

Making Change

TSCPA Fall Conference Planned for Emerging Professionals

By Anne McDonald Davis

A self-described “Army brat” who lived all over growing up, **Stephanie Shaner**, CPA-Fort Worth, learned a long time ago to adapt to change, which she sees as essential for becoming the best CPA possible in the years ahead. While attending a recent statewide conference in Houston geared toward new technology, her Under 40 Professionals (UP) group began brainstorming how to convey this message at the Young CPAs and Emerging Professionals Conference in fall 2018.

“Keeping up can be daunting,” Shaner nods. “There are constant tax updates, always new software coming out; a lot of information in today’s world. But it’s like my dad says, ‘Whatever happens, happens. You’ll figure it out.’”

The CPAs in Shaner’s UP group also value having a forum to share issues specific to budding careers, including the development of soft skills. She asserts, “There are things you just can’t learn in a classroom; making the transition from technician to manager, gaining leadership experience, deciding between public and industry.”

A manager in Accounting Services with Auldridge Griffin, Shaner has found that public accounting suits her: “I enjoy having tons of different clients. I even get to work in industry in a way – it’s just a different company every day. I see it as the best of both worlds.”

She feels particularly fortunate to have the green light from her firm when it comes to TSCPA involvement, which is not always the case elsewhere where new staff CPAs are often under pressure to work long hours and focus solely on billables. “We have two past chapter presidents at my firm,” she explains. “I went along to my first chapter event with some colleagues here. The firm is very supportive and encourages us to get involved. They even sponsor some of my community volunteer activities.”

One volunteer effort near and dear to Shaner is Rivertree Academy, a private Christian school that provides community-funded education for under-resourced students in the Lake Como neighborhood. She periodically helps out with their accounting needs.

She recalls: “During a CPA service day when we were cleaning up the lot next door to the school, I overheard the head of the school talking about how they needed help with QuickBooks. I spoke up and said, ‘I can do that!’”

Each year, the Fort Worth Chapter also organizes and sponsors a Christmas party for Rivertree that Shaner says is “a really big deal to the kids.” The chapter’s Santaccountants program provides Christmas presents for the students plus offers them an Amazon wish list with a variety of items so that they are also able to shop for the others in their lives.

She beams: “For most of the Rivertree children, this is a rare opportunity to be able to give Christmas presents to their families. We also have a craft table and my catering company client donates the snacks. It’s lots of fun.”



Stephanie Shaner, CPA-Fort Worth



Stephanie Shaner is a volunteer for the Fort Worth Chapter’s Santaccountants program

When having fun just for herself, Shaner chooses baseball. The last book she bought was on Cal Ripken. “I’m a huge fan,” she enthuses. “I try to go to games as much as possible in the summer.”

Only problem is ... the games she attends these days take place at the Texas Rangers’ home field in Arlington. Now Shaner’s family is from Maryland. Many of her relatives still live there and she remains a loyal Baltimore Orioles fan. She even has the moxie to use her BO credit card to buy snacks at Rangers games.

She laughs: “The vendors give me a hard time – everyone in line gives me a hard time. The partners at the firm and most of the people in the office give me a hard time. And of course, if Baltimore is actually playing the Rangers, sorry, I’ll be wearing my Orioles cap.”