



Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance

CONNECT • ADVANCE • LEAD

Mesa East Valley's IN TOUCH

February 2015

Vol 23, Issue 8

www.mesaeastvalleyafwa.org

President's Corner by Stacey Craig



Wow, this year seems to be flying by! The nominating committee is hard at work identifying next year's board. Have you thrown your name in the hat yet? If not, let Diane Hewlett know if you are interested.

It's also that time again to start thinking about our annual "Empowering Today's Accountant" Seminar, which is scheduled for August 29th. This is a perfect opportunity to get involved and support

AFWA by volunteering for one of the conference committees. It's a fairly short-term commitment and Laura Mangan has been involved with this event for so long that she knows exactly how to put everyone to work! Please contact Laura or myself to volunteer.

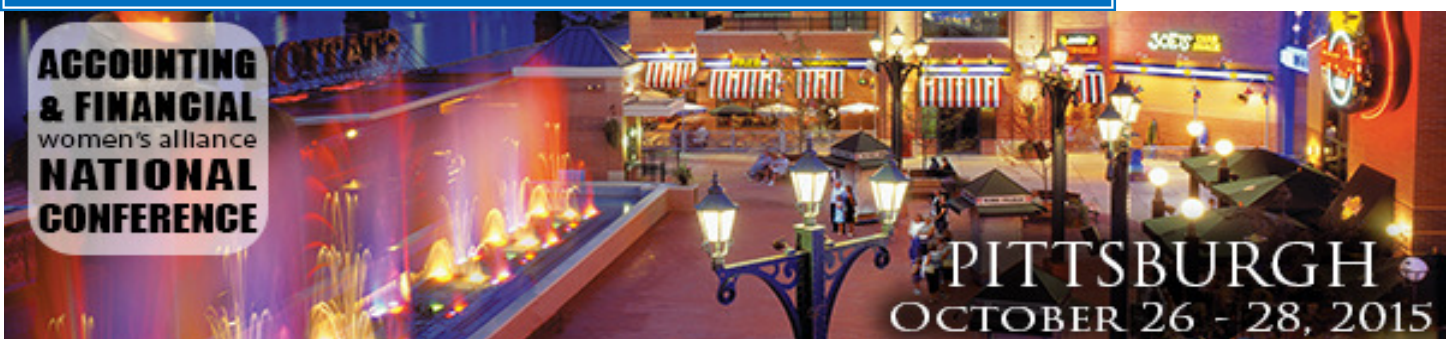
I'm really excited about this month's program. Our very own Shelby Williams will be presenting "Excel Tips and Tricks," and you won't want to miss it! I'm looking forward to learning a new trick or two. You know what they say about old dogs...

Also, don't forget that this month's community service project is our quarterly food drive. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you there!

Stacey Craig

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February Meeting Details Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Quarterly Food Drive

"I am a success today because I had a friend who believed in me, and I didn't have the heart to let him down."

Abraham Lincoln

Happy 103rd Birthday

Arizona!



TOPIC: Excel Tips and Tricks

LOCATION: Landmark Restaurant
809 W Main St, Mesa

DINNER: Meatloaf or Salad Room

TIME: 5:30 p.m. Networking
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 p.m. CPE Session

COST: \$26 member / \$32 guest / \$20 student

RSVP online at:

<http://mesaeastvalleyafwa.org/meetings.html>

(Salad room option only after Feb. 20)

You can also contact our membership director
Patricia Schumacher at pks-cpa@cox.net or call
480-583-4344

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES: If you would like to cancel a reservation, please contact Patty at the above email. Per chapter rules, if you register and do not attend or do not cancel by the Monday prior to the meeting, you will be charged the cost of the dinner. For more information regarding administrative policies such as

ANNOUNCEMENTS



- **Monthly 50/50 Drawing:** If you can't win the Lottery, try the 50/50 drawing for better odds (tickets \$2 each or 6 for \$10). Proceeds benefit our scholarship fund.
- **Community Service:**
 - Financial Literacy Program:** Our chapter is working to help others learn the financial skills that will help them manage their money and be successful in life. This program uses the FDIC Money Smart Program. If you are interested in helping, please contact Pat Donohue at Pkdonohue@cox.net
- **AFWA National Conference: Save the Date!**
 - October 26-28, 2015: Pittsburgh, PA
 - Visit the website at www.afwa.org for updates as the year goes on.
- **AFWA Scholarships**
 - The deadline has passed for our chapter scholarships, but many scholarships are available from AFWA National. Please see Page 8 for more information and how to apply.

Heart Walk—join the Number Crunchers Team!

Saturday, March 21

In 1999 the American Heart Association set a bold 10-year goal: To reduce coronary heart disease, stroke and risk by 25 percent by 2010. We achieved the reduction in deaths ahead of schedule and made substantial progress against three of the six risk factors. Because of this success, the Board of Directors approved a 2020 Impact Goal. This new goal looks beyond helping people reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke by focusing on helping them build stronger health and a better quality of life.

The 2015 Phoenix Heart Walk event will be held on March 21st at the Wesley Bolin Plaza, Downtown Phoenix. The Heart Walk is a non-competitive event including two different paths; a 5k Heart Walk and 1 mile Stroke Walk followed by a heart healthy festival. Put your walking shoes on and participate or come down and cheer the walkers and pick up some great information on staying healthy.

Join Team Captain Laura Mangan and AFWA and IMA members on the Number Crunchers Team for either the 1 mile or 5K route or make a donation to support our team. Visit our team page:

<http://phoenixheartwalk.kintera.org/numbercrunchers> to sign up or donate or both!

Meetings and Events around Phoenix

IMA Valley of the Sun Chapter (www.imavalleyofthesun.org):

- Lunch and Learn:** February 26: “HR Update: Issues for 2015”
Goldie’s Neighborhood Sports Café, Scottsdale, aZ
- March Meeting: Tuesday, March 17:** Tour of the Office of the Arizona State Treasury Department (afternoon), Dinner, and presentation: “The State of the Arizona State Treasury”
- Breakfast Meeting:** Thursday, March 26 “How do Nonprofits win Foundation Grants”
- Lunch and Learn:** Friday, April 17: “Preparing Succession Plans”

AFWA Phoenix Chapter (www.phoenixafwa.org):

-**February meeting: Thursday, February 19:** “Protect your Company through Risk Assessment and Employment Audits”, presented by Julie Pace and Jennifer Sellers, Please visit the chapter’s website to register and for more information. For more information, visit the website: www.e-factorgame.com.

E-Factor Ethics CPE workshop:

February 26, 2015, 8 am to noon

Presented by Marc Maslov, This is an interactive and fun way to complete the Arizona ethics requirement for CPAs.

ICAN: Positive Programs for Youth:

One of our members, Brenda Masters, is involved with Collaborating for a Cause. Please see the information below and contact her if you are interested in finding out more about this organization.

Collaborating for a Cause is a networking group comprised of nonprofit finance and development professionals. The group conducts monthly meetings aimed at providing networking opportunities and expert led best practice learning experiences for our members. The atmosphere is lively and friendly, yet structured and efficient.

For information on upcoming events and ways to get involved, please contact Brenda or Danielle:

Brenda@icanaz.org or Danielle@icanaz.org



**ACCOUNTING
& FINANCIAL**
women's alliance
**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE**

PITTSBURGH
OCTOBER 26 - 28, 2015



Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance
CONNECT • ADVANCE • LEAD
Mesa East Valley Chapter

2014 - 2015 Program Schedule

Date	Program	Speaker	Promotion	Salad Bar or Entree
7/22/14	GAAP/FASB Updates	Chris Lutes & Adam Cary		Atlantic Salmon
8/26/14	Nonprofit Accounting	Patricia Schumacher	Qtrly Food Bank	Champagne Chicken
9/23/14	Economic Update	Annie Groth	Joint meeting with Phx Chapter	Pot Roast
10/28/14	Resume Writing & Interview Skills	Julie Walker	Student Night	Crab Cakes
11/18/14	Forensic Accounting	Billy Vickers	Qtrly Food Bank 2 Hours CPE	Roasted Turkey
12/16/14	Team Building	Roger Gannon	Gift Exchange & Holiday Gift Drive ½ price member	Prime Rib
1/27/15	Federal & State Tax Updates	Lisa Novack, IRS & Anthony Forschino AZDOR	2 Hours of CPE	Chicken Marsala
2/24/15	Excel	Shelby Williams	Qtrly Food Bank Joint Meeting Scholarship Awards	Meatloaf
3/24/15	My Brain Made Me Do It: Common Investor Mistakes	George E Rambow III, Edward Jones	Bring Your Boss	Southwest Tilapia
April 2015 Fun Event - TBD				
5/26/15	Professional Image Leadership	Mary Lynn Ilitsky TBA	Qtrly Food Bank 2 Hours CPE	Champagne Chicken
6/23/15	Officer Installation	No CPE Program		Atlantic Salmon

Regular monthly meetings are held at the Landmark Restaurant 809 W. Main St. Mesa, AZ 85201. Speakers or topics may change if necessary. Please contact the chapter before the meeting date to confirm.

Cost: \$26 - Member, \$32 - Guest, \$20 - Student Reservations should be made by noon the Friday before the meeting. Any cancellations must be made by noon on the Monday before the meeting. The Mesa East Valley Chapter will be charged by the restaurant for all meals reserved. Any missed reservations will be billed by the chapter treasurer to the member or guest if they are not canceled by the deadline. To RSVP, please visit our chapter website at www.mesaeastvalleyafwa.org/meetings. To change or cancel reservations, please contact Membership Director Patricia Schumacher at pkc-cpa@cox.net.

Top Finance Priorities and Challenges for 2015

(Provided to AFWA for our newsletter by Natassia Culp, Field Public Relations Manager, Robert Half)

With the new year already here, your organization is likely busy analyzing your business goals and setting priorities. Wouldn't it be helpful to know what executives at other companies are trying to achieve this year? The [2015 Finance Priorities Survey](#), conducted by Protiviti and the Financial Executives Research Foundation (FERF), offers an inside look at U.S. executives' top concerns.

The survey, conducted during the third quarter of 2014, shows that financial managers are incredibly busy. According to the report: "The sheer number of priorities they are addressing is at an all-time high in our four-year study." Compared to last year's results, many more areas have moved from "moderate priority" to the "significant priority" range. Here are the top five finance priorities, in order, of chief financial officers (CFOs) and other executives polled for this study:

1. Strategic Planning

Many financial executives are rightly concerned with maneuvering their companies into the best possible position for long-term growth. Strategic planning includes anticipating challenges, gathering and readying [the necessary staff](#) and resources to address those challenges, and evaluating the role of the finance function within the entire organization.

2. Budgeting

To facilitate decision-making across the entire organization, a business not only needs accurate budgets, but also sharper, real-time analytics and instant information. A growing trend is holistic budgeting: improving processes in a comprehensive manner and integrating the role of the finance department into the whole enterprise.

3. Domestic Regulations

A continuing trend from 2014, financial managers find it a challenge to follow and adapt to new laws and standards. CFOs and executives need to hire the right people with the expertise and skills to manage [compliance issues](#). In many ways, it's a perfect storm: At the same time the number of regulations is mushrooming, an aging workforce means organizations are losing a substantial knowledge base to retirements — making [succession planning](#) more important than ever.

4. Profitability Analysis

The backbone of any business is bottom-line profitability. To make strategic decisions about which products, channels, customers and markets to pursue, financial managers have to spend more time and resources to analyze data. Among the significant finance priorities of large companies (with annual revenues of \$1 billion or more) is [big data analytics](#). The report suggests that small and midsize companies have not yet begun to take advantage of this growing trend.

5. Cash Forecasting

Closely related to budgeting and strategic planning, cash forecasting is one of the top financial priorities of 2015. As the report puts it, "Cash remains king, as does cash clarity." Sound cash forecasting can allow businesses to adapt to market volatility with greater agility and make better decisions based on anticipated cash shortages or surpluses.

The common thread through all these and other finance priorities is the prerequisite to attract and retain top talent, especially those with well-developed [soft skills](#), such as leadership, change management, conflict resolution and mentoring/coaching. Organizations must hire skilled executives and financial managers who can build relationships (with employees, clients and regulators), analyze data, make accurate projections, recommend strategy and communicate and collaborate with other departments. Without the right people in the right places, companies will find it very difficult to reach their business goals — in 2015 or the years ahead.

(continued on next page)

Slate of Officers for our 2015-16 Board

Our nominating committee is working on filling the Slate of Officers and the board for next year. Please contact Diane Hewlett at dianephx928@gmail.com if you are interested in one of these positions for next year!

Office	Name
President	
President-Elect	Open
Treasurer	Kathleen Pease
Assistant Treasurer	
Secretary	
Past President	Stacey Craig
Membership Director	Patricia Schumacher
Programs Director	
Asst Programs Director	
Member Relations	
By-Laws	
Newsletter	
Career Services	
Webmaster	
Assistant Webmaster	
Public Relations	
Education Foundation	
Scholarship	
Activities	
Community Service	

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Abstract

Finance executives' priorities for 2015. (Note to writer: Base this piece on Protiviti's Finance Priorities Survey: <http://www.protiviti.com/financesurvey>.)

Accountemps, a [Robert Half](#) company, is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm for temporary accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals. Accountemps has more than 340 locations worldwide. More resources, including online job search services and the [Accountemps blog](#), can be found at accountemps.com.

Natassia Culp can be reached at natassia.culp@roberthalf.com



AFWA Foundation Scholarships

(Please visit their webpage for live links of this information: www.afwa.org/foundation/scholarships)



The mission of the Foundation is to promote and advance education, career development and leadership in finance and accounting, with the goal of guiding women to achieve success in their careers. We believe that to decrease barriers for women in the accounting and financial profession, education and access to career development resources are essential. The Foundation aims to ensure women will have the tools and resources to achieve every career success they desire.

NOW OPEN: UNDERGRADUATE AND MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE STUDENTS. Applications due April 1, 2015.

Undergraduate Scholarship: To support the costs of attending 3rd, 4th, or 5th year when pursuing an accounting or finance degree. [Download the Undergraduate application.](#)

Masters Scholarship: For those attending an accredited College or University enrolled in a master's program, and is pursuing an accounting or finance degree. [Download the Masters application.](#)

Endorsement Form: You do not need to be a member of AFWA, or affiliated with a Chapter to apply for the Undergraduate and Masters Scholarship. However, if you have an endorsement from an AFWA member or Chapter, please enclose [this form](#) with your application. [Click now to find an AFWA Chapter near you.](#)

More Scholarships from the Foundation of AFWA

Finance and Accounting Scholarships: The undergraduate and master's scholarships are open to the public.

- **Undergraduate Scholarships** – To support the costs of attending 3rd, 4th, or 5th year when pursuing an accounting or finance degree.
- Including the [Paula Zanni Award](#), presented annually to one outstanding undergraduate scholar.
- **Master's Scholarships** – For those attending an accredited College or University enrolled in a master's program, and is pursuing an accounting or finance degree.
- **Native American Scholarship** – To support the costs of attending 3rd, 4th, or 5th year when pursuing an accounting or finance degree. Applicant must be enrolled or a direct descendant of an enrolled member in a Federal or State recognized tribe.

AFWA Member Scholarships: Applicants must be a current member of AFWA to be considered. To apply, log into the [AFWA Member site](#) and find current applications in the Member Resources section. Or, contact your chapter scholarship chair or president for more information. Visit our [Chapter Directory](#) now

- **Certification** – To support the exam fees of AFWA members for any one of the following certifications: CPA, CFP, CFE, CIA, CMA, or CVA.
 - **CPAexcel Review** – To provide registration for a CPAexcel CPA Review Course
- PhD Scholarship** – To cover the cost of research for a student seeking a PhD degree in accounting. Applications due annually by March 1.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Prestigious status of professional affiliation
- National contacts for networking and professional information
- Forum for CPE
- Scholarship opportunities
- Leadership opportunities in supportive arena
- Subscription to *Accountability* e-Newsletter
- National and regional conferences at a discounted rate
- Access to Career Center
- Access to LinkedIn group
- National online membership directory
- Discounted membership to the Institute for Management Accountants (IMA)
- Discounted products and services through affiliation agreements (CPA review courses, CCH tax & accounting books, and Long Term Care Insurance)

Office	Name	Phone	Email
President	Stacey Craig		scraig23@cox.net
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Activities	Shelby Williams	602-430-8834	Shelby_williams@yahoo.com
Community Service	Dayna Brown		daynab@woodsidehomes.com