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TXCPA Houston

Path to Year End Goals

IRS IS MAILING OUT LETTERS ON CRYPTOCURRENCY

WHEN IS IT TIME TO MOVE TO A MIDRANGE ACCOUNTING SOLUTION?

SAVING STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER FOR THE END OF THE YEAR

GAMIFIED LEARNING, BLOCKCHAIN, AND HANDS-ON AUDIT EFFICIENCY TOOLS

Message

from the desk of

It's been a busy couple of months for the chapter. In August, we held our Energy Conference at the Marriott Marquis and in September we had a large crowd for our CFO Controllers Conference in Sugar Land.



Ramsey Womack, CPA
President

We also celebrated PAC Bonus Week. The committee and staff did an outstanding job of fundraising during PAC Bonus week with over \$6,000 raised that will help us support local legislators who help support our profession. The PAC is a nonpartisan group that makes sure we help protect the profession as needed.

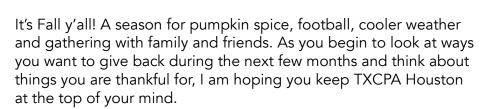
We kicked off our Strategic Planning process and had a full day retreat in October to discuss various issues facing both our profession as CPAs and accountants and the association profession. Change is more rapid than ever before and continues to impact how we as a chapter operate and how we support our members. Our goal continues to be to serve, connect and protect, but we recognize the challenges facing the profession and associations. We have just begun scratching the surface in this process and I am excited to see what direction it will lead us in.

We continue to look at new ideas for attracting members to the association. Our Young Professionals Group is getting reenergized and have begun planning events. One of the most significant things they will be doing is building a bridge program to help those members who have graduated from college and are in the process of becoming CPAs. Our membership team continues to get out and about at various events and activities to retain current members and recruit new members. I encourage each of you as you read this to find one or two people in your firm or company who are not members and ask them to join. As always, if there is anything we can do to support you, please let us know.

As we enter November, TXCPA will once again be holding their month of service. This is a great opportunity for CPAs to give back to the Houston area. The Young Professionals already have several great events lined up at the Food Bank and other nonprofit organizations and we will be planning a few more events for our other member groups. Please continue to check our website for details. Also, don't forget about our charitable groups during Giving Tuesday. Both CPAs Helping Schools and our Accounting Scholarship program accept tax deductible contributions. If you want a portion of your holiday shopping proceeds to go towards our charities, you can do so through Amazon Smile by selecting The Houston TSCPA Foundation as the charity you would like to support.

Message

from the desk of





Jennifer Poff, CAE
Executive Director

Giving Tuesday is the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. We have two entities that need your support – CPAs Helping Schools and Accounting Scholarships. Please make sure you mark your calendar to donate to these two entities for your charitable giving.

Holiday shopping? If you use Amazon, look up Houston TSCPA Foundation as the charity on Amazon Smile and make your gift purchases count towards our efforts.

Want to enjoy the cooler weather and maybe some donut holes? Join us at TopGolf on November 4th as we raise funds for CPAs Helping Schools. Golf experience is not required. Just a willingness to come out and have some fun.

The chapter will once again participate in the Lone Star Challenge during the month of November. The chapter with the highest percentage of members who volunteer for community service during the month of October will win the prize which they will donate to the charity of their choosing. Our Young Professionals group is planning a few activities including the food bank and we will have some other options soon. You can volunteer on your own or with us. Either way, take a selfie and send it to us or tag us on social media using #TXCPAHouston and email us at chapter@houstoncpa.org with your photo. I know we can win this challenge Houston.

Are you following us on social media? We have a LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook account. This is the best way to keep up to date with everything going on in the chapter. Please make sure you are following the correct LinkedIn page as we will be closing down an old group on there soon and only using the new one.

We are thankful for you and your continued membership and support of TXCPA Houston. If there is anything you need or we can do to assist you, please call us at 713-622-7733. I hope you all have a wonderful Halloween and Thanksgiving.

TXCPA HOUSTON

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IRS IS MAILING OUT LETTERS ON CRYPTOCURRENCY

By Kathy Ploch, CPA



On July 26, 2019 the Internal Revenue Service began sending out letters to taxpayers with virtual currency transactions that either failed to report the income and pay the tax or did not report their transactions accurately. "Taxpayers should take these letters very seriously by reviewing their tax filings and when appropriate, amend past returns and pay back taxes, interest and penalties," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "The IRS is expanding our efforts involving virtual currency, including increased use of data analytics. We are focused on enforcing the law and helping taxpayers fully understand and meet their obligations." The IRS will also begin to ask (as part of their financial interview) whether the taxpayer possess virtual currency. The IRS plans to focus on cases where there appears to be genuine evidence of fraud.

By the end of August, more than 10,000 taxpayers should have received these educational letters. There are three variations depending on the information the IRS has about the recipient. They are Letter 6173, Letter 6174 or Letter 6174-A. They are to help taxpayers to understand their tax and filing obligations relating to virtual currency and how to correct past errors.

So, let's look at what is this cryptocurrency all about. Cryptocurrency is digital currency that uses encryption techniques, rather than a central bank, to generate, exchange, and transfer units of currency. Unlike cash transactions, no bank or government authority verifies the transfer of funds. Instead, these virtual transactions are

recorded in a digitized public ledger called a blockchain. Individual units of the currency are called coins. First introduced in 2009, Bitcoin was the first cryptocurrency and is the most widely used today. Bitcoin is the world's most popular cryptocurrency. In mid-July, Bitcoin topped \$12,000, more than three times its value at the end of 2018. Since this type of currency can be used in the "underworld," it is getting a bad reputation. This concerns the IRS about the ability of digital currencies to promote tax evasion.

So how did the Internal Revenue Service get the taxpayer names to send these letters to? It's possible that they received them from Coinbase, a cryptocurrency exchange. In mid-March of 2018, under a federal-court order Coinbase provided data on about 13,000 accounts per the IRS request. They turned over data on customers who bought, sold, sent or received digital currency worth \$20,000 or more between 2013 and 2015. Chandan Lodha, chief executive and co-founder of CoinTracker, a digital-currency tax software company says that many cryptocurrency exchanges weren't built to provide users with transaction histories. This means investors must keep track of their transactions manually.

IRS Notice 2014-21 states that virtual currency is property for federal tax purposes and provides guidance on how general federal tax principles apply to virtual currency transactions. Taxpayers must recognize gain or loss on the exchange of cryptocurrency for cash or for other properties. This means that gain or loss is recognized every time that cryptocurrency is sold or used to purchase goods or services. A coin position held for one year or less is considered a short-term gain, taxed at ordinary tax rates and a position held for more than one year is considered a long-term gain, no different than the stock sales we've been dealing with for years.

Under IRS rules, the default for stock transactions is the first-in, first-out (FIFO) method and under certain circumstances, specific identification method is allowed.



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The use of specific identification can drastically reduce the recognized gain on cryptocurrency transactions, since many traders have multiple transactions in the same form of cryptocurrency.

While some tax preparers may have attempted to use the specific identification method when reporting cryptocurrency gains, this represents an aggressive approach. Within the IRS Notice 2014-21, it refers to cryptocurrency as property not stock. Also, it's doubtful that an adequate identification could ever be made with respect to cryptocurrency. The coin being traded is represented by an entry in a distributed ledger held by various parties. It also can be divided into an infinite number of parts, therefore lacking any sort of identifying lot number.

The payment for goods and services can also be a challenge. The Notice 2014-21 provides guidance on the taxation of cryptocurrency when it is used to pay for employees and independent contractors services. The fair market value must be reported on either the W-2 or Form 1099. Although Notice 2014-21 clarifies some of the tax treatment of these transactions, many questions remain unanswered, such as how cryptocurrencies should be treated for international tax reporting and whether these trades prior to 2018 are subject to the like-kind exchange rules.

In a recent article in Accounting Today, Darren Guillot, the new deputy commissioner for collection and operations support in SB/SE, explained that the IRS has been training its revenue officers in how to determine the value of cryptocurrency and to ask taxpayers whether

they have any. Eric Hylton, who was recently named commissioner of the SB/SE Division spoke with the media and stated that "cryptocurrency is an area that we want to look at and take a strong look from an examination and collection standpoint as well."

What should tax professionals do if a client has received one of these new letters? The best approach is to contact the IRS and attempt to rectify any past mistakes. Currently, there isn't a requirement that cryptocurrency sales be reported to the agency by third parties. However, tax practitioners should routinely ask their clients if they own or have used cryptocurrency in any transactions.

Links:

- <u>Understanding the Basics of the Dark Web</u>
- https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-hasbegun-sending-letters-to-virtual-currencyowners-advising-them-to-pay-back-taxes-fileamended-returns-part-of-agencys-larger-efforts
- https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-14-21.pdf
- https://www.irs.gov/pub/notices/letter_6173. pdf
- https://www.irs.gov/pub/notices/letter_6174.
 pdf



Kathy Ploch is a CPA and a manager at Durio & Company, P.C. She has been in public accounting preparing all types of taxes for over 30 years and has worked with small nonprofit organizations for more than 15 years. Ploch is a past president of TXCPA Houston and currently serves as vice chair of the Circular Practitioners Roundtable group.

Join TXCPA Houston's Circular Practitioner Roundtable!

The bi-monthly meetings allow committee members to develop and maintain relationships with federal, state and local taxing agencies. Members have the opportunity to express positions, resolve issues and maintain collaboration between all parties.

Sign up today at houstoncpa.org/membership/volunteer.

When Is It Time to Move to a Midrange Accounting Solution?

By Dave Kerr, CPA



The good news: your business (or your client's business) is growing. The bad news: your entry-level accounting system can't keep up.

A quick peek into a day in the life of the accounting staff reveals an increasing number of manual processes. More spreadsheets. More workarounds. The team struggles because accounting system limitations prevent automation of regularly recurring processes.

We have come across five symptoms that indicate it is time for the client to upgrade to a more robust financial accounting system:

- 1. Inflexible billing
- 2. Manual billing
- 3. Over-reliance on spreadsheets
- 4. Delayed reporting
- 5. Challenging forecasts

Inflexible billing – Modern midrange accounting software is designed to accommodate a variety of billing options that today's customers have come to expect, from subscription billing to value pricing, from perpetual licensing to volume discounts. Any number of variables can come into play. Entry-level accounting software wasn't built to handle the complexity and as a

result, manual intervention by accounting staff is required. This is a signal that new software is needed.

Manual billing – This flows from the previous symptom. If the accounting system can't accommodate your organization's full range of billing options, it means your staff is intervening with manual billing. Manual billing is fraught with risks and negatives: the potential for error and client confusion, delayed billing leading to delayed payment, to name just a few.

Over-reliance on spreadsheets – How many spreadsheets are being used to manage the organization? Ten? Twenty? More? Spreadsheets are evidence of accounting systems and reporting shortcomings. Spreadsheets are highly susceptible to errors (incorrect formulas, transposed numbers). Accounting best practices, audit trails and version control are automatic when reporting created directly from the accounting system.

Delayed reporting – Do prolonged closes followed by days, often weeks, of preparing reports manually sound familiar? Too much manual prep means less time to analyze data to

understand causes and impacts. Reporting delays mean that decisions can't be made quickly and opportunities may be missed.

Challenging forecasts – Perhaps the most crippling aspect of entry-level accounting software solutions is the inability to efficiently predict your cash position. This thwarts basic operations management not to mention opportunities to invest in the business in order to more quickly reach your growth objectives.

Most organizations balk at moving from a solution that costs \$1,000/year to a solution that costs \$1,000/month. It's often a case of being penny wise and pound foolish.

The savvy CFO seeks out an accounting software technology partner who can help determine the total cost of ownership and return on investment – someone who can assist you in making the first of many data-driven decisions. Often, what owners and CFOs find is that is in spite of larger price tag, the solution often pays for itself in under a year, sometimes even as quickly as 90 days. How is this possible? Revenue leaks are discovered and fixed. Repetitive processes are

automated, Real-time data is available to all managers allowing them to better manage their departments and locations. There's no need to hire additional headcount.

Investing in a right-sized accounting solution for your business could be the most powerful change you make.



Dave Kerr is the founder and CEO of Kerr Consulting. Kerr Consulting is a nationwide firm that focuses on the implementation of accounting software technologies including the Sage and Microsoft offerings.



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Saving Strategies to Consider for the End of the Year

By Marissa Sweet



As 2019 comes to a close it is important to evaluate what is best with regards to your real estate and personal property. Property tax is an expense that directly hits your bottom line. Increases each year add up over time therefore being proactive and offensive is best. A little planning and some proactive steps can save you money in property taxes over the long term. Processes and procedures can streamline the property tax savings actions even further. Any corporation that owns real estate can benefit by using property tax saving strategies.

THE LIEN DATE

The most important date to remember for property tax is the lien date or the assessment date. The lien date governs when you become legally responsible for property taxes. The lien date for Texas is the 1st of January each year. This date is used by the county to place an assessment value on your property. If your property is in need of maintenance items as of the lien date, it is best to receive quotes and

estimates from vendors at that time to utilize them for property tax reductions and savings. Many companies try to spend their revenue at the end of the year by investing into their property through improvements, however, it is typically the wrong move to make. After the lien date, the county will then notify you of the value they have decided to assess your property at. Once you receive the assessment notice you have until 30 days after the notice or until May 15th to file an appeal to protest the value.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

There are many arguments we make as property tax consultants, but by far the strongest argument can typically be deferred maintenance of a property. Deferred maintenance is a dollar for dollar tax assessment reduction. Items such as photos, written estimates, documented repairs and insurance claims can all assist with deferred maintenance. If you are considering doing any type of construction, renovations or purchasing any new property or assets, it is

always best to wait until after the lien date to avoid an increase on your property tax liability. These are the most impactful end of year property tax savings strategies for our clients.

To receive more strategies please sign up for our newsletter at <u>www.taxrecourse.com</u> or give us a call to assist with answering any questions at 832-433-7509.

ABOUT TAX RECOURSE

Tax Recourse, LLC. is a full-service provider of state and local tax recovery and minimization consulting services. Our core services include real and personal property administration, tax appeal and protest services, and business property return filing. The firm is a very unique property tax consulting company representing properties all over the country for major companies like Walgreens, CGG Veritas, Office Depot, and Utility Trailer.



Marissa Sweet manages over the day to day operations at Tax Recourse, LLC. She emphasizes and maintains each of her clients receive superior customer service and a customized approach to their target goals related to commercial tax appeal and protest. She believes that each protest filed is just as important as the next as it saves many commercial businesses on their bottom line.



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Gamified Learning, Blockchain, and Hands-On Audit Efficiency Tools

By Donny C. Shimamoto, CPA, CITP, CGMA



I'm excited to share with you that our chapter has introduced some unique collaborations and new learning methods that are getting great feedback! Learn more about these very different courses below.

Gamified Learning and Blockchain for Accountants

On September 9, we hosted a course called How Accountants Can Leverage Blockchain: A Hands-On Workshop for Blockchain Beginners. This course was a mix of traditional lecture, reinforced with gamified learning from TrueUp, an AICPA Startup Accelerator company, and highly interactive group exercises.

The overall Net Promoter score was 9.3 out of 10, and the comments speak for themselves:

- "Enjoyed both speaker's presentations.
 it was refreshing to gain insight into
 Blockchain by two guys that have passion
 and interest for the topic."
- "The interactive exercises are a good idea and enhance the 'hands on learning' aspect."
- "I found the exercises assisted in

- application to visualize [how to use blockchain]."
- Several of the attendees also mentioned wanting the course to be longer and that they would now want to also attend an "advanced" course.

The workshop closed with participants being able to see a live demonstration of how artificial intelligence audit software from MindBridge Al could be used to do risk scoring on accounts payable blockchain data to identify high risk transaction and then do follow-up controls testing against blockchain endorsement policies.

We would like to see if there is enough interest to run this class again before busy season. If you would be interested in taking this class, please email **cpe@houstoncpa.org** to sign up for our Blockchain interest list.

Audit Efficiency Workshop with Hands-On Exercises Using Leading Audit Tools

The next interactive and collaborative course that we have is on November 21. It is called <u>Audit</u> <u>Efficiency Workshop: A Hands-on Introduction</u> <u>to Audit Automation Tools</u>. For this workshop we are collaborating with Audimation (IDEA), MindBridge AI, Thompson Reuters (Inflo), and Wolters Kluwer (TeamMate Analytics) to bring these four great audit tools into the classroom—and into your hands!

This workshop will be a "flipped" workshop. Rather than mostly lecture and a few exercises, this workshop will be a little lecture and a LOT of hands-on exercises working with the audit tools. One of the challenges for firms is that they often just watch a demo of the tools but aren't able to easily compare the tools. This workshop was designed to enable this comparison through experiential learning.

Attendees will be split into four groups, with each group working with a particular tool. Following a standard audit engagement process, we will be looking at how the tools do (or don't) support each phase of an audit engagement. Attendees will be provided with the same datasets to run through the tool assigned to their group and they will work through how to use the tool and see what kind of output it provides. At the end of each exercise groups will share their experience in working with the tools and compare the results.

If you plan to attend, you will definitely want to send at least four people—one to work with each of the tools to maximize your ability to figure out which tool is the best fit for your firm!

Our chapter is providing a special incentive to help you manage your budget. Every additional registration after the first will receive \$50 off the regular price of the course. Groups of 6 or more are also eligible for a group discount. **Register now!**

Have ideas for other innovative courses?

If you have any ideas for other courses or topics that you think may be innovative or a great addition to our CPE offerings? Please email me and let's discuss it! You can reach me at donny@intraprise.us.



Donny C. Shimamoto, CPA, CITP, CGMA is the Director of Innovation at TXCPA Houston. Donny has been recognized as one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Accounting and Top 25 Thought Leaders in Public Accounting. He is responsible for facilitating innovation and changes to the chapter's programs and operations.

As a leader in the Houston market, Creative Financial Staffing helps companies attract and hire exceptional accounting and finance talent. Founded by CPA firms, CFS has unique resources to better understand your hiring needs and assess candidate potential.





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Our Advice.

From left: Shelitha Smodic, Maureen Phillips, Tom Williams, Leah Bennett, Donnie Roberts, Susan Wedelich, Katie Slater



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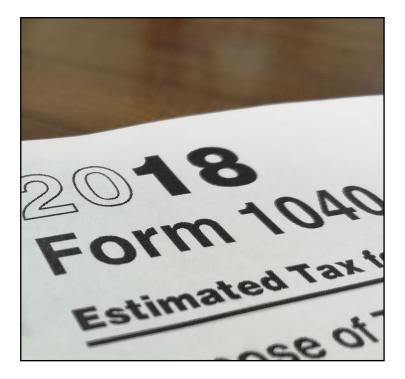
IRS Revenue Ruling 2019-24: Hard Forks, Airdrops and Other Topics Related to the Taxation of Virtual Currency

By Ryan Firth, CPA, CCFC

After a five-year hiatus, the IRS issued **Revenue** Ruling 2019-24 and frequently asked questions (FAQ) on October 9, 2019. Prior to the ruling, the only formal guidance taxpayers had on the tax treatment of virtual currency transactions was IRS Notice 2014-21, which declared that virtual currency--also commonly referred to as cryptocurrency, or crypto for short--is to be treated as property for federal tax purposes. One item not specifically addressed in Notice 2014-21 was how taxpayers should report virtual currency they received from a hard fork or airdrop. Specifically, Revenue Ruling 2019-24 states that virtual currency received from a hard fork or airdrop is to be reported by the taxpayer as gross income, which will generally be treated as ordinary income, and thus subject to the taxpayer's highest marginal tax rate.

A hard fork occurs when a cryptocurrency's network protocol (i.e., the rules that describe how the network should operate) changes such that one group of network participants adopts the new protocol, while another group of network participants follows the old protocol, or one that is substantially different from the new protocol. In other words, the two protocols are incompatible with each other, and thus by extension, so are the networks. (A hard fork is also commonly referred to as a chain split because there are now two cryptocurrencies post the fork event.) Typically, crypto holders who held coins, or tokens, prior to the hard fork retain those same coins in the same crypto wallet and are issued new coins in a new wallet from the new crypto network equal to the number of coins they held at the moment of the chain split. In some respects, hard forks are analogous to a corporate spin-off; though not for tax reporting purposes, of course.

Airdrops are typically crypto tokens, or coins, that are distributed gratis to individuals who participate in a community. For example, the individual might be a crypto newsletter subscriber, or a user of a messaging application.



Airdrops are primarily used for marketing and promotional purposes to raise awareness of a cryptocurrency. Contrary to what is written in Revenue Ruling 2019-24, airdrops and hard forks are mutually exclusive events. Semantics aside, the tax result is the same whether a taxpayer receives virtual currency via an airdrop or a hard fork: it's all treated as gross income.

Perhaps the most prominent hard fork to date was Bitcoin Cash (BCH), which was spun off from Bitcoin (BTC) in August of 2017. Bitcoin holders received 1 BCH coin for 1 BTC coin. At the time of the fork, 1 BTC was worth approximately \$2,800¹ and 1 BCH was worth approximately \$340². Applying the guidance in Revenue Ruling 2019-24, a taxpayer who held 1 BTC at the time of the hard fork would recognize \$340 of ordinary income, but only if the taxpayer was able to "exercise dominion and control" over the BCH. A taxpayer has dominion and control over the cryptocurrency if he has the

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¹ https://coinmarketcap.com/currencies/bitcoin/historical-data/?start=20170801&end=20170801

² https://coinmarketcap.com/currencies/bitcoin-cash/historical-data/?start=20170801&end=20170801

ability to "transfer, sell, exchange, or otherwise dispose of the cryptocurrency." If any one of these criteria is met, then the taxpayer has constructively received the cryptocurrency, and his tax basis would be established based on the fair market value of the crypto at that time. If the taxpayer cannot exercise dominion and control over the newly created cryptocurrency (which commonly happens when virtual currency is held at a cryptocurrency exchange), then the taxpayer does not recognize gross income until he constructively receives the cryptocurrency. Once the taxpayer is able to exercise dominion and control (typically when the cryptocurrency exchange credits the taxpayer's account with the new cryptocurrency) then the taxpayer must recognize income on the date the crypto was constructively received based on the fair market value of the crypto at that time. Using the BCH example again, if the taxpayer custodied his 1 BTC coin at a crypto exchange that did not credit his account until December 20, 2017, then he would recognize approximately \$4,355 of income, which was the price of BCH on that date³. That's a nearly \$4,000 difference from the date of the hard fork! As a point of reference, in October 2019, BCH was trading at around \$220.

As a practitioner, how can you help clients who may have an "accession to wealth" resulting from a hard fork or airdrop of cryptocurrency?

- Ask your clients if they have ever transacted in virtual currency, because the IRS will most likely be asking taxpayers on Schedule 1 of Form 1040 for 2019⁴, and because the agency has issued letters to taxpayers who may have transacted in virtual currency in the past⁵. You'll probably want to know about your clients' crypto transactions before the IRS does.
- For those clients that have transacted in virtual currency, determine if they need to file an amended tax return for any prior

3 https://coinmarketcap.com/currencies/bitcoin-cash/historical-data/?start=20170801&end=20170801

years. Help them determine whether they've constructively received cryptocurrency as a result of a hard fork or airdrop. Be aware that the Bitcoin network has had several hard forks, as have other cryptocurrencies.

- Ensure taxpayers are properly tracking the cost basis of their crypto holdings (per FAQ A36, specific identification is allowed as a cost basis tracking methodology). There are many online basis tracking software tools available to both taxpayers and tax professionals that aid in tax lot optimization strategies.
- If your client is charitably inclined and wants to donate crypto, help him identify crypto assets that will offer the highest charitable deduction possible, being mindful that crypto held for one year or less receives a deduction that is equal to "the lesser of the taxpayer's basis in the virtual currency or the virtual currency's fair market value at the time of the contribution." Also, remember that charitable deductions are subject to AGI limitations, and a qualified appraisal is required for donations greater than \$5,000 in value.
- Utilize tax loss harvesting to offset capital gains. Because virtual currency is deemed property, and not a security, the wash sale rules do not apply should your client wish to purchase the same crypto asset within the 30day window.
- Explore with your clients who want to invest in cryptocurrencies the possibility of using a tax advantaged vehicle such as a self-directed IRA, thereby reducing the burden of basis tracking and tax uncertainty surrounding virtual currencies. Don't forget about prohibited transactions in an IRA, though.
- e Educate your clients about using cryptocurrency with unrealized losses to purchase personal-use property such as a home or car because then the cryptocurrency might not qualify for capital asset treatment, thus your clients might not be able to take a capital loss deduction. Best practice would be to sell the cryptocurrency and then use the proceeds from the sale to purchase the personal-use property.

⁴ https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-dft/f1040s1--dft.pdf

⁵ https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-has-begun-sending-letters-to-virtual-currency-owners-advising-them-to-pay-back-taxes-file-amended-returns-part-of-agencys-larger-efforts

Much like blockchain technology and cryptocurrencies, the taxation of virtual currency is multi-faceted and ever changing. CPA financial planners are well-positioned to help clients navigate this complex, exciting space.

If you would like to learn more about virtual currencies and related tax and financial planning considerations, please check out the following resources:

- https://www.houstoncpa.org/news/ details/2018/12/13/cryptocurrencies-whatevery-tax-practitioner-and-financial-plannershould-know
- https://www.aicpa.org/content/dam/aicpa/ interestareas/personalfinancialplanning/ cpeandevents/downloadabledocuments/ audio-files/20181005-virtual-currency.mp3
- https://www.mercerst.com/singlepost/2018/09/20/Tax-implications-ofinvesting-trading-and-transacting-incryptocurrencies
- https://www.onefpa.org/journal/Pages/ JUN16-Should-Cryptoassets-Be-a-Part-of-a-Client%E2%80%99s-Portfolio.aspx



Ryan Firth is the founder and president of Mercer Street Personal Financial Services, an independent Registered Investment Adviser (RIA) firm based in Houston, Texas. Mercer Street serves small business owners, young professionals, entrepreneurs, and growing families in the wealth building phase of their lives. Find us @MercerStreetCo.



Your Career in Personal Financial Planning

The accounting profession is changing. It's not just about audit or tax anymore. Careers in personal financial planning are growing and will continue to grow over the coming years. Being a CPA financial planner can be one of the most gratifying careers one can pursue in the fields of accounting or finance.

If you'd like to learn more about a career as a CPA financial planner, please join us at the TXCPA Houston office on **Tuesday**, **December 10, 2019 at 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.** for a panel discussion on careers in financial planning, presented by TXCPA Houston's Personal Financial Planning Committee.

Register online at www.houstoncpa.org.



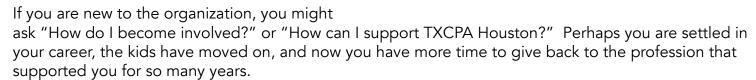
Member Involvement

By Carol Spencer

You are a member of TXCPA Houston – now what?

TXCPA Houston Member = new applicant, newly-licensed CPA, CPA-Candidate, Student, long-time CPA, Non-CPA Employee Affiliate, International Affiliate, or a 40-plus year Member.

Regardless of your membership type, you are eligible to participate on committees.



TXCPA Houston has over twenty open committees, ranging from community service activities, including CPAs Helping Schools and Young Professionals, to industry-specific CPE planning committees for energy, personal financial planning, financial reporting, and CFO/Controller conferences. Other committees include the Annual Scholarship Extravaganza Committee, which works on fundraising and planning the program that provides funding for the fifth-year accounting scholarships program.

If tax is your forte, consider being a part of the **Tax Expo Committee**. Help plan the January two-day conference that focuses on preparing yourself and your staff on all matters pertinent to the upcoming tax filing season. Or consider the **Circular 230 Practitioners Roundtable**, a mixed group of tax practitioners who are eligible to practice before the IRS. This group meets bi-monthly over lunch and is attended by local IRS and Taxpayer Advocate representatives, Harris County Appraisal District professionals and those from other taxing agencies sometimes attend to provide updates from their offices.

Accounting Scholarships Committee is always open for volunteers to assist in the application review and funding process.

If you are politically-focused, the **Houston CPA-PAC** provides oversight of funds for distribution to local state legislatures and maintains a legislator key person program, while the **Public Affairs Committee** provides education and opportunities for local grass roots activities.

A committee for anyone is **Membership Development**, which oversees membership events, networking opportunities, community service activities, and diversity and inclusion. Subcommittees assist in the event planning of networking programs and semi-annual open houses, lunch and learn activities, member outreach and more.

Many of the open committees have subcommittees to allow volunteers to focus on their preferred area and conference call is usually available for all meetings.

For more information, visit https://www.houstoncpa.org/membership/volunteer.

To join now, complete a volunteer form here or email chapter@houstoncpa.org.







TXCPA Houston members have a multitude of committees and tasks forces. Please check your top three committee(s) based on interest.

il:	Phone: Address:		
		CPE Related Committees	Professional Services Committees
Quality control and oversight of Society CPE	Plan topics, serve as on-site coordinators for CPE.		
CFO/ Controllers Conference CPE	Accounting & Auditing Forensic & Valuation Services		
CPE by the Sea Tax Expo	Personal Financial Planning Circular 230 RoundTable		
	Charity/Civic Related Committees		
Membership Related Committees Work on Society image enhancement, career	Sponsor community and organization events.		
awareness and member services	Accounting Scholarship Endowment Accounting Scholarships		
Membership Development	Community Service		
Young Professionals	CPAs Helping Schools/Accounting Career Education CPA-PAC		
Industry/Other Committees Plan topics, serve as on-site coordinators for industry CPE.	Public Affairs Scholarship Extravaganza		
Business & Industry Energy			

Thank you for signing up!

Your active participation will provide: Current topic updates, professional development, networking opportunities ... and more!

You will be placed on the distribution list for each chosen committee. Committee meeting dates vary from monthly to quarterly. Email this form to chapter@houstoncpa.org.

TXCPA HOUSTON LOCAL SUPPORT



PAC BONUS WEEK

Thank you for your generous support during PAC Bonus Week. We raised over \$6,000 that will help us support local legislators who help support our profession. The PAC is a nonpartisan group that makes sure we help protect the profession as needed.

CPAS HELPING SCHOOLS



Over the past six years, TXCPA Houston CPAs Helping Schools has generously donated to the Brookline Elementary library. The donations have allowed the school to purchase e-books and library books. On November 4, join us at TopGolf Houston-Katy for our 2nd Annual Fall FUNraiser to help support local schools.

TXCPA HOUSTON

Join Us!



2ND ANNUAL FALL FUNDRAISER

"Par" tners in Education Top Golf Challenge

TopGolf Houston-Katy Monday, November 4, 2019 5:00 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

Join us for TXCPA Houston's second annual Fall FUNdraiser on Monday, November 4 at 5 p.m. at TopGolf Houston-Katy for an evening of fun, food and prizes. Our "Par"tners in Education TopGolf Challenge benefits CPAs Helping Schools educational programs in the thirteen-county membership area. Since 2002, CPAs Helping Schools has reviewed over 600 grant applications, awarding funding in excess of \$600,000 to over 220 school programs. CPAs Helping Schools provides funding to local school districts for educational projects, while emphasizing aid to economically disadvantaged schools, and volunteers participate in career day presentations at local schools to encourage accounting careers.

5:00 p.m. Fajita Fiesta

6:00 p.m. TopScramble

7:15 p.m. Free Play

7:45 p.m. Player recognition awards

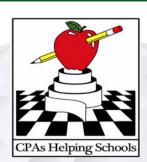
8:15 p.m. Raffle Drawings

Anyone may participate, including non-players (no golf experience required)

Player: \$100

Caddie Spectator: \$50

Net proceeds benefit educational programs for grades PreK-12 in the TXCPA Houston thirteen-county membership area.



To register please email Carol Spencer at foundation@houstoncpa.org or call TXCPA Houston at 713-622-7733.

TXCPA HOUSTON INVESTS IN FUTURE

CPAS

TXCPA Houston attended university career fairs this fall including the University of Houston Downtown, the University of St. Thomas, Texas Southern University and Houston Baptist University. We signed-up approximately 100 accounting students for our Student Auxiliary program.



Michael Spartalis pictured with Christine Nguyen, Sara Sharma, Jennifer Poff, Nhu Le and Samuel Cooper.



Student Auxiliary officers and Steering Committee with "Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success" panelists Sara Assaf, PHR from Briggs & Veselka Co., Steve Diamond from Ernst & Young, and Christopher Gervasio from ExxonMobil.

TXCPA Houston Student
Auxiliary kicked off their fall
season with "Mastering Soft
Skills for Workplace Success,"
"GASS It Up" and "Phishing for
the Truth: Cybersecurity, IT and
Accounting." Thank you to our
members who volunteer as
panelists and invest in the lives
of our future CPAs!

To learn more about Student Auxiliary volunteer opportunities, please email students@houstoncpa.org.

STUDENT AUXILIARY

TXCPA HOUSTON

The TXCPA Houston Student Auxiliary provides career training, career path options and information, networking, and hiring opportunities for students in the Houston area interested in Accounting.

REASONS TO JOIN TXCPA HOUSTON:

- Networking with Houston's most prominent CPAs
- · Getting involved with your future profession
- TXCPA Houston gives scholarships every year
- You can join at TSCPA.org for just \$35 per year

JOIN US FOR THE 2019-20 STUDENT AUXILIARY FALL EVENTS:

TXCPA Houston— 777 Post Oak Blvd.

Suite 500 Houston TX 77056

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Check-in; snacks; and

mingling with other students

6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Presentation

8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Additional networking time

with students and professionals

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT EVENT!

Friday, October 18, Tick Tock Tech Talk Friday, November 1, IDEA Workshop

Friday, November 8, Don't Mess with Taxes

Schedule dates and topics are subject to change.





For more information: call 713.622.7733 or email students@houstoncpa.org.

MONTH OF SERVICE

Help us win the Chapter Lone Star Challenge!

TXCPA Houston will be participating in a variety of community service events during the month of November. We need all members to participate since the chapter with the hightest percentage of members participating wins the challenge.

If you or your firm/company volunteers on their own, please send a photo to chapter@houstoncpa.org or post to social media using the hashtag #TXCPAHouston.

All month of service activities will be posted to TXCPA Houston's website at www.houstoncpa.org.

Currently scheduled:

11/9/19- Young Professionals at Houston Food Bank





GIVING TUESDAY

The Tuesday after Thanksgiving is Giving Tuesday. Please keep our charitable entities in mind.

CPAs Helping Schools

Provides grants to K-12 programs at schools in the Houston Chapter area. Awards approximately \$50,000 annually.

Accounting Scholarships

Provides scholarships to aspiring CPAs at 11 local universities and colleges in the Houston Area. Awards approximately \$105,000 annually.

Donations can be made online at houstoncpa.org/contribute.

For more information, contact chapter@houstoncpa.org.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Register at www.houstoncpa.org

Medicare Workshop and Personal Financial Planning Conference

Gain valuable knowledge to help you make better financial decisions no matter what financial stage of life you are in. Earn up to 18.5 CPE hours!

NEW!

Personal Financial Planning livestream option available:

\$245 for members/ \$345 for nonmembers.

Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsor





Medicare Workshop

October 28, 2019 8 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Personal Financial Planning

October 29, 2019

Early Bird - 7 - 7:50 a.m. Conference - 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Sips and CPE - 4:40 - 5:30 p.m.

TXCPA Houston Training Facility

777 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 500

Houston, Texas 77056

REGISTER TODAY at www.houstoncpa.org

25

Get deep insights into medicare, social security, retirement, estate, risk management, and more. Attendees will learn about the industry's latest tools and discuss how planners can help their clients navigate the new legislation. Financial planners who are serious about their craft should not miss this chance to sharpen their skills at the TXCPA Houston Medicare Workshop and Personal Financial Planning Conference.

Date:

October 28 and 29, 2019

Location:

TXCPA Houston Training Facility

CPE Hours:

Up to 18.5 hours (includes early bird and Sips and CPE hours)

Prerequisite: None

Level of Instruction: Update/Overview

Course Objective:

To equip financial planners, CPAs and members the insights and tools to make better decisions in Medicare and personal financial planning.

Medicare Topics

- Changes to Medicare for 2020 and the MACRA Laws
- Medicare Basics: Medicare ABCD
- Medicaid Coverage for Long Term Care
- Elder Care Management
- Social Security 2019

Personal Financial Planning Topics

- Education Planning Under the Tax Cut and Jobs Act
- Reverse Mortgages
- Financial Markets Update
- The ABC's of Mergers and Acquisitions
- Section 199A Qualified Business Income Deduction Opportunities
- Charitable Planning Essentials
- R&D Tax Credit

Look for these names in your agenda!



Ross A. Riskin, CPA/PFS, CCFC Assistant Professor of Taxation/ CFP Program Director, American College of Financial Services

"Education Planning Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act"



Chris Matlock, CPA, CFA
Chief Investment Officer,
Goodman Financial Corporation

"Financial Markets Update: Where have we been and Where are We Going?"



Robert Mendell, CPA, JD President, Robert M. Mendell, Attorney at Law, P.C.

"The ABC's of Mergers and Acquisitions"

Register today at http://bit.ly/2019-PFP-Medicare-Workshop

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Register at www.houstoncpa.org



Cybersecurity Workshop

Date: November 12, 2019

Time: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Location: TXCPA Training Facility

CPE: 8 hours

Prerequisite: None

Level of Instruction: Overview

Instructor: Donny Shimamoto, CPA.CITP, CGMA

This two-session hands-on workshop will guide you through developing a tax workflow model personalized for your firm and assist non-techies how to craft a cybersecurity plan. In the first session, we will discuss the technologies available to support automation of the various phases of your tax compliance engagements and identify potential vendors. In the second session, we will discuss the essential elements of a strong IT program for smaller firms.

8:30 a.m - 12 p.m. Tax Innovation & Cyber Summit -Tax Workflow Automation Workshop (CPE: 4 hours)

12 - 1 p.m. - Lunch Break

1 - 4:30 p.m.

How Non-Techies Can Craft a Cybersecurity Plan

(CPE: 4 hours)

Cost: Member \$250 Non-Member \$350

REGISTER HERE



Audit Efficiency Workshop: A Hands-on Introduction to Audit Automation Tools

Date: November 21, 2019

Time: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Location: TXCPA Training Facility

CPE: 8 hours

Searching for solutions to make your audits efficient and effective? Enroll in our hands-on Audit Automation Tools Workshop on November 21st featuring software from Audimation - IDEA, MindBridge AI, Thompson Reuters – Inflo, and Wolters Kluwer – TeamMate Analytics.

Attend this workshop to:

- Understand the emerging "information ecosystem" and how this can be leveraged to gain audit efficiency or enable continuous audit capabilities
- Obtain an overview of current data extraction, preparation, and analysis tools that can be used to support the performance of analyses or audit procedures
- Gain hands-on access to audit tools and see comparative results of how different audit tools process data that you may receive from a client

Bring your laptop to find the right solution for your firm!

Cost: Member \$250 Non-Member \$350

REGISTER HERE

UPCOMING CPE COURSES

ETHICS FOR CPAS: IT'S A MATTER OF CHOICE

TXCPA Houston Training Facility

In-person Ethics Course

- 4 CPE hours

Deanna Sullivan, CPA, CGMA October 25, 2019 • 12:30 - 4:15 p.m.

Register Here

In-person Ethics Course

- 4 CPE hours

Deanna Sullivan, CPA, CGMA November 22, 2019 • 12:30 - 4:15 p.m.

Register Here

In-person Ethics Course

- 4 CPE hours

Deanna Sullivan, CPA, CGMA December 13, 2019 • 12:30 - 4:15 p.m.

Register Here

Register at www.houstoncpa.org

2019 NORTHWEST CPA BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUP

Los Cucos, 22390 Tomball Pkwy.

Social Security and Medicare 101

- 3 CPE hours

Speaker: Dave Zander

October 24, 2019 • 2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Register Here

Employment Issues

- 3 CPE hours

Speaker: Bennett G. Fisher

October 31, 2019 • 2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Register Here

Qualified Opportunity Zones

- 3 CPE hours

Speaker: Austin Carlson, CPA

November 21, 2019 • 2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Register Here

WEBINARS

Cybersecurity for Small Tax Firms

Date: October 31, 2019

Time: 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Location: Online **CPE:** 1.5 hours

Prerequisite: None

Level of Instruction: Overview

Instructor: Donny Shimamoto, CPA, CITP, CGMA

Enroll in our October 31 Cybersecurity for Small Tax Firms webinar to understand the growing risk of tax identity theft and the increase in hackers targeting firms. This non-technical webinar will address the IRS's expectations of safeguarding your clients' data (Pub 4557) and provide practical tips to reduce your risk of a data breach.

Cost: Member \$59 Non-Member \$99

REGISTER HERE

UPCOMING EVENTS

Register at www.houstoncpa.org

Student Auxiliary: Tick Tock Tech Talk

TXCPA Houston Training Facility October 18, 2019 • 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. RSVP Here

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017: Utilizing Retirement Plans to Optimize the New IRC §199A - 3 CPE hours (free for members)

TXCPA Houston Training Facility October 24, 2019 • 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.

RSVP Here

Student Auxiliary: IDEA Workshop

TXCPA Houston Training Facility
November 1, 2019 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

RSVP Here

Student Auxiliary: Don't Mess with Taxes

TXCPA Houston Training Facility
November 8, 2019 • 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

RSVP Here

Young Professionals: Volunteer at Houston Food Bank

535 Portwall St. November 9, 2019 ● 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. RSVP Here

Your Career in Personal Financial Planning

TXCPA Houston Training Facility
December 10, 2019 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RSVP Here

SAVE THE DATE

Morning Buzz

November 7, 2019

Happy Hour

Mo's Irish Pub November 7, 2019

Open House

TXCPA Houston Office December 9, 2019

Lunch

Location TBD December 11, 2019

Tax Expo

January 6-7, 2020 Sugar Land Marriott Hotel

This two-day conference offers topics that range from international and federal taxation to all IRS form updates.

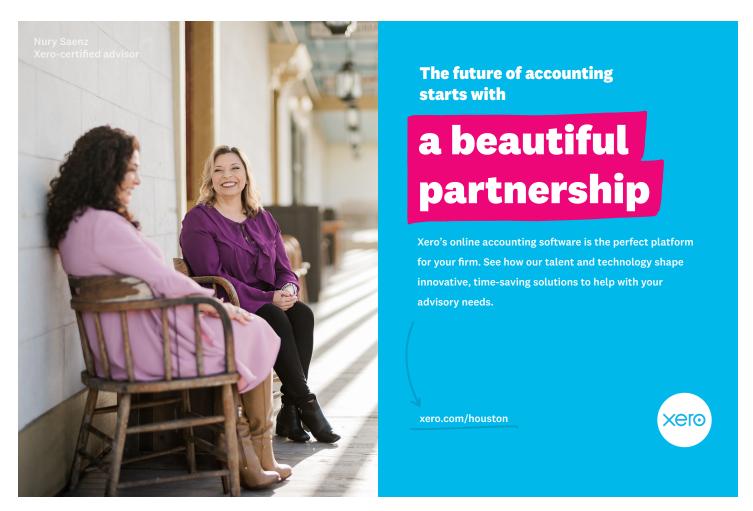
Member News

DISASTER RECOVERY RESOURCES FOR HOUSTON AND SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Our thoughts are with those who have been affected by the recent floods from Tropical Storm Imelda. We have compiled a variety of helpful resources about disaster recovery for members, their clients or colleagues who have been affected by these damaging floods. Visit https://www.tscpa.org/resources/news/advocacy/legislative/general/disaster-planning for the complete list. TXCPA is here for any members needing assistance during this challenging time. They can call 800-428-0272 or email membership@tscpa.net to speak to a TXCPA representative about their disaster recovery needs.

RISING STARS NOMINATIONS

Your chapter is welcome to nominate one or more eligible members for TXCPA Rising Stars recognition. Involve your chapter board soon in starting to think about CPA members born after May 31, 1979 who have been actively involved in TXCPA through committee participation or support for TXCPA programs. Rising Stars criteria and the online nomination form can be found here. **Dec. 16 is the deadline for nominations.** Nominate a colleague at https://risingstars.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home.



Member News



Danielle Supkis Cheek named as a "40 Under 40" honoree by CPA Practice Advisor

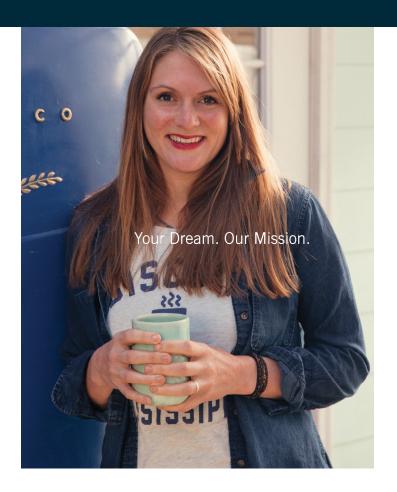
On October 1, Pannell Kerr Forster of Texas, P.C. (PKF Texas) Entrepreneurial Advisory Services Director, Danielle Supkis Cheek, CPA, CFE, CVA, has been named one of 2019's "40 Under 40" honorees by CPA Practice Advisor. This is her sixth year receiving the award.

The 40 Under 40 Awards spotlight top practicing public accountants, educators and thought leaders, who are leading their profession by visibly and incrementally changing the accounting through exemplary leadership, innovative thinking, collaborative efforts to provide unity across generations and community outreach, which extends visibility of the profession outside the workplace.

"We are thrilled to have one of our Directors recognized for their hard work and innovative efforts in the accounting industry," said Byron Hebert, CPA, CTP, Entrepreneurial Advisory Services Practice Leader and Chief Growth Officer. "On behalf of PKF Texas, I'd like to thank Danielle for being a positive example for not only our team members and their careers but all accounting professionals."

"It's an honor to be recognized among esteemed leaders in the industry," said Supkis Cheek.
"Change in accounting is here - with much more to come – so it's an exciting time to be part of that impact."

To see the full list of honorees, visit www.cpapracticeadvisor.com.



"They are helpful. They are kind. And they are right down the street. I love to have a bank like Hancock Whitney that is so close to my business."

Kait S.

At Hancock Whitney, we help our clients achieve their dreams by providing financial solutions delivered with expertise and warm 5-star service. Each day, we reaffirm our mission to help people achieve their financial goals and dreams. We work hard to create opportunities for people and the communities we serve—our purpose for doing what we do.

713-951-7250 hancockwhitney.com



Hancock Whitney Bank, Member FDIC.

CLASSIFIEDS

PRACTICES FOR SALE -

email Holmes@APS.net.

Gross revenues shown:
League City Area CPA \$1.8MM;
Kingwood Humble Area CPA \$734K;
North Houston Area CPA \$825K;
The Spring/Woodlands Area CPA
\$1.3MM, \$740K, & EA \$300K;
Brazos Valley Area CPA \$640K;
Greenway-Galleria Area CPA \$546K;
Beaumont Port Arthur Area CPA \$579K;
SE Houston CPA \$437K;
NW of Houston CPA \$404K;
SE Texas CPA \$311K.
Call 888-847-1040 or

CPAS HELPING SCHOOLS

If you would like to make a financial contribution, volunteer with the committee, become involved in a local school, speak to students about your accounting career, or learn more about our grant program for schools, contact Carol Spencer (cspencer@houstoncpa.org, 713.622.7733 ext.320)



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CPAs play an integral role in their company's important decision-making process. Becoming a sponsor is a great way to engage these influential accounting professionals. There are many upcoming events for you to take advantage of.

Sponsorship benefits vary and levels start at \$500. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for an upcoming event contact TXCPA Houston at cpe@houstoncpa.org.

Please welcome our new strategic corporate sponsor, Cornerstone Wealth Management!







LET'S WORK TOGETHER.

At Goodman Financial, we speak your language. While tax and accounting services are your specialty, we focus solely on financial advisory and investment management. As fee-only fiduciaries, we provide these services in a tax-efficient manner, in coordination with our clients' CPAs. Our goal is to work with you in serving your clients.

This firm is not a CPA firm.

Call us today 713.599.1777 or visit www.GoodmanFinancial.com

Serving clients across Texas and the US.



LOOKING FOR A NEW OPPORTUNITY?

Visit the TXCPA Houston Career Center to find the job that's right for you!

Employers and recruiters can access the most qualified talent pool with relevant work experience to fulfill staffing needs. Job candidates can access the most successful and rewarding companies to invest their skills and talents in.

Recruiters: Target your recruiting and reach qualified candidates quickly and easily.

Job Candidates: Post your resume to all employers, even confidentially and get job alerts sent to your inbox.

Simply complete our online registration form and start posting jobs or searching for jobs today!

Visit <u>careers.houstoncpa.org</u> today!

Nonprofit Assistance Program We Need Your Experience!

One of Houston CPA Society's charges is to assist not-for-profit organizations that need the assistance of a CPA but are unable to afford it. We match volunteer CPAs with organizations on a SINGLE PROJECT BASIS only, not for on-going services such as routine accounting. Volunteer CPAs are not asked to provide annual audits. We need YOU to be a volunteer and experience the satisfaction of helping a worthwhile cause!

By signing up to be a part of the program, we will add you to our volunteer pool and may call on you if a need arises in an area you have indicated. You may decline to accept any request.

Yes...I am willing to participate in the Community Services Volunteer Program, if needed, and may be able to provide assistance in the area(s) indicated below:

assistance in the area(s) indicated below:		
ACE:		
☐ Educate young professionals on career development and financial literacy		
TAX:		
□ Application for exempt status under 501(c)(3) (Preparation of Form 1023)		
□ Preparation of tax returns and/or annual 990s		
ACCOUNTING/FINANCIAL REPORTING:		
□ Accounting policies and procedures		
☐ Financial reporting policies and procedures		
☐ General ledger set up consulting		
☐ Assist with the preparation of client-prepared audit schedules		
OTHER AREAS:		
□ Silent Auction Management Assistance		
□ Please specify		
Name Employer		
Address Zip		
Daytime Phone: Email:		
Do you have prior experience with nonprofits? (Experience is not required to be a part of this program.) If so, please describe:		
Do you have restrictions or strong preferences on the geographic area of Houston where you will volunteer?		
Do you have restrictions or strong preferences on the type of charity you will volunteer for?		

So Forum



777 Post Oak Boulevard Suite 500 Houston TX 77056-3212

Phone: 713-622-7733

Fax: 713-622-0522