2020 Notable Women in Accounting & Consulting

CONGRATULATIONS

Few qualities are more vital to the health of any business than financial equilibrium and organizational efficiency. Rarely has the value of both been more strongly felt than in recent months. From stress-tested balance sheets to fast-changing regulations, and reconfigured supply chains to “new normal” working arrangements, the Covid-19 pandemic has challenged even the strongest of businesses.

Standing tall within this chaotic breach are the foot soldiers of professional service firms, led by accountants and management consultants.

In selecting the 86 honorees for this year’s list of Notable Women in Accounting and Consulting, Crain’s sought to spotlight the accomplished metropolitan area professionals and problem-solvers who keep businesses churning. The talented individuals presented here are a diverse group, skilled at resourceful innovation and disruptive thinking. These women are experts in tax regulation, audit, estate administration, forensic accounting, organizational transformation, advisory services, fundraising and business structure. They represent an extraordinary group of professionals from firms of varying size and renown.

To find these honorees, Crain’s consulted with trusted sources in the business world in general and in the accounting and consulting realms in particular. The nominations submitted by individuals and firms in the New York metropolitan area were rigorously vetted. Ultimately, each of the accounting and consulting notables was chosen for her career achievements and involvement in industry and community organizations—and at times her efforts to help New York rebound from the coronavirus.

Read their biographies and learn how the members of this remarkable cohort keep the gears of business whirling.

[Excerpt]
Janis Cowhey
Partner, Marcum LLP

Janis Cowhey has made impressive inroads in financial planning for nontraditional families. At the public accounting and advisory firm Marcum, her practice focuses on estate, gift and income tax planning; financial planning for same-sex and unmarried couples; individual and fiduciary tax compliance; and providing corporate counsel. Cowhey, a member of Marcum’s trusts and estates practice group and national practice leader of its modern family and LGBT services practice group, routinely works with high-net-worth clients to develop comprehensive estate plans. In particular, she helps LGBT families navigate the complexities of financial planning. In addition, Cowhey advises business owners on strategy, succession planning and shareholder agreements. She lectures regularly on estate planning topics, and she has been quoted as an expert on LGBT issues by media outlets, including The New York Times.

Diane Giordano
Partner, tax and business, Marcum LLP

When Diane Giordano joined Marcum in 2005, she already had 17 years at big-league accounting firms under her belt. Which is why, in part, she’s succeeded so notably at the public accounting and advisory services firm. At Marcum, Giordano provides multiple-state companies and family-owned businesses with tax consulting, financial statement disclosure and compliance services. She serves several Securities and Exchange Commission reporting entities, and she is editor of Marcum’s newsletter, Beyond the Numbers. Giordano, who helps produce the Marcum Year-End Tax Guide, is a regular instructor on tax-related technical topics. She presents frequently on industry panels, and she has received multiple business awards.
Colleen McHugh
Co-partner-in-charge of the alternative investment group, Marcum LLP

Colleen McHugh is an erudite authority on all things tax. The co-partner-in-charge of Marcum’s national alternative investment group tax department has more than 15 years’ experience in the field, with a particular focus on partnership and private-equity taxation. McHugh guides private-equity funds, their partnerships, and management companies through intricate tax matters on behalf of the accounting and advisory services firm, leveraging her extensive knowledge of partnership taxation and local, state and international tax compliance. That expertise has been applied by many grateful private-equity funds and their portfolio companies. Before joining Marcum in 2013, McHugh spent time at several Big Four public accounting firms.

Elizabeth Mullen
Partner, Marcum LLP

Elizabeth Mullen has the sort of expertise—in corporate taxation, Securities and Exchange Commission reporting, mergers and acquisitions, transfer pricing, executive compensation, consolidated returns and tax controversy—that only comes with 25 years in the accounting business. That laundry list of competencies comes courtesy of her experience at an international luxury goods group, a consumer products company, Big Four public accounting firms and, since 2007, the accounting and advisory services giant Marcum. In her role there, Mullen provides services related to her aforementioned proficiencies in the financial services, luxury retail and consumer products industries. She has spoken about and published work on tax and audit subjects.
Natalie Verbanac
Partner, Marcum LLP

Natalie Verbanac, an instructor in Marcum's continuing education training program, has a lot to offer trainees. As a partner at the accounting and advisory firm, Verbanac provides assurance services, including due diligence, audits of financial statements and internal controls, to domestic and international clients. The recipients of her services hail from a number of industries, such as food and beverage, retail, consumer products, health care technology, manufacturing, distribution and advertising. Verbanac, a member of Marcum’s diversity and inclusion committee, has experience auditing Securities and Exchange Commission reporting companies and working with firms undergoing private and public equity and debt offerings. She is president of the Nassau chapter of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants.