

2015 Best Firm



“Strive
NOT TO BE A
success,
BUT RATHER
to be of
VALUE.”

- Albert Einstein

MARISA AHRENS, CPA

Manager

Contact Me

marahr@yeoandyeo.com

989.793.9830

Connect with me on
LinkedIn



BEST CPA FIRM FOR WOMEN 2015

Marisa Ahrens

Women Leaders in Accounting



Meet Marisa

I am a Saginaw Valley State University 2008 graduate with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

Larry, my husband, and I reside in Reese with our two children, Lawrence and Ellen. I love spending time with my family and seeing life through my kids' eyes. I also enjoy traveling and running every chance I get.

I am the secretary/treasurer of Saginaw County Business & Education Partnership and participate in Junior Achievement.

Tell us about your career with Yeo & Yeo.

To be perfectly honest, I did not pick my major until my junior year of college. I started as a marketing major, then switched to pre-law, then economics, and finally chose accounting.

My dad was the one who advised me to go into accounting. He said that every company needs an accountant, so there will be many opportunities for me. He also frequently reminded me that many successful people have accounting backgrounds.

I started working at Yeo & Yeo in January 2009 in the audit department. Today, as a manager, I specialize in audit with an emphasis in schools, health care and not-for-profit entities as well as retirement plan audits. In June 2011, I made the decision to leave Yeo & Yeo and work for a private company. It lasted two months as I discovered what I truly had at Yeo & Yeo, and what I loved doing.

I was fortunate enough to be welcomed back to Yeo & Yeo in August 2011. What I enjoy most about my job is the relationships I have with my clients and co-workers. Work is fun when you have great people to work with. My job always challenges me intellectually and there is rarely a dull moment.



“There are so many opportunities for women in the accounting profession and you can have it all.”

Marisa, describe a time where Yeo & Yeo's work/life flexibility positively impacted you.

As a parent, work/life flexibility is very important. I was able to take 12 weeks off after each of my children were born without any worry. My work was transitioned well thanks to a great team and all I had to focus on was bonding with my new baby. And, with the ability to work remotely, I can leave at 3:00 in the afternoon for a doctor's appointment or to take care of a sick child and catch up on my work in the evening after the kids are in bed.

There is rarely a Friday that I work past 3:00 p.m. I like to work longer hours during the week so I can enjoy some extra time on Friday, especially in the summer. If I am in the office past 3:00, I am often asked, “What are you still doing here?”

How does Yeo & Yeo encourage the advancement of your career and how do you develop future leaders?

Yeo & Yeo has established a clear path of what it takes to be a principal. We have levels within each department and we are made aware of what it takes to get to the next level. At the manager level, we are assigned a principal to help us advance in our career. We meet at least once per quarter to review performance, expectations and any other items. Also, as a working mom, I have been paired with a career coach to show me that I can have both a family and a great career.

Yeo & Yeo also has an open door culture. If I ever have a question about most anything, I can pop into one of our principals' offices and ask for their insight. Our CEO also lives this culture and is always inviting us in for a chat about work or just wanting to know how the family is doing. I genuinely feel that they care about you as an individual and are willing to go the extra mile to show you that you belong here.

I help to develop my staff through on-the-job training. As auditors, we are at clients' offices nearly daily. I challenge staff to take on new responsibilities and show them that it isn't just about work, but also about the connections you make with your clients.

What challenges have you faced as a woman in accounting and how have you overcome them?

I have been faced with clients who would just rather work with a man. I must show them that I am very knowledgeable and that I know what I am doing. Typically by the end of the job, I have earned their respect because I have done good work and went well above their expectations.

What advice do you have for women new to the accounting profession?

There are so many opportunities for women in the accounting profession and you can have it all. You can have a family (if you choose) plus a great career in accounting. There is give-and-take in this profession. Sometimes work requires more from you and other times family does, but overall, you can have the best of both worlds.

What is your favorite motivational quote or best advice you have ever received?

“So I run straight towards the goal, in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.” Philippians 3:14

Yeo & Yeo is among 10 firms named to the 2015 Accounting MOVE Project Best Public Accounting Firms for Women list, conducted by Wilson Taylor, www.wilson-taylorassoc.com. Follow Yeo & Yeo on LinkedIn and Facebook as we profile women leaders within our firm through September.