

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs



KNOWLEDGEABLE AND SKILLED ACCOUNTANTS AND FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS ARE PARTICULARLY NEEDED TODAY to help our businesses respond and react to economic fluctuations caused by the world's issues. Those of us living and working in Los Angeles are fortunate to have access to an impressive and diverse selection of financial professionals.

Los Angeles is truly a national leader when it comes to diversity in business – and the field of accounting is no exception. There are some particularly stellar CPAs in the LA region who happen to be minorities. Our special section, “Leaders of Influence: Minority CPAs” contains an alphabetical list of many of our region’s outstanding accountants, along with some basic information about their careers, practices and some relevant recent accomplishments they’ve achieved.

Congratulations to the superb professionals who made the list this year and thank you for working to keep the people and businesses of Los Angeles on the right fiscal track.

Methodology: The professionals featured in these pages did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from nomination materials submitted to the Los Angeles Business Journal. Those selected for inclusion were reviewed by the editorial department and chosen based on a demonstration of impact made on the profession and on the Los Angeles community.

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs

**CHERYL CALHOUN**

Managing Director
CBIZ & MHM

As managing director at CBIZ MHM Los Angeles, Cheryl Calhoun brings more than 30 years of experience and expertise to all facets of the entertainment industry. She represents talent, production companies, entertainment service companies, media service companies, publishing companies and executives in varied tax and business matters.

Calhoun is also a co-leader of CBIZ's Multi-Family Office and Virtual Family Office Practices. In addition, she specializes in assisting not-for-profit organizations – combining her talent for business and tax issues with her desire to contribute and support causes in the community. Some of her most successful career accomplishments have come to fruition in the last few years. She recently became involved as a coach in CBIZ's Emerging Managing Director Academy and is working hard to shape the future of the company through its up-and-coming leaders.

**JOSE CAMPOS**

Audit & Assurance Partner | Health Care
Deloitte & Touche LLP

Jose Campos has over 30 years of experience serving the healthcare and life sciences industry, including large corporate engagements, middle market and emerging growth companies. His clients cover diverse sectors in the industry including health insurance, hospital systems, diagnostic imaging, and other health sciences. As a health care audit & assurance partner at Deloitte & Touche LLP, Campos is responsible for leading the execution of quality audits, assisting audit committees in fulfilling their governance obligations, international expansion, and mergers and acquisition.

Campos was appointed by Governor Brown to the California Board of Accountancy (CBA), and previously served terms as president and vice president. Campos also served for twelve years on the Board of Directors and as chairman of the Finance Committee of AltaMed Health Services, and served as a diversity leader at Deloitte.

**CRISTY CANIEDA**

Partner
Vasquez + Company LLP

Cristy Canieda, CPA, CGMA manages Vasquez + Company LLP local government and Yellow Book audit practice. She also oversees its offshore operations providing accounting outsourcing, internal audit, and audit and administrative support services.

Canieda specializes in audit and consulting for local government agencies, including cities, water districts, housing, and public financing authorities, transportation agencies, and other special districts. Her more than 20 years of public accounting and consulting experience encompasses all aspects of financial and compliance audits, including internal control reviews and Uniform Guidance and program-specific audits, as well as comprehensive annual financial report preparation and compliance reviews. Canieda has been a long-time partner of Vasquez + Company LLP, as an experienced auditor and public accountant, she has done it all from consulting for government agencies, and program-specific audits to comprehensive financial reports and compliance reviews.

**EVONNE CHEN**

Principal
GHJ

Evonne Zhiyun Chen has over nine years of accounting experience and leads GHJ's Corporate Tax Practice. She focuses on corporate tax compliance and consulting across a range of industries including manufacturing and distribution, food and beverage, and health and wellness. She also has deep expertise in income tax accounting under both U.S. GAAP and IFRS standards.

Chen joined GHJ's Tax Practice in 2013 and has experience in all aspects of corporate tax with extensive experience in large multi-national corporations with domestic, international and multi-state tax filings. She works closely with clients to provide proactive tax planning, and her attention to detail delivers consistently high-quality work product. Her experience includes providing U.S. inbound tax due diligence, transaction planning and deal structure optimization to cross-border clients. Chen is known for her habit of checking in with clients regularly, addressing any questions that may arise.

**KEITH HAMASAKI, CPA**

Principal of Assurance & Advisory and Leader
of KROST Business Intelligence Services

2022 MINORITY CPA OF INFLUENCE - KEITH HAMASAKI

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LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs

Keith's hard work and dedication to the needs of his clients have been hallmarks of his time at KROST, and as the industry leader for KBI he has taken his client service to the next level.

In implementing KBI, Keith and his team of analysts have leveraged raw data from client systems into dynamic reports that provide real insights catered to the company and their industry.

Executives across industries are now using KBI to analyze key performance indicators effectively, and without taking hours to compile information across multiple reporting systems. Visit KROSTCPAs.com/services/krost-business-intelligence to schedule a demonstration with Keith and see what KBI can provide for your practice.

We are proud to recognize Keith as an integral member of the KROST team and of the Los Angeles minority CPA community.

[KROSTCPAs.COM](https://KROSTCPAs.com) | CONNECT WITH KEITH: KEITH.HAMASAKI@KROSTCPAs.COM

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs

**ALEXANDRA CHERNYAK**

Partner
Miller Kaplan

Alexandra (Alex) Chernyak has more than 18 years of public accounting experience, focusing primarily on labor organizations and employee benefit plans. Her expertise includes auditing and accounting services, agency fee/financial core payer/Beck reports. Chernyak is responsible for a full range of services, including managing Department of Labor Reports, and Federal and State Information Returns. She handles engagements with many of Miller Kaplan's larger, more complex labor organizations.

Chernyak's ability to continue serving her clients – without interruptions – during a global pandemic is just the latest example of the continuity of service she has always provided. Over the years, clients have come to know that they can count on her to deliver results – on time – and that has not changed throughout the pandemic. Internally, Chernyak's leadership is equally valued. As co-chair of the firm's HR committee, she helps promote an effective work/life balance and mentors staff.

**KAMI COHEN**

Partner
Miller Kaplan

Kami Cohen has worked in public accounting for more than 20 years and specializes in financial statement audits for employee benefit plans and labor organizations. He consults on internal control matters and provides guidance to his clients on filing and reporting compliance requirements and best practices.

In addition to his work with clients, Cohen serves on Miller Kaplan's Engagement Quality Control Review Committee where he is engaged in identifying audit deficiencies and evaluating audit quality before the report is issued. Cohen is also the co-chairperson for the firm's Human Resources Committee and participates in HR management, evaluating employee performance, benefits, and incentives, including the quality of work life. Cohen is designated as a Chartered Global Management Accountant, bestowed by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

**JIGNA DOSHI**

Partner
Baker Tilly US, LLP

Jigna Doshi has more than 17 years of public tax and accounting experience, providing clients with tailored compliance and consulting services. She has extensive experience in federal and multi-state compliance, tax planning, research and analysis, merger & acquisitions, and tax restructuring. The industries she serves include manufacturing & distribution, retail, real estate, media & technology, service, restaurant, and nonprofit.

Doshi is involved in many different aspects of the firm's growth. She is the office risk leader and is charged with managing and mitigating risks inherent of our profession. In addition, she not only holds a key leadership role in the firm's Private Wealth Strategy but also champions the entire Western region. She was recently named to a leadership role within the firm's Indian Services team tasked with growing specialty tax practice dedicated to outbound and inbound Indian businesses.

**KAYO M. ELKNER**

Director
Prager Metis International

Kayo M. Elkner was born in Yamagata, Japan and was raised in Tokyo. Elkner has a strong academic background and a no-nonsense approach which helped shape her adulthood. After high school graduation, she decided to take a leap of faith, and she traveled to the U.S and enrolled at Seattle University, where she learned English and received a B.S. in finance. She later obtained her CPA certification in Illinois and launched her career.

Elkner currently guides the Nagano Morita Division of Prager Metis to help bridge two cultures. She provides accounting and tax services to individuals, small-and-medium-sized privately held businesses, and small-and-medium-sized closely held and public corporations. She has prepared individual, corporate, S corporations, and partnership income tax returns for clients in the U.S. and internationally, including Japanese clients headquartered in Hawaii and California.

Deloitte.

Congratulations

We are proud to recognize our accomplished leaders:

Deloitte congratulates **Jose Campos**, **Venisa Ibarra**, **Jose Sarabia**, and all other individuals named as **Leaders of Influence: Minority CPAs** by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*.

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Jose Campos
Audit & Assurance
Partner
Deloitte & Touche LLP

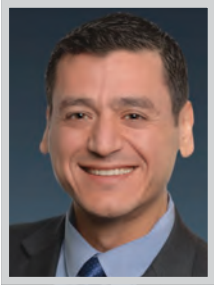


Venisa Ibarra
Audit & Assurance
Managing Director
Deloitte & Touche LLP



Jose Sarabia
Audit & Assurance
Partner
Deloitte & Touche LLP

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs

**MOHAMED GHATTAS**

Partner
CohnReznick

Mohamed Ghattas, CPA, is a partner in the tax practice of CohnReznick's Los Angeles office. With more than 16 years of experience, he provides tax and business consulting services concerning numerous facets of partnership and real estate taxation, as well as tax structuring and compliance for closely held businesses and their owners. He is also actively involved in the Private Client Services group, with a focus on servicing high net-worth individuals to meet their business, family, and financial and lifestyle needs.

Ghattas has also served privately held and public companies, both startups and those in the middle market. He works with clients in a variety of industries with a focus on commercial and residential real estate, retail and consumer products and the emerging cannabis market. He is also a member of the NHM Professional Advisors Council, where he incorporates charitable gift planning services into his professional practices.

**KEITH HAMASAKI**

Director
Krost

Keith Hamasaki, CPA, is passionate about empowering others so they can to help them build a better future for themselves. As a director at KROST, he brings together a strong and cohesive team to provide his clients value-added experience through collaborative partnership. With over a decade of experience, Hamasaki specializes in audit and business advisory services to emerging and middle market companies in areas such as attestation, process improvement, internal controls, technical GAAP accounting implementation and procedural review assessments.

Hamasaki has developed an expertise in a variety of industries including real estate and construction, financial services, technology, digital media, restaurants, hospitality, not-for-profit organizations, and employee benefit plans. Further, he leads the firm's Manufacturing and Distribution Industry Group and co-champions the data analytics practice called KROST Business Intelligence that allows middle market companies translate their data into meaningful insights.

**CATHY HYODO**

Office Managing Partner and Member
of Partnership Board
Grant Thornton LLP

Askilled accountant with over 20 years of leadership experience, Cathy Hyodo is a member of Grant Thornton's Partnership Board and the office managing partner for the firm's Los Angeles office. She has also led Grant Thornton's Los Angeles Technology Industry Practice (TIP) and served as a member of the firm's national TIP leadership team. In addition to overseeing hundreds of staff members, Hyodo supports clients in the digital media, e-commerce, telecommunications and software industries.

Hyodo remembers doing her homework on her brother's Commodore 64 – and being amazed. With each keystroke, she marveled at the innovation that made this machine possible. And in the decades since, her passion for innovation has only grown. Over the course of a 27-year accounting career, she has helped tech start-ups and Fortune 100 companies achieve widespread success by knowing how to navigate current and future challenges.

**VENISA IBARRA**

Audit & Assurance Managing Director |
Aerospace & Defense
Deloitte & Touche LLP

Venisa Ibarra is an audit managing director with over 25 years of audit experience in the aerospace and defense, technology, and manufacturing industries. Her broad experience includes serving Fortune 500 companies as well emerging growth companies. She is an industry leader within the aerospace and defense audit practice focused on serving clients of varying size and complexity within the growing space sector locally and in the West Region.

Ibarra also has extensive experience in dealing with complex accounting issues and internal control matters, particularly relating to revenue recognition and purchase accounting, as well as experience with initial public offerings, private and public debt financing, mergers and acquisitions, SEC registration statements and related compliance matters. She is a trusted leader and mentor that is known for her sense of community and collaborative approach to problem solving.

Congratulations! Kayo M. Elkner

We are proud of *your*
spotlight in
Leaders of Influence:
Minority CPAs in the
Los Angeles Business Journal



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LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAs



ALBERT JANG
Managing Partner
 Kim & Lee, LLP

Albert Jang has been with Kim & Lee since 1994. He has been successful in leading Kim & Lee and has also expanded the firm's business to Korea, Vietnam, Canada and Mexico during his tenure. His leadership with the firm has led the firm to establish its consulting division, KL Global Consulting, LLC and also its insurance division, KL Financial & Insurance Services, LLC. With its division, the firm has grown to be one stop service firm for local businesses. His leadership has changed the firm's value from a traditional accounting practice to a value-added suite of advisory services, including personal financial planning.

Jang is a professional leader for the community who does not settle with status quo. Rather, he is a leader who understands and foresees the future requirements for the ever-evolving and changing accounting industry. He also influences and helps other firms' digital transformation to prepare for the future.



KIMBERLY JIN
Partner
 Baker Tilly US, LLP

Kimberly Jin's journey first started 30 years ago when she arrived in the United States to attend University of California, Los Angeles as a graduate student enrolled in the Department of Biology on a scholarship and fellowship provided by the institution. While studying biology, Jin came across a free accounting software that came with a computer purchase, and she realized this was the actual profession for her.

Jin has now been preparing tax returns and advising clients for over 20 years. Her clients are individuals, partnerships, corporations, trusts and foundations. Jin has a deep-rooted interest in environmental affairs and their impact on our day-to-day life. The unrelenting draught and wildfire in California have caused so much loss and disruption, she is actively working to start a movement within the firm to battle the ongoing issues in a practical level.



KAREN JONG
Tax Partner
 RSM US LLP

Karen Jong is a tax partner in the Los Angeles office of RSM. She has more than 30 years of experience in providing federal and state tax consulting and compliance services to both privately and publicly held middle market companies. Jong works with the middle market leaders to learn about their business operations and challenges to identify tax opportunities to increase profits to their bottom line. She serves clients in a wide range of industries including manufacturing, wholesale distribution, aerospace, transportation and logistics, technology, media and communications.

As the firm's West Region industrial industry champion, Jong is an industrial thought leader, serving many of RSM's clients in this sector, and helps drive growth within this industry. And, previously as West Region leader of culture, diversity & inclusion, In this former leadership position, she oversaw the 11 employee networking groups and all of the regional culture and diversity initiatives.



HARRY LIN
CPA, Owner & CEO/President
 Harry C. Lin, CPA a Professional Corporation

Harry C. Lin started Harry C. Lin, CPA A Professional Corporation in Los Angeles in 1992. Prior to starting his own firm, Lin spent several years at various accounting firms in California and Taiwan which include prominent Los Angeles area firm Gleicher, Tilley & Leonard and one of the Big Eight accounting firms Price Waterhouse in Taiwan.

Lin is well-known for his IRS advocacy expertise and international tax planning. Lin was one of the major shareholders in Grand Foremost, Inc. which supplied the Southern California hospitality industry. Lin also specializes in hotel and retail rental real estate. Lin was extremely instrumental in the founding of the Sino-American CPAs Association, which is one of the most active Chinese American civil organizations in Los Angeles and has been named emeritus founding chairman since 1993.



We are proud to congratulate our colleague

Cheryl Calhoun
 Managing Director

on being recognized by the

LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL AS A

2022 Leader of Influence:
MINORITY CPAs



MHM (Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C.) is an independent CPA firm that provides audit, review and other attest services, and works closely with CBIZ, a business consulting, tax and financial services provider. CBIZ and MHM are members of Kreston Global, a worldwide network of independent accounting firms.

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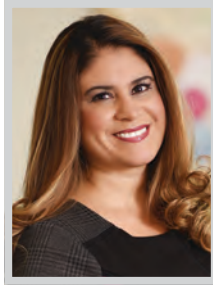
**MICHAEL LIN**

CPA, Managing Director

Harry C. Lin, CPA a Professional Corporation

Michael Lin works closely with Harry C. Lin to ensure that all of Harry C. Lin, CPA a Professional Corporation professionals understand the business of the firm's clients, in order to help them better identify their business and financial needs. Lin studied abroad at National Taiwan University in 2011 and Peking University in 2012. Lin is currently working on obtaining his Master of Business Taxation at University of Southern California.

Prior to working at Harry C. Lin, CPA A Professional Corporation, Lin gained experience in a diverse range of industries performing assurance engagements at Moss Adams and PricewaterhouseCoopers. Lin's experience ensures that clients see the results they deserve by having trusted advisors who work quickly and efficiently. Lin is also actively involved in the Sino-American CPAs Association and is working closely with the members of the organization to ensure the next generation of Chinese Americans will succeed in their careers.

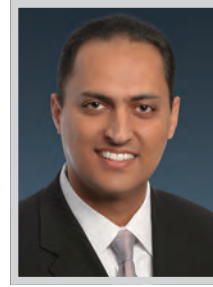
**KARLA LUNA**

Tax Partner

BPM LLP

BPM's Karla Luna Chavez has been a steady riser in the tax community for more than 20 years. Working extensively with high-net-worth individuals, she guides them through the process of optimizing their income tax positions and decreasing their tax liability to help preserve their wealth. Her diligence in staying up to date with the most current and advantageous tax laws enables her to provide significant value. She consistently identifies tax credits and industry-specific matters that result in meaningful tax savings for her clients.

Luna works with clients in a variety of industries, including manufacturing, retail, professional services and entertainment. Her specialty lies in the areas of tax planning, consulting and compliance for privately held companies (corporations, S corporations and partnerships), trusts and estates, and high-net-worth families and their entities. She was a tax partner with Gumbiner Savett, which combined with BPM in 2021.

**ZUBIN MISTRY**

Partner

CohnReznick LLP

Zubin D. Mistry, CPA, serves as an audit partner in CohnReznick's Los Angeles office and co-leads the office's Real Estate practice. Mistry has more than 25 years of experience in serving privately held and public companies in the emerging and middle markets, as well as mature companies in the Fortune 100. His public accounting and private sector experience encompasses audit, accounting, and other relevant due diligence and financial reporting. Mistry specializes in serving variety of real estate clients, including commercial, residential, affordable housing, retail and traded and non-traded REITs.

Mistry has helped many clients, including a well-known privately held real estate company in the Los Angeles area, through his adept provision of services and coordination of their audit, tax, and advisory related needs. Through his guidance, Mistry provides critical support of clients' growth and strategic initiatives and, as a result, is a trusted business advisor to many.

**SATPAL NAGPAL**

Partner

GHJ

Satpal Nagpal, CPA, is GHJ's Audit and Assurance Practice leader and has more than 20 years of public accounting experience providing audit, accounting and business consulting services. He comes from Mumbai, India and is fluent in Hindi and Punjabi. Nagpal is a key member of the firm's Waste Management Group and Nonprofit Practice, but Nagpal's vast industry experience extends to distribution, real estate and home building, e-commerce and entertainment.

In addition to helping clients grow their businesses and assisting them on complex audit issues, Nagpal has led the implementation of new technologies that have helped the Audit and Assurance Practice become more efficient and effective. When the pandemic hit, the firm relied heavily on Nagpal's expertise to develop a remote audit framework. Nagpal is also known for encouraging collaboration between the various groups and people at the firm.



We are stronger when we celebrate and value the identities, perspectives and contributions of everyone.

Congratulations to Kimberly Jin and Jigna Doshi on being named Leaders of Influence: Minority CPAs by the Los Angeles Business Journal. By creating an environment where every team member feels seen, heard, valued and connected, these two women are living proof that the work put in today leads to truly amazing tomorrows.

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAS

**LIZBETH NEVAREZ**

Managing Director
GHJ

As a champion of women in the workplace, an emerging business development leader and trailblazer in the Los Angeles nonprofit community, Lizbeth Nevarez is truly a leader of influence. Born in Mexico, she moved to the U.S. at five. She was a recipient of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allowed her to be the first in her family to finish college and gain employment after graduation. She found her first accounting job at GHJ in 2008, and has become a pivotal member of the firm.

Nevarez leads GHJ's Nonprofit Tax Practice, which offers a range of tax services to tax-exempt entities. In this role, she leads a dedicated team of experienced tax professionals to provide advisory and compliance services. She specializes in providing complex tax services for nonprofits and tax-exempt entities and is an expert on how tax reforms are impacting nonprofits.

**ANDY PARK**

Managing Partner, Greater Los Angeles
EY

As the EY Los Angeles office managing partner, Andy Park leads a dynamic group of 2,300 professionals, while driving growth and advancing EY's inclusive, people-focused culture. He has nearly two decades of experience working with fast-growing pre-IPO entities and large multinational organizations in the technology, retail and consumer products, media & entertainment, healthcare, financial, automotive, manufacturing, and real estate industries. He has deep fluency in advising high-growth, pre-IPO companies on tax issues and he is passionate about fueling the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

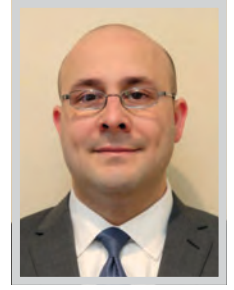
As co-director for the Entrepreneur Of The Year Greater Los Angeles program, Park is committed to recognizing, celebrating and connecting the innovators, creators and leaders who are the backbone of our economy. As a Korean-American and first-generation college graduate, Park is also passionate about the power of education and opportunity for underserved students.

**LORI ROCK**

Partner
Marcum LLP

Lori Rock, CPA, MST is the partner in charge of tax services for Marcum LLP's Los Angeles office. Rock made partner in September 2017 and has been a mentor and role model for young accounting professionals at the firm. Rock is a frequent presenter at Marcum's annual tax updates which are put on for clients and service providers. She is often asked to speak on various tax issues and has become the go-to partner for clients and colleagues with complex questions.

Rock joined the firm in 2010 and provides tax compliance and business consulting services to publicly traded and privately held companies in various industries, including retail, distribution, manufacturing, technology and service industries. She has extensive experience with accounting for income taxes as well as accounting for uncertainty in income taxes. She is an active member of the firm's State & Local Tax (SALT) and Corporate Tax Services groups.

**JOSE SARABIA**

Audit & Assurance Partner | Financial Services
Deloitte & Touche LLP

Jose Sarabia is an audit partner in the Deloitte & Touche Financial Services group based in Los Angeles, with 23 years of experience. In that time, he has served some of the firm's most prominent financial services clients. Sarabia has served large public and private clients in the asset management and securities industries. He has extensive experience auditing investment funds, including mutual funds, business development companies, hedge funds, fund of funds, private equity funds, and venture capital funds as well as investment advisers and broker-dealers. In addition to financial statement audits, Sarabia also has extensive experience with examinations of internal controls over financial reporting.

Sarabia is a mentor and coach to firm practitioners and members of the community, and is a frequent speaker to diverse business students at local community colleges and universities. He has served on the boards of Para Los Niños at Walden School.

**Helena Song**

Senior Manager, Assurance

**Karla Luna**

Partner, Tax

Aspire to Greatness

We proudly congratulate **Helena Song, Karla Luna** and all the CPAs recognized among the **2022 Leaders of Influence: Minority CPAs** by the Los Angeles Business Journal who are making a positive impact.

At BPM, we are honored to work with the brightest and most talented professionals in the industry. Their leadership and dedication to servicing our clients truly set us apart - Because People Matter.

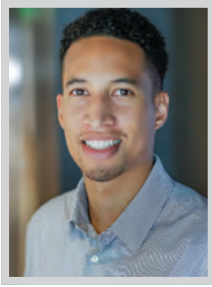
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LEADERS OF INFLUENCE: MINORITY CPAS



KIYOSHI WILLIAM SMITH
Supervising Senior
Armanino

Kiyoshi William Smith has been an emerging leader at Armanino since he joined the firm. He is currently a tax manager specializing in the cannabis industry, providing tax compliance for privately held businesses and individuals. This pivot comes after establishing his career in US and global transfer pricing and domestic tax compliance.

Since joining Armanino, Smith has played a leading role in building out the firm's cannabis non-income tax practice, serves as a core member of the firm's cannabis practice in the marketplace within the industry and has demonstrated industry leadership through sharing his expertise. For example, he recently hosted a business license and compliance event focused on getting basic compliance information out to social equity and smaller providers in the cannabis space. Smith has been a key leader and advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion as part of Armanino's IDEAL (Inclusion of Diverse Employees and Leaders) team.



HELENA SONG
Senior Manager
BPM LLP

With more than 17 years of public accounting experience, Helena Song is a senior manager in BPM's Assurance practice. She works with both SEC-registered and privately held entities across numerous industry sectors and assists her clients with their accounting issues, valuing the relationships built and the experiences gained along the way.

Song has extensive experience leading financial statements audits, due diligence investigations, and special reports. With a specialty in real estate accounting, she handles large audit engagements for real estate investment funds, residential and commercial real estate builders, and operators. She also serves clients in other industry sectors, such as private equity, technology, manufacturing, and distribution. Helena was previously a principal with Gumbiner Savett Inc. before that firm joined its practice with BPM in 2021. Fluent in Mandarin, Song spearheaded Gumbiner's China-focused efforts with pre-IPO clients prior to joining BPM.



GILBERT VASQUEZ
Managing Partner
Vasquez + Company LLP

Gilbert R. Vasquez, CPA is founder and managing partner of Vasquez + Company LLP since its founding in 1981 and oversees the firm's direction, strategic planning, administration, marketing, and major account management. He has led successful practices in public accounting, auditing, taxation, and financial consulting for nearly five decades. He guided the firm's growth from a one-person consultancy into the largest Latino-owned CPA firm in California.

Vasquez was the first minority board member of the California Board of Accountancy, which is responsible for regulating more than 100,000 CPAs, and later served as president. He also is a former Chapter 7 bankruptcy trustee for the Central District of California. He was the founder and president of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, which now has 90,000 members and 200 chapters; and a founding advisory board member of the International Society of Filipinos in Finance and Accounting.



BELLA WANG
Tax Director
Windes

Bella Wang joined Windes in 2000 and is currently a director in the firm's Tax Department. She has been promoted to partner, effective July 1, 2022. Wang's experience includes tax planning and consulting for businesses, corporations, partnerships, and high-net-worth individuals. She works closely with business owners and investors, specializing in international tax considerations, planning, and compliance on inbound and outbound transactions.

Wang's international tax expertise has helped businesses and investors develop tax strategies to minimize their global taxes. She serves clients in the real estate, transportation, technology, manufacturing, professional services, healthcare, and restaurant industries. As the practice leader for many of the firm's strategic planning and incentive program services, Wang championed the formalization and development of the firm's Paycheck Protection Program and Employee Retention Credit services within the tax department to service businesses and non-profits impacted by COVID-19.

ACCOUNTING SPOTLIGHT

ALIGN YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR EXTENSIVE **ACCOUNTING** PORTFOLIO

The **Los Angeles Business Journal** recognizes the crucial role that the accounting industry provides to help the financial strength of our business community. The Business Journal provides extensive coverage of the accounting industry through custom supplements, industry lists and special events throughout the year. Reach our affluent business readers by strategically positioning your firm in the following issues:

LISTS

- Manufacturers
- Private Equity Firms
- Private Companies

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE

- Women Accountants
- Minority CPAS
- Private Equity, Investors & Advisors

BRANDED CONTENT

- Corporate Citizenship & Giving Guide
- ESG Roundtable

SPECIAL EDITIONS

- LA500
- 2023 Book of Lists

EVENTS

- Economic Trends
- DEI Symposium & Awards
- Black Business Matters
- CFO of the Year Awards
- Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards
- Top 100 Accountants
- International Business Symposium & Awards
- Disruptor Awards: LA's Fast 100



For more information and to secure space, please contact **Eva Juse at ejuse@labusinessjournal.com**

Accounting Industry Groups Join Forces to Provide DE&I Solutions

Report offers solutions to closing the diversity gap

IMA (Institute of Management Accountants), CalCPA (California Society of Certified Public Accountants), and IFAC (International Federation of Accountants) last month released the “Diversifying Global Accounting Talent: Actionable Solutions for Progress” report. As a joint effort, the report assesses the deeply rooted issues inhibiting progress in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) within the accounting profession and offers actionable solutions to close the gap in DE&I.

The capstone in a series of regional DE&I research studies, the report exposes key factors contributing to the underrepresentation of diverse people in the profession, and particularly at leadership levels, in focus regions (Asia-Pacific, Europe and the Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa, and North America – the U.S.). Three key catalysts for action toward DE&I progress are presented: the current state of DE&I in accountancy, the responsibility to protect the public interest, and demands for sustainable business information around DE&I.

“The voices of more than 8,000 study participants across the globe issued a call-to-action to the profession’s leaders: a call for recommended solutions and intentional,

collective action to affect greater change,” said Jeff Thomson, CMA, CSCA, CAE, IMA president and CEO.

The report generated an inventory of more than 70 actionable DE&I practices, each mapped to relevant United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, and reflects input from dozens of leaders representing millions of accountants who can implement those practices. It offers recommended steps needed to remedy the lack of equity and inclusion as a path to improving diversity. While expanded efforts have energized DE&I, there is often a disconnect between perceived progress among leaders and progress truly felt and realized by the staff or profession at large.

“By collaborating through shared resources and efforts, leaders can learn from one another and yield long-lasting solutions,” said Denise LeDuc Froemming, CPA, CAE, president and

CEO at CalCPA. “So, we are humbled and honored to be accompanied by more than 60 professional accountancy organizations who join us as DE&I advocates for progress and commit to collective action.”

The authors classified their actionable practices into two main categories: attract diverse talent and retain and promote the diverse talent. Leaders must welcome and value diverse employees to sustain the accounting workforce in the years to come.

Kevin Dancey, CEO at IFAC, said, “Professional accountants are bound by ethical commitments, which should extend into DE&I efforts. The solutions recommended in this report can and should be leveraged by professional accountants and leaders across the profession, to move our workplaces around the world toward a culture of belonging and fulfill our obligation to protect the public interest.”

IMA is one of the largest and most respected associations focused exclusively on advancing the management accounting profession. Globally, IMA supports the profession through research, the CMA (Certified Management Accountant) and CSCA (Certified in Strategy and Competitive Analysis) programs, continuing education, networking, and advocacy of the highest ethical business practices.

CalCPA traces its heritage to 1903 when the California State Society of Certified Public Accountants was organized. In 1909, it merged with two other state CPA associations to form CalCPA. CalCPA serves more than 43,000 members in public practice, private industry, students, academia and government, and has 14 chapters across California. CalCPA also offers more than 1,400 live courses, conferences, webcasts and on-demand self-study courses annually.

IFAC is the global organization for the accountancy profession dedicated to serving the public interest by strengthening the profession and contributing to the development of strong international economies. IFAC is comprised of 180 members and associates in 135 countries and jurisdictions, representing more than three million accountants in public practice, education, government service, industry, and commerce.

The full report can be viewed at imanet.org.

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What Accounting Firms Need to Do if They are Serious About Diversity

Black accounting professionals face indignities and disrespect from both colleagues and clients, according to a recent study. However, the study also outlines what accounting firms can do if they are serious about recruiting, retaining, and respecting Black professionals.

“Protests related to race and social justice led to some difficult conversations with colleagues in 2020,” said Phebe Davis-Culler, co-author of the study and a clinical assistant professor of accounting at Clemson University. “We realized there would be value in telling the stories of successful Black auditors.”

“It became clear that many white colleagues thought inequities and microaggressions faced by Black people stopped when someone reached a certain education level or socioeconomic status,” said Joseph Reid, co-author of the study and an assistant professor of accounting at East Carolina University. “That’s not the case.”

“Sharing these stories could help the broader business community understand what Black professionals are forced to deal with, and what needs to be done if we are serious about inviting Black people to be auditors, CPAs and financial professionals. There is a reason that decades of diversity initiatives have not been very successful.”

For this qualitative study, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 11 auditors and four former auditors who are Black.

“One reason for the small number of study



participants was that there are so few Black people in our field that many declined to participate for fear of being identified,” Davis-Culler said.

One striking aspect of the findings was how similar the study participants’ experiences were.

“We talked to men and women from around the country, and the stories they shared were almost interchangeable,” Reid said.

Those stories shared three themes: stereotyping, insensitivity, and disrespect.

“Most of the participants reported instances of clients and subordinate workers questioning

the expertise of Black professionals and undermining their authority,” Reid said. “There were also instances of client personnel assuming Black professionals were security or administrative staff.”

“Taken as a whole, these stories highlight how Black auditors are automatically treated as outsiders,” Davis-Culler said. “This treatment further alienates them from the in-group, leading to even worse treatment, and it becomes a vicious cycle.”

But there are things companies can do.

“We need more training on how to be sensitive to issues that touch on race,” Davis-Culler said. “For example, don’t schedule company-wide events at a plantation. We also need more mentoring for Black men and women entering the field. And we need auditing firms who are willing to stand up to clients who engage in racist behavior.”

“Honestly, the first step is to acknowledge that there is a problem in our field, and that diversity initiatives alone aren’t solving the problem,” Reid said. “To individuals, I say: don’t be a bystander. Speak up on behalf of your Black colleagues.”

The study, “Auditing While Black: Revealing Microaggressions Faced by Black Professionals in Public Accounting,” is published in *Current Issues in Auditing*. Co-authors include Denise Dickins of East Carolina University and Julia Higgs of Florida Atlantic University.

Information for this article was provided by the American Accounting Association is the largest community of accountants in academia. Founded in 1916, the AAAHQ has a rich and reputable history built on leading-edge research and publications. The diversity of its membership creates a fertile environment for collaboration and innovation. Collectively, AAAHQ shapes the future of accounting through teaching, research and a powerful network, ensuring our position as thought leaders in accounting. Learn more at aaahq.org



Children's Burn Foundation in partnership with the **California Science Center** is proud to announce our **Fire! Science & Safety** exhibit on the third floor.

For over 30 years, Children's Burn Foundation has educated communities in California and across the globe on burn prevention. This innovative exhibit advances **our mission to use the power of education to save lives**. The interactive **permanent exhibit** will allow visitors to explore the science of fire and raise their awareness of fire safety. Admission is free.

