

2015 Best Firm



“Never blame

ANYONE IN YOUR LIFE.

Good people give you

HAPPINESS.

Bad people give you

EXPERIENCE.

Worst people give you

LESSONS.

Best people give you

MEMORIES.”

CHRISTINE PORRAS, CPP

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BEST CPA FIRM FOR WOMEN 2015

Christine Porras

Women Leaders in Accounting



Meet Christine

I am a harmony-seeking individual. Warm-hearted, sympathetic and loyal are just a few of my traits. I enjoy when others are cheerful and I love to be a source of happiness for others.

I am the mother of one son, Storm. I care for two cats, and four lizards, which were left in my temporary care when my son moved to Lansing to obtain his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University. My son has since moved to Chicago to obtain his master's degree ... and I still have the lizards. I am learning to accept that they are a permanent addition to my home!

I love walking on the beach of Lake Michigan where my boyfriend, Brad, and I have a small cottage in Manistee. Brad and I enjoy watching sunsets, observing wildlife and being adventurous together. We like to boat, swim, jet-ski and tube. I am very fortunate to have a special bond with my mother who lives with me during the winter months and is only a mile away from our cottage during the summer months.

I enjoy being involved in the community and have a passion for my career as a payroll professional. I am the president of the Great Lakes Bay Chapter of the American Payroll Association (APA), of which I was a founding member. We have grown from five members to nearly 30 members over two years. I have served on the Michigan APA Statewide Conference for the past two years and am a member of the National APA. I am also passionate about volunteering my time to the Saginaw County Veterans Memorial Plaza, for which I have served as treasurer for two terms and currently serve as assistant treasurer, patiently awaiting my one-year “break” before becoming treasurer again.



Tell us about your career with Yeo & Yeo

I believe things happen for a reason because I did not anticipate working in payroll. Early in my career I accepted a position as a receptionist for Thomas Township. Shortly after, a position opened in the finance office for a payroll clerk which I transitioned to. While working at Thomas Township, I meet Yeo & Yeo principal, Steven Witt, who at the time was a township trustee. He was in search of a payroll professional and shared with me the opportunities at Yeo & Yeo. Shortly after, in 1998, I accepted a position with the firm. When I first started, there were approximately 25 payrolls and one part-time individual to assist me.

Our payroll services have grown significantly. Today, our Payroll Group includes two full-time and two-part time professionals who provide payroll services for more than 100 business clients. With Yeo & Yeo's support, and my perseverance, I have obtained the Fundamental Payroll Certification and the Certified Payroll Professional accreditations. My colleagues and clients are fantastic people and make my days more satisfying. Believe it or not, I even appreciate January, which is an intense time of year for payroll professionals. I enjoy multi-tasking, staying busy and most of all, I love seeing what can be accomplished in a short time frame with dedication and hard work.

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

I am very thankful to Yeo & Yeo and the people I work with for helping me through a difficult time in my life. My late husband Ralph joined the service after 9/11. He was a paratrooper in the Army and was deployed to the front lines in the Middle East multiple times. The year 2006 brought great tragedy as Ralph was killed in action while deployed in Iraq. My entire life was shattered in an instant.

I relied on my friends at Yeo & Yeo during my time of mourning. The outpouring of love and kindness was so overwhelming that I still become teary-eyed when I think of it. The press hounded me for a story and repeatedly tried to contact me at work. Yeo & Yeo helped manage the media so I didn't have to. The principals and my coworkers offered me as much time as I needed to get through a difficult time. For me, I needed to return to work quickly for some sense of normalcy, but in all honesty, I don't think I was really expected to do much. I couldn't have asked for more — everyone was there for me.

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

I have been very lucky with my mentors and the principals who have guided me throughout my career at Yeo & Yeo. I have always felt that I am important to the firm. I have been encouraged throughout the years to take and make opportunities to not only grow personally, but to also grow the payroll niche. It is my hope that I am just as encouraging to those on my team so they, too, have the opportunity to develop into future leaders.

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

Take the time and any opportunity to grow and promote yourself. While your mentor is there to help you, ultimately your future is up to you. You have every opportunity to advance. Motivation and choice is yours.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

"Never blame anyone in your life. Good people give you happiness. Bad people give you experience. Worst people give you lessons. And, best people give you memories."

"Take the time and any opportunity to grow and promote yourself. While your mentor is there to help you, ultimately your future is up to you. You have every opportunity to advance. Motivation and choice is yours."

