



Contact: Joanne Cleaver, 414-395-6876

Wilson Taylor Associates

jycleaver@wilson-taylorassoc.com

GOLF FOR WOMEN? WOMEN CPA'S ACCELERATE CAREERS THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE

2012 Accounting MOVE Report Focuses on

Strategic Use of Volunteering to Develop Partner-Track Career Skills

Updates Status of Women in Public Accounting and Practices Proven to Advance Women

May 14, 2011 (Chicago, IL) –

The 2012 Accounting MOVE Project Executive Report focuses on community service as a 'silver bullet' growth tool for women in public accounting. Focused philanthropy is a powerful draw for women, because it is a way to blend personal values with professional development. When firms frame community service as a channel for growth, women gain essential business development skills required to become partners and principals. Based on dozens of interviews, reviews of best practices at 29 firms, and statistical analysis, highlights of the 2012 Accounting MOVE the report include:

- Two screenings of Sundance award-winning advocacy film *MissRepresentation* drew 400 Seattle women, providing host Moss Adams LLP with a high-profile networking event; reinforced its ongoing support for women's leadership; and propelled the partner who seized the opportunity into the local spotlight.
- Minneapolis firm Lurie Besikof Lapidus & Company LLP, co-founded the Women's Development Business Center of Minnesota nearly a decade ago. The architect of the deal went on to become the managing partner several years later, proving that a passion for the successful careers of women benefits both the firm and the non-profit.
- Improv theater is the unlikely catalyst for one Baker Tilly Virchow Krause director to retain clients in the decidedly unfunny practice of risk management. Skills she gained through serving on the board of an improv troupe have re-invented her presentation and client relationship skills.

- Firms with philanthropic foundations, like Rothstein Kass, offer targeted opportunities for employee development in administering the funds. The firm also tracks ROI in such measures as paid time off to volunteer.

Public accounting firms generally recognize the generic value of community service. But only a few firms, such as Plante Moran, explicitly link philanthropy to the strategic goals of the firm such as talent development, recruitment and retention, and client development. According to the 2012 Accounting MOVE Report:

- 71% of participating public accounting firms offer leadership training through employer-supported volunteer responsibilities
- 64% offer leadership training through support for business board positions
- 79% offer leadership training through support for nonprofit board positions
- 36% offer organization marketing tied to sponsorship/support of entrepreneurs

“It is important for women in the accounting and finance fields to step away from the daily routine and develop leadership skills through activities that can only happen outside of the workplace,” said Lee Lowery, Executive Director of the American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA). “For example, membership in ASWA is an opportunity to hone leadership skills. As opposed to sitting in staff meetings, our members get hands on experience setting agendas and leading committee meetings.”

The 2012 Accounting MOVE Project Executive Report also expands on themes introduced in the inaugural 2010 report:

- Firms that concentrate on equipping women with critical business development skills are promoting more women to management
- Leadership for women's initiatives is becoming democratized to local offices, as larger firms seek to tailor advancement of women in terms of local business needs.
- Firms are expanding business development training by partnering with similarly-minded companies

The Accounting MOVE Project is produced by strategic communication firm Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc., in partnership with the American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA) and the American Woman’s Society of Certified Public Accountants (AWSCPA). Founding sponsor Moss Adams and National Sponsor Rothstein Kass in provide support for the project.

“The *2012 Accounting MOVE Project Executive Report* is a must-read—not just for women in accounting but for leaders at firms across the industry,” said Tammy Young, managing director of human resources at Moss Adams LLP. “It’s inspiring, and it uncovers fresh successes and proven, easily replicated ways that women, with their firms’ support, can advance their careers. Moss Adams is committed to this effort because we believe the industry has an opportunity to work together to solve the challenge of accelerating women’s growth. Half of the industry’s talent pool is simply too large to neglect.”

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“More and more we are seeing that women professionals, especially the younger demographic, view community service as a critical component to what makes a company a great place to work. Our programs range from direct interaction with the communities we serve to helping the next generation of business leaders develop essential tools for success,” said Rosalie Mandel, Principal-in-Charge of the Rothstein Kass LIFE program. “Great ideas for meaningful philanthropic opportunities come from all levels of the organization. Many of these initiatives have developed on a grassroots level, while others were established through the LIFE program and have gone on to become firm-wide initiatives.”

The project is based on the MOVE methodology, developed by research partner Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc., to capture the factors proven essential to women’s career success: **M** – Money: fair pay practices; **O** – Opportunity: advancement and leadership development; **V** – Vital supports: work-life programs that remove barriers; and **E** – Entrepreneurship: operating experience for managing or business ownership. “Community service is the sweet spot for women: they can develop critical career skills while investing in causes personally important to them,” said Joanne Cleaver, president of Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc. “When employers align community service with leadership development, they retain women, especially during the time-pressed midcareer stage, by opening a new channel to accomplish life and professional goals.”

The ASWA and AWSCPA’s list of the Best Accounting Firms for Women will be released in mid-May, based on the 2012 Accounting MOVE Project research.

The 2012 Accounting MOVE Project Executive Report can be found at the web sites of the ASWA, the AWSCPA and Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc.

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About the 2012 Accounting MOVE Project Executive Report Partners



Moss Adams LLP is a leader in assurance, tax, consulting, risk management, transaction, and wealth services. Moss Adams has a staff of over 1,800 that includes more than 230 partners in 21 offices across the country. We focus on serving public, private, and not-for-profit enterprises across the nation through specialized industry and service teams.

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The Moss Adams Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization funded by the firm, its partners, and its employees. Our programs promote accounting excellence in teaching, research, and curriculum as well as provide global disaster relief as needed.



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Founded in 1938, the American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA) provides women in accounting and finance the leadership, education and networking opportunities needed to achieve their career goals. Over seventy years later, ASWA is still the only organization that solely represents the interest of women in the entire accounting and finance community. The organization's mission is to enable women in all accounting and related fields to achieve their full personal, professional and economic potential and to contribute to the future development of their profession. Visit www.aswa.org for more information.



AWSCPA is a national organization founded in 1933 dedicated to serving all women CPAs. The AWSCPA provides a supportive environment and valuable resources for members to achieve their personal and professional goals through various opportunities including leadership, networking and education. As the only resource exclusively for women CPAs and those aspiring to become certified, the Society provides information as well as scholarships to those in the profession. The Society is a leader in addressing concerns such as gender equity, the glass ceiling, and work and family issues. AWSCPA members work in all segments of the accounting and financial profession, from individual practitioners to professionals in industry, academia, and government, as well as partners in all of the largest firms. Visit the AWSCPA Web site at www.awscpa.org or call the Society's office at (800) AWSCPA1 (297-2721).



Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc., has been designing and managing national research projects that measure the progress of women in the workplace since 1998. Its methodology pivots on factors proven to remove barriers so that women can fully participate in driving business results. Led by veteran business journalist Joanne Cleaver, its current and past clients include the Women's Transportation Seminar Foundation, Women in Cable Telecommunications, *Pink* magazine, the Alliance for Workplace Excellence, *Working Woman* magazine, Tribune Co. and others. Please see Wilson-Taylor's portfolio of work at www.wilson-taylorassoc.com.



MEDIA CONTACTS

Lee K. Lowery, Executive Director

American Society of Women Accountants

703.506.3265

llowery@aswa.org

Kimberly A. Fantaci, Executive Director

American Woman's Society of CPAs

800.AWSCPA1 M: 937.313.1337

info@awscpa.org

Tammy Young,

Managing Director, Human Resources

Moss Adams LLP

206.302.6878

Tammy.Young@mossadams.com

Robert Solomon

Senior Manager, Public Relations

Rothstein Kass & Company

212.997.0500 x 3918 direct: 917.438.3918

rsolomon@rkco.com

Joanne Cleaver, President

Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc.

414.395.6876 M: 414.232.3181

jycleaver@wilson-taylorassoc.com