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Sustainable Success via “Career Fluid” Strategies Outlined in 2022 Accounting MOVE Project Report

***Bonnie Buol Ruszczyk takes helm of Accounting MOVE Project,
industry’s only annual measurement of women, founded in 2010***

Chicago, Il, October 28, 2022 --

The new “career fluid” work culture presents deep currents for growth for women and firms in the accounting and advisory profession, according to results released today by the Accounting MOVE Project. In the MOVE cohort, women have solidified their presence at 31% of firm partners and principals, validating the innovations sparked at CPA firms by the COVID-19 pandemic.

More responsibility, earlier in their careers: that's what younger women want. Accounting MOVE Project firms are meeting that ambition with new forms of career development, matched by new ways to pace career advancement for sustained success.

Along with this year's report, the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance released today its two lists of exemplary CPA firms, based on the Accounting MOVE Project results: the 2022 Best Firms for Women list and the 2022 Best Firms for Equity Leadership list. Winning firms are listed below.

"This year's study highlights how firms have shifted their approaches to developing and providing career opportunities. Firms are accelerating the advancement of women based on the success of the new strategies they implemented in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Tricia Bencich, Inclusion & Social Responsibility Associate Director for Moss Adams.

Among the innovations showcased in this year's report are sabbaticals, now offered by 46% of MOVE Project firms, including by SAPRO, a national sponsor of the MOVE Project. "People need to take leave to spend time with family, travel, learn a language, take a course, care or volunteer. Most people have never taken a break in their working lives and yearned for space to travel and explore. A sabbatical allows women to reacquaint themselves with who they are and what they value. It provides a fresh perspective, allowing you to return to your career as a more innovative and creative person. Women need to give themselves the gift of time," said Mary Maguire, Chief Operating Officer SAPRO.

"Now more than ever women need a third-party stamp of approval like the MOVE Project lists and the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance to find firms where they can grow and thrive. Traditional career paths are changing so quickly that firms can hardly keep up. The 2022 Move Project shows fresh avenues of advancement," said Cindy Stanley, Executive Director of the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance.

At the conference, Accounting MOVE Project founder Joanne Cleaver handed the reins to Bonnie Buol Ruszczyk, president of [bbr companies](#) and incoming manager of MOVE, who will continue to collaborate with the AFWA and sponsors to celebrate and challenge the accounting and advisory profession as it seeks to advance women and diverse talent in new and sustainable ways.

“Bonnie has provided invaluable behind-the-scenes guidance that has helped the MOVE Project anticipate emerging trends and provide insight to participating firms,” Cleaver said. “The profession is fortunate to have her energy and insight to propel the MOVE Project to even greater relevance.”

The Best CPA Firms for Women

(In alphabetical order)

Abbott, Stringham & Lynch

Abbott, Stringham & Lynch is sustaining a culture of close collaboration as remote work takes hold. As part of its evolving culture, it’s now placing an emphasis on pursuing projects which prove fulfilling for its staff.

BeachFleischman PLLC

No diversity deficit here: 21% of BeachFleischman’s women principals identify as minorities. The firm rapidly evolves its career paths to anticipate next steps for advancement-craving millennials...and Gen Z.

Bland & Associates, P.C.

Bland & Associates is making quick progress. In early 2020, women comprised just 17% of principals and partners. Now, the demographic represents an astonishing 44% of leadership.

Clark number

With women comprising 51% of Clark Nuber's partners and principals, it is no surprise that they are on both the Accounting MOVE Project Best and Equity Leadership lists. But this firm is not one to rest on its laurels. It has also created a robust diversity, equity, and inclusion program, including making DEI a mandatory part of leadership reviews, as well as other programs focused on embracing employee recommendations on flexible work arrangements and career progression.

Eide Bailly

Eide Bailly proves that a big firm can make a big difference for women, with determination: This year, with women accounting for 32% of the firm’s partners and principals, it lands on both the Accounting MOVE Project Best

and Equity Leadership lists. Thanks to an energetic internal rotation program, women here can try out different roles and practices without uprooting their families or disrupting their career track or earning progress.

Frazier & Deeter

Frazier & Deeter has seen exceptional growth in the last year, and the fresh wave of momentum is helping to solidify the gains made by women.

HBE LLP

Young professionals might leave for a while, but they often want to come home when they start their families...which is why HBE keeps the door wide open. Its winning strategy for attracting remote talent is to showcase all that they'll learn while they're with the firm and to keep in close contact to welcome them back when they realize they can grow in place.

James Moore & Co.

Strong retention at James Moore undergirds the firm's momentum, proving that it takes both culture and strategy to elevate women.

Jones & Roth

Jones and Roth is thriving in the career-fluid workspace, mapping out well-rounded careers for employees on any track. The efforts have resulted in the flexibility women need to be successful.

Kerkering, Barberio & Co.

Kerkering Barberio Co. is outpacing its peers when it comes to women in decision-making roles. By guaranteeing flexibility, women are now in the majority at the partner and principal levels.

MCM CPAs & Advisors LLP

Not only do women comprise 37% of MCM's partners and principals – putting them on track to reach gender parity in the near future – the firm only loses 21% of women from the director level to partner, less than half the typical rate at firms nationwide. An early trendsetter in the area of allowing employees to define their own schedules, it also added a third Unplugged Day in 2022 where the firm completely closes, and employees can "turn off their brains" to recharge and come back refreshed.

Moss Adams

The firm continues to be a trailblazer in leadership accountability. Partners are now asked to review the internal diversity, equity, and inclusion dashboard monthly to see how they are helping Moss Adams achieve its goals. This consistent data analysis – looking at numbers firm-wide as well as by region and service line – ensures progress is made and drives strategic planning.

Novogradac & Company LLP

Novogradac's partnership pipeline is more consistent than most, resulting in a steadily rising proportion of women partners, now at 35%. A quarter of the firm's women partners are ethnic minorities – a rare accomplishment. Its next advance: blending advocacy with allyship to build on women's advancement and create more opportunities for all.

Rehmann LLC

Women comprise 36% of the management committee at this perennial on the MOVE Project Best Firms list – outstripping its cohort, where women comprise 27% of management committees. These days, Rehmann is adapting winning ways of its renowned women's initiative for a full-fledged diversity initiative.

SAPRO

International firm SAPRO debuts in the MOVE Project on both the Best and Equity Leadership lists, with a blockbuster number: 44% of its partners and principals are women. In 2017, firm founders had the chance to build a better CPA firm from scratch... and they did. "Extreme wellness" programs like sabbaticals for all and holistic well-being benefits help professionals fully participate in the firm's growth.

The Bonadio Group

Recognizing burnout is rampant in the profession, The Bonadio Group addressed it head-on by closing the firm for the week of July 4 much to the delight of the firm's employees. The firm loses fewer women in the transition from director level to partnership – only 24% an improvement from 34% in 2020 and much better than the national average of 50%.

The Best CPA Firms for Equity Leadership

(In descending order of percentage of women partners & principals. To qualify, women must comprise at least 31% of a firm's partners and principals.)

100% Kaiser Consulting

Since women comprise 100% of its leadership team, Kaiser Consulting will likely always be at the top of this list. This is not, however, the only way this firm leads. Flexible work solutions have always been a firm focus, and other firms now seek Kaiser's advice when setting up their own programs and policies. Now that they are moving beyond Ohio, expect to see more innovation from this MOVE firm.

74% KWC Certified Public Accountants

KWC is a statistical anomaly: it retains 90% of its manager in the partnership pipeline maintaining women as a stunning 74% of its partners and principals. Remote work has only opened new avenues of business development training, enabling rising women to qualify for senior leadership in a remote and hybrid work environment.

63% RoseRyan, a ZRG Company

Joining ZRG has opened up a world of lateral developmental rotations for women at this boutique firm, where women maintain 63% of its management committee. The first set of skills gained by midlevel women: how to assess potential clients.

55% Kerkering, Barberio & Co.

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51% Clark Number

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focused on embracing employee recommendations on flexible work arrangements and career progression.

50% James Moore & Co.

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50% Jones & Roth

Jones and Roth is thriving in the career-fluid workspace, mapping out well-rounded careers for employees on any track. The efforts have resulted in the flexibility women need to be successful.

47% BeachFleischman PC

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44% SAPRO

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44% Bland & Associates, P.C.

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42% HBE LLP

Young professionals might leave for a while, but they often want to come home when they start their families... which is why HBE keeps the door wide open. Its winning strategy for attracting remote talent is to showcase all that they'll learn while they're with the firm and to keep in close contact to welcome them back when they realize they can grow in place.

41% Abbott, Stringham & Lynch

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38% Johanson & Yau

Half of J&Y's partners are women, validating its innovative work-life policies. And the firm has intentionally aligned with the LGBTQ, Asian, Latino, and other diverse communities in its West coast markets, differentiating itself from more reticent competitors.

37% MCM CPAs & Advisors LLP

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36% Rehmann LLC

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35% Novogradac & Company LLP

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advance: blending advocacy with allyship to build on women's advancement and create more opportunities for all.

35% Frazier & Deeter

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35% Councilor Buchanan & Mitchell, PC

Over the past few years, Councilor, Buchanan & Mitchell has integrated dozens of new team members through a series of strategic mergers. The outcome is a diverse staff, and varying client types, project focuses, and industries served.

32% Lurie LLP

Lurie LLP (now the Minneapolis office of Eisner Amper) independently earned a spot on the 2022 Accounting MOVE Project Best Firms for Equity Leadership. The recognition of the reliably high proportion of women in leadership at Lurie LLP underscores its leadership in advancing women through both culture and practice. Additionally, ever-increasing transparency, with Lurie leaders looping all employees in on the firm's priorities and progress, dovetails perfectly with the expectations of Gen Z staff.

32% Eide Bailly

Eide Bailly proves that a big firm can make a big difference for women, with determination: This year, with women accounting for 32% of the firm's partners and principals, it lands on both the Accounting MOVE Project Best and Equity Leadership lists. Thanks to an energetic internal rotation program, women here can try out different roles and practices without uprooting their families or disrupting their career track or earning progress.

About the Accounting MOVE Project

The Accounting MOVE Project is based on the MOVE methodology, developed by research partner Wilson-Taylor Associates, Inc., which investigates the factors proven to be 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;

E – Entrepreneurship: operating experience for managing or business ownership

Methodology

Since 2010, the Accounting MOVE Project has measured and supported the advancement of women at accounting and consulting firms. MOVE is the only annual benchmarking project that both counts and advocates for women in the profession.

The MOVE Project advisory board includes leaders from association partners the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance and founding sponsor Moss Adams.

MOVE is made possible by support from its sponsors and by administrative fees paid by participating firms. Firms receive benchmarking reports based on the MOVE Project.

See the archives of MOVE Project reports at <https://accountingmoveproject.com/archives/>.

About the Accounting MOVE Project Partners



Founding Sponsor Moss Adams brings more West to business. More than a location, it's a way of doing business in which innovation thrives and optimism abounds. At Moss Adams, we're excited by the greatness of possibility and the extraordinary potential for companies and individuals to prosper. With more than 3,800 professionals across 30-plus locations in the West and beyond, we provide the world's most innovative companies with specialized accounting, consulting, and wealth management services to help them embrace emerging opportunity. For more information, visit www.mossadams.com.



National Sponsor SAPRO is a full-service assurance, tax and advisory consulting firm providing a world-class workforce perfectly optimized to meet public accounting industry needs. We are dedicated to revolutionizing the accounting industry by bringing balance to the public accounting world and the communities surrounding us. Our rotating and mobile network of experienced professionals creates a significant impact in our communities, leaving a unique legacy for future generations. For more information, visit www.sapro.com.



Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance
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The Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance promotes the professional growth of women in accounting and finance. Members of the association benefit from opportunities to connect with colleagues, advance their careers, and become industry leaders. For 83 years, the organization has proudly upheld its mission to enable women in all accounting and related fields to achieve their full potential and to contribute to their profession. Visit www.afwa.org for more information.

The Accounting MOVE Project is the basis for two recognitions of excellence for women in the accounting and advisory profession, both awarded by the AFWA:

- *Best CPA Firms for Women*: To earn a spot on the list, an employer must have *both* a proportionate number of women at most or all levels of management *and* proven success with the MOVE factors. An employer cannot win by having a rich array of programs but few women in leadership. We believe that if a firm's MOVE factors are effective, it will have a healthy and growing proportion of women in its leadership pipeline.

- *Best CPA Firms for Equity Leadership*: This list recognizes firms with at least 30% women partners and principals, as roughly a third is the widely recognized “tipping point” or members of any identity group to have individual impact. The Equity Leadership list recognizes firms that have achieved that milestone through any combination of culture, programs, initiatives, and growth.



CPAacademy.org offers an easy-to-use platform for knowledge sharing and idea exchange through the marketing and presenting of the most up-to-date educational content and developments important to the accounting profession. On CPAacademy.org, members have access to the highest quality webinar presentations by thought leaders in the profession.



bbr companies was founded on the knowledge that not all firms need the same level of marketing resources, leading to my part-time CMO offering. Whether you need to create a strategic marketing plan, help managing projects your current team can't handle, mentoring or coaching for young marketing team members, or help with DEI training or program development, my goal is to deliver comprehensive, effective insight and services so you can reach – and exceed – your growth goals. Now with the addition of the Accounting MOVE Project, we are excited to continue helping firms gain competitive advantages by delivering the most comprehensive data and guidance on finding, retaining, developing and advancing women and diverse talent.