPA is not **predicated on you as a minority — it is how you navigate the journey.** What matters is not the color of your skin, but the relationships you develop today that may be mutually beneficial in the future. Focus on developing a strong network and establishing resources that will keep you informed.



Frank K. Ross, CPA

Mr. Ross is director of the Howard University School of Business Center for Accounting Education and a visiting professor of accounting, auditing and ethics. After 38 years of service, he retired from KPMG LLP. Prior to retiring, he was the mid-Atlantic area managing partner for audit and risk advisory services and the managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. He also was a member of KPMG's board of directors and the chairman of the board of the KPMG Foundation.

In 1968, he was one of the nine co-founders and the first president of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA). He has written a book about his life as an immigrant and successful CPA, *Quiet Guys Can Do Great Things, Too: A Black Accountant's Success Story*.

Mr. Ross is a member of the board of directors of Pepco Holdings, Inc., and Cohen & Steers Mutual Funds Group, and serves on the board of the following not-for-profit organizations: Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund, Inc., the Greater Washington Urban League and the Howard University Chartered Middle School for Mathematics and Science. He was a member of the board of NCRIC Group, Inc., and the board of trustees of Gallaudet University.

In 2008, he was named to *Accounting Today's* list of 100 Most Influential People in Accounting and *Diversity Edge's* list of 20 National Diversity Champions.

Mr. Ross is a graduate of Long Island University, where he earned a B.S. in accounting and an MBA. LIU awarded him an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, as did the University of the District of Columbia.



Advice for aspiring CPAs...

You are smarter than you think you are. Therefore, **don't hesitate to make decisions...but first, do the necessary research**. Most of the time, you will come to a correct answer. Those times that you are wrong, it will probably be because of something you had no control over. I was given this advice as a young CPA by a partner I worked for who sensed that I knew the answer, but was afraid to make a decision. From that point on, I was never afraid to make a decision. Of course, I knew that I had to get all the facts, listen to alternatives, etc. — but in the end, I needed to be the one to make the decision and let others around me know that decision.

“ You are **smarter** than you think you are. ”



Carla Elissa Sledge, CPA

Ms. Sledge is CFO of the Charter County for Wayne, Michigan, the 11th-largest county in the world, with a budget of \$2.3 billion. Previously, she was for nine years an audit manager in Deloitte's Detroit office.

She is a member of several boards of directors, including the Michigan Association of CPAs, the Government Finance Officers Association, the Wayne County Retirement Employees' System, NABA and the AICPA.

Ms. Sledge's achievements include a NABA Award for Achievement in Government, the AICPA Outstanding CPA Government Award and numerous other awards during her 24-year finance career. She has been featured in many magazines and other media, and in 2001 was given an award for being named one of Detroit's Thirty Most Influential Women.

She holds a B.S. in accounting from Wayne State and an M.A. from Eastern Michigan University.

“What matters is not the color of your skin, but the **relationships** you develop.”



On President Obama...

In 2006, he gave a commencement ceremony at Northwestern in which he warned graduates they live in a culture that discourages empathy, wherein those in power tell us that the poor and homeless are lazy or weak, that inner-city children can't and won't learn, that innocent people being killed in distant lands are someone else's problem. Don't believe it, he said, "because you have an obligation to yourself. Because our individual salvation depends on collective salvation. And because it's only when you hitch your wagon to something larger than yourself that you will realize your true potential — and become full-grown." These are words that I have lived by, and have spoken to students of all ages. **The leadership that President Obama exhibits only serves to reinforce my own beliefs and values.**

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

Attend receptions, seminars, etc. with the intention of meeting new people and making them part of your network. When you attend a seminar or workshop, introduce yourself to the speaker, thank him/her and send a follow-up email — you now have an open channel with an expert who will be happy to be a resource for you. **Always carry business cards and give them out freely.** During the early stages of your career, all this outreach can be intimidating, but if you step out of your comfort zone, the rewards will be great.



Kecia Williams Smith, CPA

Ms. Williams is an associate director with the PCAOB in the Atlanta regional office, which she joined in 2004. She is responsible for the development, execution and administration of training for the inspections division of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board.

She formerly was with Deloitte as a senior manager in the Atlanta office. Her professional affiliations include AICPA, NABA and the Georgia Society of CPAs. In 2005, she was honored with the NABA Rising Star Award.

Her civic affiliations include Atlanta Women's Foundation and the Georgia Society of CPAs' Minority Issues Committee.

Ms. Smith is a summa cum laude graduate of NC A&T State University with a B.S. in accounting.

On being a minority CPA...

I never considered being an African-American female an obstacle to becoming a CPA. As I was researching the profession as an accounting student, I read the AICPA's "360 Degrees of Possibility" brochure and saw CPAs that looked like me, including one who graduated from my alma mater. Knowing there were others that accomplished the task made the pursuit realistic. I knew there would be challenges, but also **knew it was in the realm of possibility** to accomplish my goal of being a CPA.

The most memorable CPA job (so far)...

I was given an opportunity that, unbeknownst to me, would ultimately be widely reported in business periodicals and become known as one of the largest financial statement re-statements in the U.S. This experience called upon every **skill a CPA needs to be successful**: technical ability, focus, strong communications, adaptability and trust. It was a tremendous growth period for me and allowed me to further burnish my CPA credentials.

“I never considered being an African-American female an obstacle to becoming a CPA.”

Ralph Albert Thomas, CPA

Mr. Thomas has served as executive director of the New Jersey Society of CPAs since December 1999. Previously, he was a vice president with Citibank, N.A.'s Structured Products Group in New York City, and a manager in various accounting and financial areas of AT&T Information Systems. He also has worked at Potomac Electric Power Company and with the Washington, D.C., office of Price Waterhouse & Co. (now PwC).

He is a member of the AICPA and has served on various committees and the AICPA Council. He also is a member of NABA, for which he was national president as well as president of the Washington, D.C., chapter.

In 2002, Lehigh University's Office of Multicultural Affairs established the Ralph Albert Thomas '76 Leadership Award, presented annually to a senior student of color who has demonstrated outstanding academic and leadership skills. He also was recognized by *Business News New Jersey* as one of the top 20 African American Business People in New Jersey, and presented with a NABA Special Presidential Award for Professional Achievement.

Mr. Thomas earned his B.S. and MBA from Lehigh University.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

The best advice I would offer an aspiring CPA would be to **take and pass the exam as soon as possible!** Not taking the exam immediately after obtaining my undergraduate degree presented an obstacle for me. My other advice: manage your career from day one and seek out a mentor to assist you.

On being a minority CPA...

I did and still do believe that being a minority has been an obstacle in pursuit of a career as a CPA. When I started in the profession in the mid-1970s, preconceived notions regarding skills and capabilities of minority accountants and CPAs were widespread. Diversity initiatives and inclusion measures have been met with some success; however, there is **still much to be done to eradicate biases** and behaviors that prevent businesses from letting go of the fear of embracing diversity and fostering cultures of inclusion.



“**Manage your career from day one** and seek out a mentor to assist you.”



Celia M. Thompkins, CPA

Mrs. Thompkins is director of human resource information systems for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

She has also served as a facilitator in the business school of the University of Phoenix since 2003, and is president for the central region and a board member of NABA.

Mrs. Thompkins earned her MBA from St. Edward's University and her B.B.A. from Texas State University. In addition, she has completed 30 hours toward a Ph.D. in organizational leadership from the University of Phoenix.

Advice for aspiring CPAs...

It's not so much being a CPA that fulfills me; it's the different opportunities and **doors that have opened because I'm a CPA**. People will value your opinion and respect what you have to say when they know you are a CPA. Business is about accounting: it's the sheet of music everything is played on. If you can read music, you can help play the music. You can do anything. That's why you see accountants becoming CEOs. Everyone needs an accountant.

What I might've done differently...

I would have identified a mentor at the beginning of my career. I focused on working hard and did not intentionally build relationships. **Relationships are important to career development** and, while I didn't realize it at the time, the relationships I built throughout my career opened doors for me later in my career. Look for a mentor that has had success in their career and has high integrity. They should be passionate about helping to develop people. It's not about the title of their job but the passion they have for their job.

“**Business is about accounting:** it's the sheet of music everything is played on.”

Ronald Thompkins, CPA

Mr. Thompkins is office managing partner for TCBA Watson Rice LLP's Florida office, and a member of the firm's executive committee. He previously was an audit manager with Deloitte, and has practiced public accounting since 1972.

He is a former board member of the AICPA, and has been a member of its governing Council since 1998. He also is a member of the PCPS executive committee and a member of the AICPA's IT Section. Since 1983, he has performed quality and peer reviews for AICPA firm membership.

Mr. Thompkins is a past state president (and the first African-American president) of the Florida Institute of CPAs, and a past president and current trustee of its Educational Foundation. He also is a member of FICPA's state and local government section, current president of the FICPA PAC — South, and a member of the peer review acceptance committee.

He is a founding member of the Greater Miami chapter of NABA, and former treasurer and a founding member of the South Florida chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. He also is chair of the board for the Alliance For Aging for Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

Mr. Thompkins is a graduate of Howard University, and a CPA in Florida and Alabama.

“Growing up minority and poor gave me an edge.”



On being a minority CPA...

When I started my public accounting career in 1972, I was one of only two African-American accountants at the largest CPA firm in Miami-Dade County. The secret to my success at this large, prestigious firm was that **I never considered myself different**. My Howard University years gave me a strong technical background for this profession, and my parents' guidance and spiritual foundation gave me the ability to deal with people of all races and nationalities. If anything, growing up minority and poor gave me an edge. I loved my work and had the discipline to survive in this profession.

A memorable experience...

One of my most memorable experiences was serving as the **first African-American president of the Florida Institute of CPAs**. The professional relationships and friendships that grew out of this association led to service on various committees, and, later, as a member of the AICPA's board of directors. Once I got involved in AICPA leadership, I will never forget the opportunity to participate along with past chairs, council members, committee members and board members. These are some of the greatest minds and leaders in our profession.



Gilbert R. Vasquez, CPA

Mr. Vasquez is managing partner of Vasquez & Company LLP; he has been directing the practice since 1969. He has more than 30 years of experience in public accounting, auditing, management and financial consulting.

He was a Chapter 7 panel trustee in the central district of California, where he handled 3,000 bankruptcy cases annually. He also served as a Chapter 11 trustee, as a bankruptcy examiner and receiver. Mr. Vasquez is a member of the AICPA and the California Society of CPAs. He was president of the California State Board of Accountancy and founder of the corporate advisory board of directors of ALPFA.

Mr. Vasquez is a member of various boards of directors; he also was a member of the 1984 Olympic Organizing Committee and serves on the board of directors of its successor organization, the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles.

He received a B.S. from California State University, and is a credentialed professor of accounting.

“I know how much it would have **benefited me had there been more Latino professionals** when I started out.”

On mentoring...

Mentoring has been almost a secondary mission for me, because I know how much it would have benefited me had there been more Latino professionals when I started out. What never ceases to amaze me is that sometimes, just a few words of encouragement or advice to a young professional or student can make a big difference — and touch off that **spark of enthusiasm and determination**.

A memorable CPA experience...

One of the greatest experiences of my 40-year career was when **I founded Vasquez & Company, one of the largest minority-owned firms in Los Angeles**. It has opened the door for the careers of many others and allowed me to have a voice, as well as active participation in my community and throughout the U.S.



Lydia M. Washington, CPA

Ms. Washington is employed by the Department of the Treasury as an on-the-job instructor in the Large and Midsized Operating Division.

In 1999, she was featured in a *CPA Journal* cover article, "Diversity in the Accounting Profession."

Ms. Washington is a member of the New York State Society of CPAs, the Institute of Management Accountants and the AICPA. She also is a lifetime member of NABA.

She is on the board of directors of Community Tax Aid and is serving a second five-year term on the New York State Board for Public Accountancy.

Ms. Washington is a CPA in New York.



On being a minority CPA...

I found that being a minority made it more challenging to become a CPA. No one in my family had a business background. But **I was very determined, so I never gave up** on my dream. I decided to sit and pass all parts of the exam as soon as possible without any breaks. This made me more focused in my studies. I gave up my social life while studying for the exam; it was more important for me to complete the exam as quickly as possible so I could start my career.

The most memorable CPA job experience...

The most enjoyable employer I've worked for is my current one, the United States Treasury. It's interesting to learn about different businesses and their accounting treatment for different transactions. My position allows me to interact with many different CPAs, and I attend National NASBA meetings. This forum for the 55 boards of accountancy has **expanded my knowledge** of accountancy legislation and the concerns that CPAs face in other licensing jurisdictions.

“It was important for me to complete the CPA exam as quickly as possible so I could **start my career.**”



George Willie, CPA

Mr. Willie is managing partner of Bert Smith & Co. and has more than 32 years of public accounting experience in the audits of federal, state and local governments; not-for-profit, healthcare and educational institutions; and private organizations.

He is a member of the AICPA's Private Companies Practice Section executive committee, the U.S. Government Accountability Office's advisory council on government auditing standards, the advisory council for Kogod School of Business at American University, and the board of visitors for Howard University School of Business. He also has served as chair of the AICPA Minority Initiatives Committee, and served on the AICPA Nominations committee.

Mr. Willie has been a member of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc., since 1974, and is past chairman of the Division of Firms. He has testified before regulatory and legislative bodies, most recently the Treasury Department's Advisory Committee on the Auditing Profession.

He has been named one of the "Top 100 Most Influential Practitioners" by *CPA Magazine*, and received similar recognition from *Accounting Today*.

A former assistant professor of accounting at Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia, Mr. Willie holds a B.B.A. in accounting from Howard University and an MBA in finance from the American University.

“The profession provides a tremendous opportunity to have a positive influence on young African-Americans.”



On the benefits of CPA certification...

The CPA profession, which is woefully lacking in minority representation, offers **unequaled opportunities for leadership**. Consider the impact on diversity, inclusion in corporate boardrooms and the transformation in academia, were we able to increase African-American representation to 10% of the CPA profession. We have known for a long time that the profession provides for a great standard of living, professional mobility and a tremendous opportunity to serve our communities and to be positive influences on young African-Americans.

On being a minority CPA...

I never thought that being a minority was an obstacle in becoming a CPA. I believe if one continually strives to be technically good, there can be **no obstacle in the pursuit of one's profession**. The obstacle has been in the marketplace, in terms of growth and acceptance of the minority CPA firms and the perception that "minority" means "substandard." The challenge comes when educated, talented minority professionals get trumped by [firms of a larger] size, and when "big enough" is the label that remains a fixed and constant in the identity of the minority firm.



Corrine Wilson, CPA

Ms. Wilson is business assurance senior manager for Moss Adams LLP. She has 28 years of experience as a financial professional, including eight years working with tribal governments in public accounting and 13 years as a successful CFO for tribes in Nevada and Arizona.

She also is an enrolled member of the Ft. McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone tribe. She has coordinated numerous tribal gaming audits for various tribes, as well as tribal enterprises and governments.

Ms. Wilson for six years represented the Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA) on the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council. She also was a member of the team that published NAFOA's *Tribal Gaming Guide to Accounting and Financial Reporting* (2007). She serves on the board of NAFOA as first vice president.

On becoming a CPA...

I wanted to obtain my CPA so I could show and encourage other American Indians that our own people can assist in strengthening tribal sovereignty through viable financial practices (there are very few American Indian CPAs in the U.S.). I believe I have a responsibility to assist other Indian people into this profession, and further assist our tribes and their entities through my professional work and outreach efforts. **This profession can take you many places and enrich your life if you have the passion for it.**

The benefits of CPA certification...

As a CPA, your work tells the real story behind an entity — one that not a lot of people readily see or understand — and your work is of value to the entity and those that govern or regulate it. Being a CPA opens the doors to so many different types of opportunities. As you progress in your career, you can work in various financial or business industries until you find the one that stirs your passion and talents.

“Being a CPA **opens the door** to so many different types of opportunities.”



The AICPA Minority Initiatives Committee 40 years and counting...

1969

AICPA Council passes resolution to integrate the accounting profession: the **Minority Recruitment and Equal Opportunity Committee** and **Accounting Education Fund for Disadvantaged Students** are formed to “address the significant lack of representation by African-American CPAs.”

Scholarships for **Minority Accounting Students** begin.

1975

AICPA Fellowship for Minority Doctoral Students is created.

The **Visiting Fellows Program** begins.

The **Faculty Summer Seminar** program begins (through 2001).

1992

The **Elliot-KPMG Peat Marwick/AICPA Scholarship** program is started to provide funding to African-American accounting doctoral students.

Committee name is changed to the **Minority Educational Initiatives Committee**.

1994

Committee name changes to **Minority Initiatives Committee**.

1995

The **Accounting Education Fund for Disadvantaged Students** name is changed to the **Education Fund for Minority Accounting Students**.

First **Accounting Scholars Leadership Workshop** takes place.

1997

College Residency Grants program begins (through 2005).

1998

AICPA partners with KPMG’s **The PhD Project**.

1999

“**Be a Star in Business, Be a CPA**” advertising campaign is launched.

2000

Graduating High School Senior Scholarship program is begun to provide awards to graduating high school seniors (through 2004).

2001

Faculty development **Best Papers** program begins.

AAA-AICPA Faculty Delegate program begins.

2002

Start Here. Go Places. student website is launched.

MIC public service announcements run on **Radio One Network**.

“**Pillars of Success**” video is produced.

2005

MIC core purpose becomes: “**To assist minorities to become CPAs and to encourage their advancement and retention within the accounting profession.**”

MIC partners with the **AAA Diversity Section**.

MIC funds **Howard University Center for Accounting Education**.

Stuart Kessler Scholarship is formed.

2009

MIC 40th Anniversary Celebration: Launch of **CPAs of Color: Celebrating 40 Years** eBook.

MIC wins **Service Excellence Award** from AAA - Diversity Section.

Leadership Workshop Alumni program begins.

2008

NASBA 120-150 Hour Paper is drafted.

2007

U.S. Department of Treasury testimony.

MIC Chairs

- 1971-1972 Lincoln Harrison
- 1972-1973 William Gifford
- 1973-1974 Gilbert Vasquez
- 1974-1975 John Weidon
- 1975-1977 Ernest Davenport
- 1977-1978 Daniel Dennis, Sr.
- 1978-1979 Benjamin Newhouse
- 1979-1982 Clarence Davis
- 1982-1985 James E. Armstrong
- 1985-1988 Quiester Craig
- 1988-1992 Alcide Tervalon, Jr.

- 1992-1995 Miguel Cabrera
- 1995-1997 Kenneth Paige
- 1997-2000 Brenda Birkett
- 2000-2003 George Willie
- 2003-2006 John Price
- 2006-2009 Geneva Gee Fulbright



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About the AICPA

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (aicpa.org) is the premier national professional association of Certified Public Accountants in the United States, with more than 350,000 members in business and industry, public practice, government and education. The AICPA and its predecessors have been serving the accounting profession since 1887.

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