

June 2014

# CPA VOICE

The Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants

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**“I’M A PERSON FROM OHIO WHO DECIDED TO STAY HERE AND BUILD SOMETHING.”**

Craig Baldwin, 26, of Upsourced Accounting

**14**

535 Metro Place South  
Dublin, Ohio 43017



# Future of CPA learning is changing

Over the last several months, I've been actively engaged with other global leaders of the profession in the AICPA Future of Learning Task Force. The goal of this group is to pinpoint leading trends in education and marry those with a keen understanding of CPAs' needs, which are changing fast. Ultimately we want to drive the development of learning platforms over the next decade to help CPAs, present and future, grow their core competencies and make them even more valuable to the businesses and clients they serve.



A few trends are influencing the timing of the task force, including increasing regulatory requirements, hyper specialization among companies and firms, an increasingly global business world and new technology that's transforming the profession.

A lot of discussion has centered on changing learning expectations among today's professionals. What makes for a valuable learning experience today is vastly different than even five years ago.

Increasingly, professionals want a program that will make them competent but also keep them in compliance. Learning must be relevant and provide context you can apply to real-world scenarios.

Learners also want a more interactive experience—one that is collaborative and has an element of mentoring and coaching.

Finally, there's a growing preference for education that's delivered as you need it as well as blended learning where part of the instruction takes place in a classroom and some online.

The task force recommendations are ambitious and will have big implications on the future of CPE. They point to creating better, more personalized experiences that drive better outcomes; creating a unified, global competency framework and one compliance standard for CPE. In the process, state societies will have a chance to pilot new learning methods that begin evolving from solely compliance-driven to a model that measures professional competencies.

Technology—including the kind we've invested in at The Ohio Society of CPAs, will play a lead role in this evolution.

I'm excited about the prospects, but even more so about some of the steps OSCPA has already taken in this direction.

Last year, we launched OSCPA On-Demand. Now you can log on to the OSCPA online store 24/7 and within minutes, start earning CPE on a wide range of topics that are updated monthly. These courses are presented by experts and are accessible in high definition video from just about any mobile device.

Our virtual seminar series is very popular with members too, giving you the chance to attend a single-topic course and



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interact with the speaker and other participants without leaving your office.

This is only the tip of the iceberg at OSCP. Our goal is to ensure we are continually changing up the learning mix for our members as your needs evolve. To drive these changes, we've recently welcomed Josh Goldman as the new Director of Professional Development. Josh has extensive experience in building learning programs for CPAs and has some great ideas in the works.

We also transitioned the annual Members Summit in June to the *Leadership Summit*, focusing on management skills for emerging and experienced leaders. We included dedicated pathways for young CPAs, topics such as building a diverse culture, and sessions on the latest tax and business issues.

In July, our two-day *Summer CPE Getaway* will combine a number of conferences and CPE formats into one event. Mix and match a business valuation track with a four-hour seminar on another topic and earn your ethics credit in one trip.

Look for more unique learning opportunities like these as we continue to expand how we package education to be most relevant to you. Learning should be a lifelong commitment and OSCP wants to be your partner in the journey.



## AICPA launches national firm benchmarking survey

Now is your chance to participate in the country's largest CPA firm practice management benchmarking survey. Participants are rewarded with a detailed report on the things firms want to know, but aren't allowed to discuss with their neighbors. The survey is open until July 31.

Targeted benchmarks will include billing rates, chargeability ratios, compensation and other key performance indicators.

The survey is open to all public accounting firms, even those who are not AICPA members.

You can sign up for the survey at [www.aicpapcpmapsurvey.com/Signup.aspx](http://www.aicpapcpmapsurvey.com/Signup.aspx). You'll be prompted for your information, and an email with personalized sign-on information will be sent to you.

The survey is brought to you by AICPA's Private Companies Practice Section and the Texas Society of CPAs, who are pleased to welcome back Aon Insurance Services as a proud survey sponsor.

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# Pro athlete tax sparks constitutional soul searching

By Richard Molina



A recent Ohio Board of Tax Appeals (BTA) decision presents an interesting issue related to Cleveland's approach to taxing the income of nonresident professional athletes. Not only is the case and the BTA's decision interesting, but it raises some grounds by which the City of Cleveland may face constitutional challenges.

## The saga begins

Case No. 2009-3688 involves *Hillenmeyer v. City of Cleveland Board of Review and Nassim Lynch*, Cleveland Tax Administrator.

Hunter Hillenmeyer was a football player for the Chicago Bears. He would visit Cleveland for two days a year to play against the Cleveland Browns. He was not a resident of Cleveland, but was subject to the Cleveland income tax because of his work-related presence in the city.

The sole issue decided by the BTA was whether the measurement of his income

subject to Cleveland's tax was to be based on the number of games played in Cleveland as a percentage of the total games played during the season, or based on the number of duty days in Cleveland as a ratio of his total duty days.

Duty days are represented by service days that include days spent on team activities including game days, preseason events, conditioning and practice days both during the season and offseason. Hillenmeyer originally filed his returns using game days as an apportionment method, but then filed refund claims using the duty days method. The apportioned income



## TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Should the measurement of a professional athlete's income subject to Cleveland's tax be based on the number of games played in Cleveland as a percentage of the total games played during the season, or based on the number of duty days in Cleveland as a ratio of his total duty days?
- ▶ Ohio statute, R.C. 718.011 provides a general rule that taxpayers will not be subject to municipal income tax if they provide services in the locality for 12 or fewer days in the locality during a calendar year. However, the legislature carved out an exception to this rule for certain classes of individuals such as athletes and entertainers.
- ▶ Does a city have a rational basis for taxing income of professional athletes when they do not earn income in that city?
- ▶ The U.S. Supreme Court set forth a four-prong test to determine whether the tax at issue violates the Commerce Clause. The state or local tax must:
  1. Be imposed only when the out-of-state taxpayer has a substantial nexus in the taxing jurisdiction.
  2. Be fairly apportioned.
  3. Not discriminate against out-of-state taxpayers (nonresidents) in favor of residents.
  4. Be fairly related to the services provided by the taxing jurisdiction.

base included signing bonuses, reporting bonuses, incentive bonuses, roster bonuses and other related compensation. Cleveland denied his refund claims so the matter made its way to the BTA.

Hillenmeyer challenged the apportionment of his income based on game days and argued that an apportionment based on service would be a better representation of the amount of income earned in Cleveland because his services to the Bears ran throughout the year (i.e., he was not compensated just to show up on game days). The BTA agreed with Cleveland's use of the game day apportionment scheme under the reasoning that it represented a valid exercise of the city's power to tax.

### Possible grounds for appeal

In its decision, the BTA acknowledged its inability to decide constitutional issues or whether Cleveland's ordinance resulted in a fair and reasonable method to apportion the taxpayer's income. Consequently, the following avenues appear worth pursuing should the taxpayer appeal the decision:

1. Whether the city's apportionment scheme violated the taxpayer's State of Ohio and Federal Equal Protection rights.
2. Whether the city's apportionment scheme violated the taxpayer's rights under the Commerce and Due Process Clauses under the U.S. Constitution.

### Equal protection

The taxpayer raised an interesting argument at the BTA level concerning Ohio statute, R.C. 718.011, which provides a general rule that taxpayers will not be subject to municipal income if they provide services in the locality for 12 or fewer days during a calendar year. Interestingly, the legislature carved out an exception to this rule for certain classes of individuals such as athletes and entertainers.

**Athletes are, of course, required to play games, but there is much more in the way of services provided to the team other than showing up on game days.**

The question that an appellate court will need to decide is whether the legislature has a rational basis for classifying taxpayers along the lines of occupations for purposes of subjecting one class of taxpayers to tax (an athlete playing one game in Cleveland) and not another (an auditor doing an audit in Cleveland for 10 days). It is difficult to discern a rational basis for the classification other than as a way to simply maximize revenue. Certainly it is easy to keep records attesting to the jurisdictions in which an athlete plays games, but it is just as easy to determine the activities of auditors based on billing records. The government must provide a reason for treating the nonresident taxpayer in a manner different from that of the resident taxpayer.

### Commerce Clause

The Commerce Clause is concerned with whether a state or subdivision thereof imposes an unfair tax burden on nonresident individuals or businesses that conduct some of their affairs within the state's or subdivision's borders. In the important case of *Complete Auto Transit, Inc. v. Brady*, 430 US 274 (1977), the U.S. Supreme Court set forth a four-prong test to determine whether the tax at issue violates the Commerce Clause.

The state or local tax must:

1. Be imposed only when the out of state taxpayer has a substantial nexus in the taxing jurisdiction.
2. Be fairly apportioned.
3. Not discriminate against out of state taxpayers (nonresidents) in favor of residents.

4. Be fairly related to the services provided by the taxing jurisdiction.

The first test is satisfied because Hillenmeyer did participate in a game in Cleveland. There was no indication that Cleveland's taxing scheme favored residents over nonresidents in violation of the third prong. Further, the city did provide services to Hillenmeyer, such as providing a police protected game day venue, among others.

The area ripe for challenge revolves around the second prong. Athletes are, of course, required to play games, but there is much more in the way of services provided to the team other than showing up on game days. There are team meetings, practices, scrimmages, strategy meetings, personal training and coaching sessions and more in which the athlete is expected to participate. A game day performance is almost the end result of all those activities brought together. An apportionment scheme based merely on the number of games played in a city over all game days fails to take into account the activities the athlete engages in to earn his income. Moreover, Cleveland's determination of the income tax base itself also is suspect.

Cleveland appears to include as part of the athlete's income base all bonuses (signing, reporting, roster, etc.). There are situations where some bonuses are nonrefundable or guaranteed regardless of whether an athlete plays, is cut or is unable to play because of injury. If a bonus is not performance related,

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Continued from page 5 ►

what nexus or relationship does that income have with respect to a nonresident city in which the athlete actually performs?

## Concluding observations

The taxpayer appealed the BTA decision and the case is now set for a hearing before the Ohio Supreme Court. It is possible that the court will reverse the BTA on constitutional grounds. There are some interesting issues that could be raised in front of a court with the jurisdiction to consider constitutional claims. As a practical matter, this issue could be moot if a taxpayer's city of residence grants a credit for local taxes paid on income earned outside the resident city. The case also provides an interesting scenario whereby a state tax practitioner must be attuned to federal and state constitutional issues that may arise while attending to a client's state and local tax affairs.

*OSCPA member Richard Molina, LL.M. (Tax), M.A. (Accounting), teaches accounting and taxation at Cleveland State University. He previously served as general tax counsel for a major energy company.*

## MORE TO EXPLORE »



### Northeast Ohio State and Local Tax Conference

Aug. 1 | Independence | Course #46395

The University of Akron's George W. Daverio School of Accountancy and The Ohio Society of CPAs are proud to offer our second-annual Northeast Ohio State & Local Tax Conference. This all day conference will focus on the core state and multistate taxation topics impacting you and your clients. As the most comprehensive state and local tax conference in Ohio, it offers wide-ranging discussions of key taxation issues facing tax payers, businesses and tax professionals in Ohio and other states. This is your chance to get up-to-date information you need from the experts you know and trust on topics that affect CPAs all over the state.

This event is designed for CPAs, tax attorneys, bankers, business owners and other professionals with an interest in state and local taxation. It features:

- **Keynote Speaker, Congressman Jim Renacci**, from Ohio's 16th District and current member of the House Ways and Means Committee, who will discuss federal developments affecting state and local taxes, including the Marketplace Fairness Act.
- Practical updates and advanced planning techniques concerning Ohio and multistate taxes from leading practitioners, including Steve Dimengo, J.D., CPA, MT, attorney, Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs, LLC and Bill Nolan, J.D., CPA, Executive Director – State and Local Tax, Ernst & Young.
- **Ohio Department of Taxation representatives**, who will provide an update on Ohio's tax climate, including the Kasich administration's tax initiatives and an overview of Ohio's Mid-Biennium Budget Bill, and a thorough review of Ohio tax procedure.
- Several breakout sessions geared towards both large multistate corporations and privately-held businesses.

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## Manager's job depends on good team performance

By Rita Keller

“

There are three types of baseball players: Those who make it happen, those who watch it happen and those who wonder what happens.

– Tommy Lasorda

”

A few years ago I was doing a presentation that was often requested. It was titled, “CPA Firm Managers in Crisis.” For 2014, I think I need to refresh that older presentation and title it, “CPA Firm Managers Play a Vital Role

in Talent Retention.” The role of a CPA firm manager becomes more important with each passing day!

I continue to write and speak about the lack of leadership and actual people management skills of managers in public accounting. I think the title “manager” does not mean much in

public accounting. Why? Most of the people with the title “manager” do not effectively manage.

Sure, they manage THE WORK, the client engagement ... the technical aspects of the job and they know the firm processes and procedures. They are highly skilled technicians. But do they inspire others? Most of them do not.



### TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Retaining top talent was one of the top five management concerns identified in last year's AICPA PCPS CPA Firm Top Issues Survey.
- ▶ Skilled CPA firm managers are critical in retaining top talent. Yet while most are highly skilled technicians, they typically do not inspire others.
- ▶ Firm leaders should invest in the success of managers by assigning books and self-study, plus sending them to management conferences and workshops.

Before I go any further I want to clarify. The title MANAGER inside a CPA firm applies to partners, too. In public accounting, partners manage people and in many firms they also do the work that a manager should be doing. This commentary definitely applies to both partners and managers. I will refer to all of you as M&Ps (managers and partners).

You have been reading and hearing about the talent shortage from AICPA, state CPA societies and perhaps from your CPA firm association. The talent wars have returned and there are not enough qualified accountants to meet the needs of growing CPA firms. Retaining top talent was one of the top management concerns identified in last year's Top Issues Survey.

Skilled M&Ps (direct supervisors) inside CPA firms are critical to the successful retention of top talent working at the firm. If you are an M&P, think back over your career and I bet that you have noticed how the immediate supervisor/manager/boss has played a determining role in employee retention.

“ I continue to write and speak about the lack of leadership and actual people management skills of managers in public accounting. I think the title “manager” does not mean much in public accounting. Why? Most of the people with the title “manager” do not effectively manage. ”

Research now validates that observation. Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman provided insight about employee performance and retention in their book, “First Break All the Rules.” The research says people do not leave jobs, they leave managers. If employees don't get along with, like or respect their direct supervisors, they will leave the firm despite a high salary and great benefits.

I do not blame the M&Ps. Most of them have received extensive CPE over the years focused on technical topics relating to tax, audit and accounting. Firm leaders have not provided training on how to be a great manager. They have not made

inspiring, nurturing and mentoring people a performance standard.

There is a great blog post on the Harvard Business Review blog site titled, “If You're Not Helping People Develop, You're Not Management Material.” Here are a couple of excerpts:

Good managers attract candidates, drive performance, engagement and retention and play a key role in maximizing employees' contributions to the firm. Poor managers, by contrast, are a drag on all of the above. They cost your firm a ton of money in turnover costs and missed opportunities for employee contribution, and they do more damage than you realize.

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## MORE TO EXPLORE »



### Summer Getaway CPE Conference

July 24-25 | Sandusky | Course #46393

Splash into some CPE and fun! If you missed at last year's Summer Getaway, here's your chance to advance your career, strengthen your knowledge and have fun with a full day of CPE at our second Summer Getaway CPE Conference at Kalahari Resort. A variety of current topics will be presented by the profession's leading speakers. We will cover the latest happenings in tax, accounting and auditing and you'll be able to fulfill your ethics requirement. Take advantage of this great program and bring the family along for the trip.

- Get a thorough federal tax update
- Find out about the latest updates on important issues of the day
- Learn about changes and updates taking place in accounting & auditing
- Satisfy your three-hour professional standards requirement
- Have fun!

This northwest Ohio event is designed for CPAs working in business & industry, corporate CPAs, financial planning and accounting professionals.

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The best managers ask, “How can we harness employee strengths, interests and passions to create greater value for the firm?”

As we continue down the path of trying to retain the best performers, consider investing in the success of your M&Ps. Assign them books to read and self-study to perform. Send them to management conferences and workshops. Bring resources into your firm to help them become skilled at nurturing, mentoring, supervising and inspiring the talent inside your firm.

A few years ago, one of my clients

wanted to focus more on developing their managers (because of succession, of course) and actually had me conduct a manager retreat. They sent their managers offsite to a nice location to meet with me for a day and a half and participate in a retreat similar to their partner retreat. However, at this retreat, no partners were allowed. And while I could report the general theme/ comments back to the partners, I kept specific comments and individual opinions confidential. It was up to the participants to decide what they did with their suggestions, comments, critiques, etc.

Guess what? They did a good job of discussing and drafting what they

wanted to say to the partners about the current status and future plans for the firm. Plus, they outlined the actions they were willing to take to help carry out their ideas. It's called commitment.

Think about a baseball team. If the team does poorly, who gets fired? Team owners do not fire the team; they fire THE MANAGER.

*Rita Keller, president and founder of Keller Advisors, LLC is a nationally known CPA firm management consultant, speaker and author. She is a former shareholder and chief operation officer of a successful, regional CPA firm and has more than 30 years' hands-on experience in the management, marketing, technology and administration of a successful firm.*

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## MORE TO EXPLORE »



### Practicing Aspects of Compilation and Review

Aug. 27 | Independence | Course #46402

Sept. 17 | Cincinnati | Course #46431

Sept. 24 | Dublin | Course #46453

Sept. 24 | Webcast | Course #46454

Get the tools you need for your compilation and review engagements at this in-depth conference. You'll learn the latest about issues pertaining to SSARS and other standards that apply to compilation and review engagement. You will also review methods for effective planning, performance and report preparation and how to make adequate disclosures. This conference is a great option for both those new to compilation and review engagements as well as those who need an exhaustive review.

This event is designed for CPA firm staff that may be new to performing compilation and review engagements and for those who need a comprehensive refresher course.

## Apps offer a way to deal with information overload



By Jeffrey A. Shumway, CPA, CITP

Information is constantly bombarding you and, while some of it is important, much of it is noise. Noise is the availability of too much information presented in a fashion that requires time to drill down to discover what is important. An article from *Science Daily* indicated that 90% of all of the data in the world was generated during the last two years. If even half of the data generated is noise that is a lot to filter through.

Using RSS news feeds to filter out noise allows for the news to be targeted to your interests and saves you the time of weeding through various websites for the news you want. An article in the May 2013 CPA Voice, 5 great Google

Reader alternatives, recommends some excellent RSS news readers. Of the five reviewed in the article, I prefer using Feedly to host my news feeds. Once you have a reader, simply select some feeds with information that is important and interesting to you and add them to the reader. Most news reader services also sync with your mobile device so you can read your news wherever you are.

A second tool, a “read it later” service, holds links to information that you think will be interesting and valuable to read in depth. They also present the page in a more readable format, often without ads and other distractions. Some great examples to check out are Pocket, Instapaper and Readability. As with RSS

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### TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Today’s CPAs are bombarded with so much information it’s difficult to keep track of what’s important.
- ▶ Use RSS news feeds to target news to your interests and save time.
- ▶ A “read it later” service can help you save in-depth information to read when you have time.
- ▶ Evernote is a powerful and versatile tool you can use to save your most important information.

Continued from page 11 ►

news reader services, most “read it later” services also offer the availability to connect to and sync with different applications including Chrome, Firefox, iOS and Android. Pocket is my preferred service, so when I see an interesting RSS feed, website or a link in an email, I usually send it to Pocket so I can read it at my leisure. This is especially handy on mobile devices, which are not always conducive to in-depth reading. Pocket also allows tagging so you can easily categorize your findings making it a good, front-line research tool. Scan it, pocket it and tag it – then move on to the next task in your busy day.

I periodically review my stash of information on Pocket. My findings can be pretty diverse, but with tags I can drill down to what is interesting at the moment. When I find truly useful tidbits of information, I save them to my permanent repository, Evernote.

Evernote is a cloud application that can be accessed from the desktop (Windows & Mac), web and mobile.

This is where I send the information that has long-term value to me. It is my central repository for everything including: tasks, grocery lists, phone log, product manuals, meeting notes, agendas and journals, just to name a few. It functions as my long-term memory.

Evernote is a very powerful application with many ways to handle and search data. It has notebooks and tags for organization and identification. It has a robust search engine that is easy to use, but offers a great deal of power when you really want to track something down. Voice messages, pictures and drawings can also be stored in Evernote.

Evernote also has some great extensions and plug-ins to help you acquire and work with your data. You can use a browser extension to clip information to Evernote, and Pocket has a built-in link to Evernote. Evernote has a business card collector, a drawing application, a handwriting application and even a study application. There is even a Food app (iOS and Android) that reads the recipes notebook in Evernote and presents it in

an easy to use format that is handy in the kitchen. All of the applications share the common Evernote database, and the data is still accessible from within Evernote. These other tools simply add to the power and flexibility, and notes can be shared with outside parties.

If you have concerns about security, Evernote has a secure data center with SAS 70 (Type II) and SSAE16 (Type 2) certification. Evernote also offers two-factor authentication so that you can be assured that only you can access your data.

If you can see some benefit from the ideas that I presented, I suggest that you give them a try. Every one of these tools is offered for free. While there are paid upgrades available, most of you could use these tools and never spend a dime. If these tools can save you even a few minutes of searching for information in a day, they are well worth the effort.

*Jeffrey A. Shumway, CPA, CITP is the chief operating officer for Battelle & Battelle LLP.*

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# How well do you know the Internet ?

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Tech Test By J. Carlton Collins, CPA

1	2	3	4	5
How many web pages are on the Internet and how many users?	Which of the following is NOT one of the top 10 most popular websites on the Internet? Google, Facebook, Amazon, ESPN, CNET, Wikipedia, Tumblr, Yelp, YouTube, Craigslist, USA Today.	Can you catch a virus by surfing the Internet?	How many email messages are sent each year and what percentage is spam?	Who pays for the Internet?

**Answers:**

- A 2012 analysis conducted by the World Wide Web Foundation reported that there are slightly more than 1 trillion web pages and 3.4 billion total users.
- According to Web100.com, the first 10 websites listed are the top 10 based on total traffic; USA Today is not ranked in the top 10, it is ranked 85th.
- Yes. Without proper anti-virus software, you can contract a virus by downloading an application, downloading data, visiting a web page or simply by hovering your mouse over a web page object. Even with proper anti-virus software, viruses are still possible, albeit very rarely.
- According to Makeuseof.com, there are 247 billion emails a day (90 trillion a year), 81% of which are spam.
- The Internet uses the unused bandwidth of data connections of millions of companies and thousands of governments. When these companies or governments use their connections, their packets are prioritized to flow through first, so other Internet traffic does not adversely affect them.

How did you do? To learn more about technology, OSCP invites you to attend a technology course, conference or webinar. Why not sign up today?

(You can read Carlton's monthly technology column as it appears in the Journal of Accountancy here: [www.CarltonCollins.com](http://www.CarltonCollins.com))

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11-2002	GAS-MCF	.00361680	ROY	1.585	1.9500	2777.00	5400.24406.87			4,993.37	10.04
Total Net For Property #39439-036						23.41 365					
87654-024 BUNKER HILL #1						SV/County: PA WALKER					
11-2002	OIL BBLs	.010393113	ROY	.000	25.8900	1268.48	32844.51	10.30		32,834.21	13.87
11-2002	OIL BBLs	.010393113	ROY	.000	.0000	00.00	00.00	151085		-1,510.85	.00
Total Net For Property #39430-060						13.87 359.0					
Total Net For Owner						37.28 724.75					

Net Totals By Product:  
Oil: 37.28 724.75

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## Young accounting entrepreneurs are bullish on Ohio



Ryan Baker

Craig Baldwin

Ryan Watson

By Gary Hunt

The owners of Upsourced Accounting of Columbus are all under the age of 30, but they have a decidedly old-school view of Ohio.

Why, they ask, can't a state known for exporting everything from food to cars be an exporter of accounting solutions?

"We're a state of makers," said Craig Baldwin, 26, marketing director for Upsourced. "We build things, and that's lost on a lot of people outside Ohio, but our people have always been that way.

"There's much more pride involved in saying that I'm a person from Ohio who decided to stay here and build something," he said. "I've been to San Francisco, I've been to New York City, I've met those people. I don't think

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There's much more pride involved in saying that I'm a person from Ohio who decided to stay here and build something. I've been to San Francisco, I've been to New York City, I've met those people. I don't think they're doing anything that special. We have all the skills, the knowledge and knowhow to do the exact same thing here. - Craig Baldwin

”

they're doing anything that special. We have all the skills, the knowledge and knowhow to do the exact same thing here."

Baldwin is one of three Ohio men with accounting backgrounds who in the past year have founded two companies that marry some aspect of technology with accounting. Upsourced Accounting offers cloud-based accounting services to tech-savvy small businesses regardless of

their location. The second company, Sqr1, is an accounting-focused portal replacement that actively gathers client documents and information.

The company founders are all from the Dayton area, attended The Ohio State University and are building their businesses with roots in both Columbus and Cincinnati.

Ryan Watson, CPA, principal of Upsourced Accounting and CEO of Sqr1,

said they are simply building in the place they see the best opportunity. “You’re starting to get this awareness from the rest of the country that there are really interesting things happening that don’t necessarily exist on the coasts, or specifically in Silicon Valley,” said Watson, 28. “And people are starting to take real notice.

“It’s a testament to people saying, ‘Hey there are some people in Ohio and the Midwest in general who have some teams that are just as talented as those from the valley solving some really compelling problems.’ I think this is a really exciting time to be in Ohio.”

### The Upsourced/Sqrl story

Upsourced Accounting began two years ago as a cloud-based firm, meaning it had no office, and its employees – at the time just Baldwin, Watson and co-founder Ryan Baker, MBA – seldom met with clients in person. Their goal was to offer on-demand, tech-enabled, efficient accounting services to small businesses around the country for a monthly fixed fee.

As the firm’s chief client service officer Baker said he serves as the “part-time virtual CFO” for clients.

“We understand that business is more than just, ‘Here’s your income statement, goodbye,’” said Baker, “We get in and understand their business.”

Their second company grew from a problem they were having at the first one – namely, the amount of time they found themselves on the telephone or sending email collecting basic, transactional information from clients. As they developed a solution for their own firm, the trio realized they had something that could be helpful to others.

But that product wasn’t known as Sqrl yet; that wouldn’t come until a



“You’re starting to get this awareness from the rest of the country that there are really interesting things happening that don’t necessarily exist on the coasts, or specifically in Silicon Valley. And people are starting to take real notice. - Ryan Watson

four-month stint last summer with the Brandery, a tech startup accelerator in Cincinnati. Successful application to the Brandery includes, among other things, \$20,000 in venture capital. It was an opportunity Watson called “once-in-a-lifetime.”

“It actually turned out to be a fantastic decision, but at the time it was... crazy,” Watson said.

“We found out three days before the application was due,” Baldwin explained. “I drove down that day to meet the co-founders at an open house. We put in our application maybe the day after that and barely got it in on time.”

The application was approved, so the three men, all of whom were living in Columbus, would have to pack up and move, taking their still-developing accounting firm with them. On the personal side, Watson and Baker are both married to teachers, who would remain home in Columbus. Also, Baker’s wife, Sjanneke, was expecting their first child.

“I basically gave my wife the keys to the decision,” Baker said. “I said, ‘Here’s where I stand. Here’s the opportunity, but it’s got to go through you because you’re

going to feel this as much as I do.’

“She slept on it, then she said, ‘Go do it.’” So, they did. In October they returned to Columbus with a new name for their software – Sqrl – and a renewed plan for their businesses. Baker would focus mainly on Upsourced Accounting, while Baldwin and Watson would work to raise venture capital for Sqrl.

They also decided to begin hiring and open an office in Columbus’ hip Short North Arts District.

“We realized that, for the same reason it was important to visit many of our clients face-to-face, it was important to work together face-to-face,” Baker said.

And though their office environment is probably different than yours, ultimately it’s about accounting work.

“We dress the way we want to dress,” Watson said. “We have a fairly cool, modern office. And of course, technology is a cornerstone to the way we work. But we are still running an accounting practice. At its core, we are still pouring over the same issues every practitioner should be pouring

Continued on page 16 ►



“

I basically gave my wife the keys to the decision. I said, ‘Here’s where I stand. Here’s the opportunity, but it’s got to go through you because you’re going to feel this as much as I do.’ - Ryan Baker

”

over. The needs of our business owners don’t differ that much from the needs of anyone else’s clients.”

## How did they get there?

Baker and Watson grew up together in Beavercreek, and were friends long before either considered accounting as a career. But Baker’s interest in money was evident even in his youth.

“From a very early age I was an avid Monopoly player,” he said. “I knew that I had a desire to be involved in decision making that was about money and the way that it intertwined with decisions. I didn’t know what that meant, though, because I didn’t see myself being a traditional accountant from what I knew about accounting... It was a journey for me to figure that out.”

They both attended Ohio State and majored in accounting, even though Watson had no intention of being an accountant.

“He was convinced he would go become a super lawyer or something, and I assumed that would be true,” Baker said of his friend. “But it didn’t quite work out that way.”

He chose accounting as his major simply because he had to major in something before heading to law school. But this self-described analytical and “deeply competitive” person discovered to his surprise that accounting filled his hunger to understand and influence the way the world works.

“I have always been interested in the ‘why,’” he said. “I’m less concerned with what the answer to a problem is.”

After college, they stayed in touch as the found jobs in Columbus – Watson at Deloitte and Baker at Lockheed Martin. They played together in a Deloitte golf league, where they met Baldwin, who was one of Watson’s colleagues.

A native of Middletown, Baldwin credits

family friend John Venturella, CPA, a member of the OSCPA Executive Board, for sparking his interest in accounting.

“He invited me to shadow him for an entire day at Clark, Schaefer, Hackett, and I was probably 15 or 16,” Baldwin. “I just remember thinking I could probably do this someday.”

So that’s what he did, earning his accounting degree at Ohio State and taking a job at Deloitte in Columbus. But he quickly learned that a Big Four job was not compatible with his desire to shake things up.

“Whether it was for financial reasons or social reasons, I was never happy with the status quo and always thought things should be done differently,” Baldwin said. “Then, after I found myself in that position after college, I thought to myself, ‘All those things I wanted to do, the impact I wanted to have and here I am and I can’t do them.’”

“That’s when I decided it was time for me to do something different and put myself in a position to make the change happen like I always wanted to.”

He said though his accounting education and experience are helpful, he focuses mostly on marketing and communication. A serious baseball player and golfer in his youth, Baldwin said running a business feeds into his competitiveness.

“I compare entrepreneurship to playing sports as a kid,” he said. “It wasn’t until I stepped foot into business ownership that I had that feeling again.”

Baker also compared business to sports, “in that you get out of it what you put into it.” With an infant daughter at home now, he also compared the

learning curve to parenthood. “The thing about becoming a parent and being an entrepreneur that were the same for me was, I had no idea what I was doing in either case but I knew that I loved it,” Baker said.

Watson said though their businesses have caused some sleepless nights, the men have found their successes to be “almost addictive.”

“Compared to the corporate world, owning a business offers a direct correlation between the upside and downside,” he said. “If I go in and do a terrible job, we don’t make any money, and if we go and do a great job then we make a lot of money. And even though it’s not just about the money, experiencing the full reward of your hard work is incredibly fulfilling.”

Upsourced Accounting and Sqr1 now employ 10 people combined, and the plan is for the latter company to



“ The thing about becoming a parent and being an entrepreneur that were the same for me was, I had no idea what I was doing in either case but I knew that I loved it. - Ryan Baker ”

move to Cincinnati’s Over the Rhine neighborhood this summer. Upsourced will remain in Columbus and will cater to high-tech startups that are similar to its sister company.

“Cincinnati probably has one of the most healthy startup ecosystems in Ohio,” Watson said. “So I think it’s going to be beneficial for both businesses to have a presence in Cincinnati.”

Both companies will seek clients from around the country and the world, but their founders are optimistic about their growth in Ohio.

*We recently spoke to Baldwin and Watson for our OSCPA Spotlight Video Series. Turn to page 20 to learn more.*



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## OSCPA Spotlight illuminating key issues in the profession

The Ohio Society of CPAs now offers you another convenient way to keep up with the important issues in the profession, as we recently launched the “OSCPA Spotlight Series,” a lively bimonthly video discussion with newsmakers and thought leaders in the business community.

The series consists of short web video programs available now via OSCPAs YouTube channel. You can also subscribe to the OSCPAs Spotlight Series playlist. We’ll bring you two episodes a month with timely information about issues important to Ohio CPAs delivered in an innovative and engaging format.



### Recent episodes include:



**Ryan Hecht, CPA** a director at SS&G and Career Coach Janice Worthington, president of Worthington Career Services talking about how volunteering can boost your career.



**Gary Adamson, CPA, CEO** of a CPA practice management consulting firm, talking about the importance of having a good “bench” at your company.



A chat with two young accountants, **Craig Baldwin** and **Ryan Watson, CPA** who in the past year have founded not one, but two companies that marry some aspect of technology with accounting.

Share your comments and show ideas via the comment section on YouTube, or send a message on Twitter with the hashtag #oscpaspotlight.

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Coaches Janice Worthington, MA, CPRW, JCTC, CEIP, president and/or Jeremy Worthington, CARW, CCTC, Director of Coaching

# OSCPA Career Center valuable no matter your situation

By Janice Worthington

In 2009 OSCPA discovered yet another way to better serve its membership. As the Great Recession continued to rock the career stability of the U.S. workforce, the Society opened its all-purpose Career Center that continues to serve members throughout the state.

Do we really need the resources of a career center? Having served as a Career Coach for more than four decades, I advise a simple motto for working professionals that teaches, "If you stay ready, you'll never have to get ready." You might be surprised to know that while our career center works intensely in job searches with the unemployed, under-employed and unhappily employed, many of our members come to us with workplace issues. Here are some examples of those we serve:

- Mike, a controller for a local manufacturer, stopped in on a Friday afternoon to discuss improving his relationship with his plant manager. A collaborative relationship was critical and did not exist between them in the workplace. With a new approach in how to encourage cost control, Mike was able to better deliver his message.
- Gayle was transferring to another state and needed some wisdom on where to apply and how to research those companies that would be most likely to hire her. With a lesson in systematic job search at a location 1,000 miles away, she eventually made her way to a new employer.
- Sam became a bundle of nerves when it came to interviewing. As an introvert, he was panic-stricken at the very thought of having to discuss his resume with prospective employer. After spending one hour at the Dayton Accounting show he was fine.

**Jeremy Worthington, CARW, JCTC** and I hold hour-long coaching sessions at four Ohio Accounting Shows per year and are available monthly at OSCPA headquarters. Our Career Center on the website features articles, "ask the expert" spots and podcasts. To keep your career on the move, you want to be sure about your career path, your branding tools and your interview abilities. We're here to help, 24-7!

*Janice Worthington, MA, CPRW, JCT, is the president of Worthington Career Services, a resume and job search consulting firm that provides strategic career coaching to professionals at all levels of the corporate ladder. Janice works with The Ohio Society as a career coach to the membership, providing regular columns in the Society's electronic publications and on the Society's website. For more career coaching and job searching resources, visit OSCPA's Career Center at [www.ohiocpa.com/careercenter](http://www.ohiocpa.com/careercenter).*

# Members in Motion

## AKRON

**DOUG KLEIN, CPA** associate director in SS&G's tax department has been elected to the Goodwill Industries of Akron board of directors where he will serve as the treasurer for the board. He will serve a three-year term.

**ROBERT LITTMAN, CPA** SS&G CEO and firm managing director has been selected as a recipient of the 2014 Frank L. Simonetti Distinguished Business Alumni Award presented by the University of Akron College of Business. The award recognizes distinguished alumni of the university and honor recipients for their

achievements of excellence in their profession or vocation, and their service to the community.

**DEBORAH DEFER**, associate director at SS&G and an Advanced Certified Quickbooks ProAdvisor, has been selected to become part of the Intuit Writer/Trainer Network. Defer joins an exclusive group, with only three certified Intuit Writers/Trainers in Ohio and 135 throughout the U.S.

## CLEVELAND

**BRIAN ROSENFELT, CPA** has been named vice president, senior relationship manager for business

banking for the Cleveland District of KeyBank.

## COLUMBUS

**PLANTE MORAN FINANCIAL ADVISORS (PFMA)**, the registered investment advisor affiliate of public accounting and advisory firm Plante Moran, was recently recognized by Forbes in its annual list, "The Top 50 Wealth Managers." PMFA placed at number five on this year's list, up from number nine in 2013.



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# Are you struggling with addiction, depression or stress?

OSCPA's Concerned CPA Network is dedicated to informing Ohio CPAs, accounting professionals, students or their peers and family members about alcohol or substance abuse problems, depression and mental illness. This program encourages affected individuals to seek help and assists in their recovery.

The Concerned CPA Network connects those in need with volunteer CPAs who have personally struggled with the same challenges or who have

someone close to them who has. This is a confidential hotline dedicated to addressing substance abuse and related problems. All calls are STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and are responded to by individuals currently in recovery or with family or friends in recovery programs.

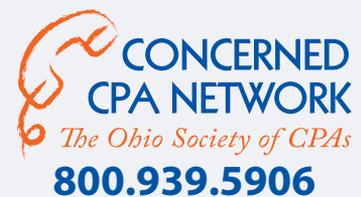
## Did you know...

- Accounting has been listed as one of the top 10 professions with high rates of addiction.
- 67% of human resources professionals identify substance abuse as one of the most serious issues they face among their workforce.

- Employees harboring drug or heavy alcohol abuse problems have much higher rates of job turnover and absenteeism than those who don't.

If you have a substance abuse problem, understand that YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

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To help kids connect with the financial literacy and pet responsibility lessons in FETCH!, Yanak brought a special guest into the classroom – Poppy, a service dog in-training he fostered and socialized during the semester.

## Student ambassador innovates and inspires

Brandon Yanak, senior accounting major and student ambassador at Wright State University, takes involvement and leadership to a new level with his innovative approach to student outreach. Yanak, who just completed his term as Student Ambassador, used that role to help students see how an accounting degree – and a career as a CPA – can lead to a bright and rewarding future.

“College is the perfect opportunity to branch out and get involved,” he said. “I am passionate about accounting and sharing my love for accounting.”

This passion is evidenced in his involvement and leadership in a number of campus activities and clubs – and led him to the Student Ambassador Program. In his role as student ambassador, Yanak created a new outreach program on campus designed to encourage more minority students to consider majoring in accounting. By partnering with Wright State’s Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement division, Yanak reached students who he may have otherwise

not had an opportunity to meet.

The program, called “Inclusiveness in Accounting,” aims to strengthen the accounting program’s – and the profession’s – diversity and inclusiveness.”

“The goal is simply to expose the unlimited opportunities and benefits of accounting to a wider audience of undecided college students,” Yanak said. “By reaching out specifically to underrepresented groups, I hope to make them feel welcome, wanted, and that a future is there for them in accounting.”

Yanak planned two events as part of the initiative – a professional development session with speakers from the accounting profession followed by a more casual “diversity mixer” with food, door prizes and conversation with students about how accounting is used in a variety of career paths and fields. Yanak leveraged his relationships with Wright State’s Beta Alpha Psi chapter and Accounting Club to help promote the event and encourage student involvement.

The Ohio CPA Foundation funds the Student Ambassador Program on 15 college campuses throughout the state.

“Having students like Brandon on campus promoting the CPA profession and the Society is one of the best ways we can inform and encourage students to consider accounting,” said Karen West, the Foundation’s executive director. “Students who are unsure about their major or who may have misconceptions about the profession can hear first-hand from students how an accounting degree can open the doors to an exciting and rewarding career.”

The Ambassador Program also gave Yanak the opportunity to volunteer with the Foundation’s FETCH! financial literacy program to help kids learn money management skills and perhaps even inspire some future accounting majors.

“Participating in FETCH! was a truly unique and rewarding experience,” Yanak said. “The students learned about budgeting and saving, planning for the expected and unexpected costs of life. I loved the ability to pass this crucial message on to students.”



Student Ambassadors are accounting majors who are in their junior, senior, fifth year or enrolled in a graduate-level accounting program. They are chosen from participating schools based on academic achievement, as well as traits such as an outgoing personality, strong communication and presentation skills, and commitment to a career as a CPA.

Student ambassadors throughout the state share their passion for accounting and reach undecided students in a variety of ways. From classroom

presentations and office hours to information tables and social events, the student ambassadors serve as the face of OSCPA and accounting as they help students better understand all the degree – and profession – has to offer.

“The most rewarding experience was building relationships with peers, professors and professionals. I had the opportunity to get to know individuals with whom I would otherwise not have interacted,” said Yanak. “Connecting personally and professionally and creating friendships that supersede school and last beyond graduation were the greatest rewards of being the student ambassador.”

The Ohio CPA Foundation provides a stipend and activity budget to each student ambassador. Your tax-deductible contribution to the Foundation can help fund the next class of Student Ambassadors. To learn more or give a gift of support, please visit [www.OhioCPAFoundation.org](http://www.OhioCPAFoundation.org) or call 800.686.2727 to speak with Karen West.



*The Ohio CPA Foundation needs your support*

# Volunteer. Give.



OSCPA members are the lifeblood of The Ohio CPA Foundation. Your volunteer time and financial contributions support programs that inspire students to pursue CPA careers and teach kids smart money skills for life.



- Your support means thousands of kids have the opportunity to participate in the FETCH! financial literacy program every year
- Your support funds Student Ambassadors for the profession on 15 college campuses
- Your support allows minority high school students to attend the ACAP-Ohio accounting summer camp at no cost

Invest in the profession – and in Ohio’s students – with a gift to The Ohio CPA Foundation today. Contributions are tax deductible and support all of these student initiatives.

*Learn more, contribute and volunteer at [www.OhioCPAFoundation.org](http://www.OhioCPAFoundation.org). Or call 800.686.2727 and ask for a member of the Foundation team.*

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4. When you are ready to take the exam log in to the OSCPA Store and click "current registrations," click on "visit classroom," and then click "take quiz."
5. Be sure to print the automatic confirmation page for your records.

### Print Instructions

1. Take the exam as an open-book test, recording your answers on the answer sheet by filling in the appropriate circle (pen or pencil is fine).
2. Then, fill out the registration information and payment information. Payment must be submitted with the exam. Please print clearly.
3. Mail this page, along with your payment, in an envelope to: **The Ohio Society of CPAs CPA Voice Exam, P.O. Box 1810, Dublin, OH 43017-7810**
4. Fax to **614.764.5880**.

### Self-Assessment Exam Results

The Ohio Society sends results for print exam submissions via email if an email address is provided on the form. Respondents taking the exam online receive their results immediately. Respondents who pass with a grade of 70% or better receive one hour of CPE credit in specialized knowledge, as approved by the Accountancy Board of Ohio.

### ANSWER SHEET

- |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 7.  | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 2. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 8.  | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 3. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 9.  | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 4. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 10. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 5. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 11. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 6. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | 12. | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |

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## Pro athlete tax sparks constitutional soul searching

- 1. The sole issue decided by the Ohio Board of Tax Appeals (BTA) was whether the amount of an athlete's income subject to Cleveland's tax was to be based on the number of games played in Cleveland as a percentage of the total games played during the season, or based on the athlete's \_\_\_\_\_ in Cleveland as a ratio of the total \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Days; days in a year
  - B. Earnings; yearly earnings for the athlete
  - C. Duty days; duty days for the athlete
  - D. Place of residence while in Cleveland; duty days for the athlete
- 2. Which of the following would be included in an athlete's "duty days"?**
  - A. Conditioning days exclusive of those required in the off-season
  - B. Days spent on team activities excluding game day activities
  - C. The athlete's preseason events
  - D. The time spent by the athlete on commercial endeavors unrelated to the athlete's sport
- 3. The taxpayer/athlete in the Hillenmeyer case has two potential issues open for appeal. These two issues include:**
  - A. Whether the city's apportionment scheme violated the taxpayer's State of Ohio and Federal statute of limitation rights.
  - B. Whether the city's apportionment scheme violated the taxpayer's rights under the Commerce and Due Process Clauses as found in the U.S. Constitution.
  - C. None of the above is correct.
  - D. Both A and B are correct.
- 4. The taxpayer raised an interesting argument at the BTA level concerning Ohio statute R.C. 718.011 which provides a general rule that taxpayers will not be subject to municipal income tax if they provide services in the locality for \_\_\_\_\_ or fewer days during a calendar year.**
  - A. 12
  - B. 10
  - C. 9
  - D. 5
- 5. Which of the following is not part of the US Supreme Court's four prong test to determine whether an imposed tax violates the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause?**
  - A. The state or local tax must be fairly apportioned.
  - B. The state or local tax must be fairly related to the services provided by the taxing jurisdiction.
  - C. The state or local tax must not discriminate against out of state taxpayers in favor of residents.
  - D. The state or local tax must not be imposed on the out of state taxpayer when he or she has a substantial nexus in the taxing jurisdiction.

## If the baseball team does poorly who gets fired?

- 6. Which of the following was identified as one of the top five management concerns by non-sole practitioners in the 2013 AICPA PCPS CPA Firm Top Issues Survey?**
  - A. The costs of running an accounting practice
  - B. The effect on firms caused by new federal and state regulations
  - C. Finding and retaining qualified staff
  - D. Issues related to the sale of an accounting practice
- 7. Which of the following represents an attribute of a good manager?**
  - A. Good managers attract good candidates.
  - B. Good managers drive performance, engagement and retention.
  - C. Good managers play a key role in maximizing an employee's contributions to the firm.
  - D. All of the above are correct.
- 8. In the book First Break All the Rules, the authors conclude that:**
  - A. Managers are the key to an organization's success.
  - B. People don't leave jobs, they leave managers.
  - C. A disciplinary approach is the key to management success.
  - D. A compassionate approach is the key to management success.

## Apps offer a way to deal with information overload

- 9. An article from Science Daily indicated that \_\_\_\_\_ of all of the data in the world was generated during the last two years.**
  - A. 80%
  - B. 90%
  - C. 100%
  - D. 50%
- 10. Which tool allows you to hold "links" to articles that you think will be interesting and valuable to read in depth?**
  - A. Pocket Reader
  - B. RSS news feeds
  - C. Readability
  - D. All of the above
- 11. What is a good app to use as a permanent repository for useful tidbits of information?**
  - A. Evernote
  - B. Everquest
  - C. Pocket
  - D. Instapaper
- 12. Which of the following has a built in link to Evernote?**
  - A. Pocket
  - B. Readability
  - C. Instapaper
  - D. Ever-ready

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CPA Voice  
535 Metro Place South | P.O. Box 1810 |  
Dublin, OH 43017-7810  
Tel: 614.764.2727 | Fax: 614.764.5880  
Email: CPAVoice@ohio-cpa.com  
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Amy Johnson, CAE, ajohnson@ohio-cpa.com

## MANAGING EDITOR:

Sandy Spieker, CAE, sspieker@ohio-cpa.com

## EDITOR:

Gary Hunt, ghunt@ohio-cpa.com

## GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Jill Ellis, jellis@ohio-cpa.com  
Shannon Beis, sbeis@ohio-cpa.com

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