

Meet the 2014-2015 FICPA Executive Committee

The FICPA's eight-member Executive Committee (EC) is comprised of FICPA Board Chair Jeff Barbacci and seven vice presidents. Deborah Curry, FICPA President/CEO, serves as secretary-treasurer and non-voting EC member. Together, the Committee implements the Board of Governors' policies and oversees the Institute's activities.

Each year, Florida CPA Today profiles the committee's vice presidents and asks them to share their thoughts on pressing issues and making a difference through the FICPA. This year, they agreed that one of the FICPA's most important emerging challenges will be to recruit, retain and engage young CPA members.

ED DUARTE

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

I believe one of the challenges for Florida CPAs is the continued understanding and use of technology. Technology is replacing the way we communicate. Today, we interact using state-of-the-art tools. Social media's impact on the way we do business and communicate is something we, as CPAs, need to embrace. Baby Boomers and Millennials need to work together to align the quality services each bring to the table to work effectively.

One of the opportunities I see for Florida CPAs is the thriving business surrounding international consulting and compliance services. Whether they are subsidiaries of international companies located in the U.S.; Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act (FIRPTA) withholding exemptions; estate planning for cross-border families; or offshore voluntary compliance, CPAs are expanding into new markets and focused on growing their international clientele. In Miami, I've seen tremendous opportunities for growth in this sector.

ABBY DUPREE

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

I think Florida CPAs will continue to face the same challenges during the coming year:

- As the economy continues to come back, firms are competing for new staff and working hard to retain current staff to service their growing client base.
- We will continue to face regulatory challenges.
- Sole practitioners and smaller firms will be faced with deciding their exit strategy.
- Firms that fail to keep up with the latest in technology will lag behind those that do.

CPAs are intelligent, hard-working individuals and will continue to face their challenges head on!

PAULETTE HOLDER

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

I think the most important challenges and or emerging opportunities for Florida CPAs are the same now as they've been the past several years:

- Succession planning. I've read that most CPAs are older than 50. This presents a tremendous opportunity for our young CPAs, but not for those of us who want to retire in the next 10 years.
- Staying up with emerging technology – weighing the cost versus the benefit of the latest and greatest – is always a challenge.
- Hiring and retaining competent staff.
- Keeping abreast of new regulations and laws to provide clients with the latest information and the most professional service possible.



Ed Duarte



Abby Dupree



Paulette Holder



Cecil "Pat" Patterson Jr.



W. G. Spoor



Maria A. "Mia" Thomas



Alan West

CECIL "PAT" PATTERSON JR.

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

I think the most challenging situations will be how CPAs handle the changing professional standard requirements.

W. G. SPOOR

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

The compliance and tax issues surrounding the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act will be a great challenge for all, while simultaneously creating many new opportunities for Florida CPAs – especially those in public practice. The compliance and tax issues will have a broad impact on CPAs in public and private accounting. Getting accurate and timely information from insurance companies will be essential with this ever-changing law.

MARIA A. "MIA" THOMAS

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

Regulatory, tax code and technology changes will always be on the forefront of our profession.

ALAN WEST

What do you think will be the most important emerging opportunities and/or challenges for Florida CPAs during the coming year?

To me, the most important emerging challenge for Florida CPAs is incorporating new technology into our professional lives. Technology is constantly changing and our profession needs to adapt to these changes. We're fortunate to have three generations of CPAs working side by side in Florida. However, we need to ensure that everyone is embracing new technology. This will facilitate our professional development. By embracing technology and incorporating it into our professional lives, we can help change the "bean counters" image. ➡

Ed Duarte



*Mallah Furman
Miami*

- My best asset is: my drive and passion.
- My dream vacation is: a trip to Australia.
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I was a butcher during college. My friends called me Ed the Butcher.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: a restaurant owner.

Duarte is an audit senior manager with Mallah Furman in Miami and Broward. He has 14 years of experience covering a range of professional services including audit, accounting, financial reporting and consulting. Duarte has served clients in a broad spectrum of industries. He specializes in audits and business advisory services for distribution, manufacturing, real estate and health care.

Duarte is a member of the Board of Directors of the Live Like Bella Foundation; the Centro Campesino Farmworker Center; and the Cuban-American CPA Association and Foundation. He is vice president of the Florida International University School of Accounting Alumni Affinity Council.

Abby Dupree



*Carroll and Company,
CPAs
Tallahassee*

- My best asset is: my 15-year-old son.
- My dream vacation is: at least two weeks on a tropical, sunny island with no scheduled commitments.
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I am adopted.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: bored and unhappy!

Dupree has been with Carroll and Company, CPAs since 1994. She has been a tax partner since 2002 and currently is co-managing partner of the firm. She specializes in tax planning and preparation for individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations. She also specializes in state and federal campaign finance compliance consulting and reporting.

Dupree graduated from Florida State University in 1992, became a CPA in 1996 and has been actively involved in the FICPA since 2002. She has served in each of the Tallahassee Chapter officer positions; as a member of the State Legislative Policy Committee; and as chair of the FSU Accounting Conference Committee. Beginning Oct. 1, she will serve as an FICPA representative on the AICPA Council. She is a graduate of Leadership Tallahassee Class 29 and a former board member of the North Florida Chapter of the Children's Home Society. She has served as finance chair for Holy Comforter Episcopal School.

Paulette Holder



*Holder & Company,
CPAs
Lutz*

- My best asset is: forcing myself to do things outside my comfort zone and growing from those experiences.
- My dream vacation is: I just came back from my dream vacation – my husband and I went on a photo safari in South Africa. We saw all the “big five” (Google it).
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I'm one of triplet girls. One of my sisters is a CPA and one is an attorney.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: an attorney. I love the law. That's probably why I went into the tax department. Plus, I'd love to go up against my sister in a trial. Did I mention we're very competitive?

Holder founded Holder & Company, CPAs in 1987 in Lutz, Fla. (North Tampa). After working for a national firm for six years, she went out on her own.

Holder has experience in tax and in accounting and auditing services. Her clients consist of individuals, small businesses and not-for-profit organizations. She has served on and chaired several FICPA Committees during the last 25 years and has served on the Institute's Board of Governors for two years.

Holder has been married for 42 years and has two children and two grandchildren. She loves football and traveling.

Cecil "Pat" Patterson Jr.



*Patterson CPA Group, Inc.
Ponte Vedra Beach*

- My best asset is: my ability to work with others and think on my feet.
- My dream vacation is: a trip to a remote wilderness lake for fishing and relaxing.
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I love to work in my vegetable garden.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: an architect.

Cecil "Pat" Patterson Jr. is an award-winning author, speaker and discussion leader for continuing education courses and numerous state societies. Patterson holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and an MBA. He has been president of Patterson & Associates, PA for over 30 years. The AICPA has recognized the firm for its work in the "virtual office" field.

Patterson serves as chair of the FICPA Continuing Education Committee and is a member of the Board of Governors, CIRA Committee, Accounting Show Committee and MEGA Conference Committee. He has been named an FICPA Outstanding Discussion Leader and has received the FICPA's Writing Excellence Award. He has also received the New York Society of CPAs' Distinguished Discussion Leader Award.

W. G. Spoor



*Spoor + Associates, PA
St. Petersburg*

- My best asset is: my analytical thinking.
- My dream vacation is: anywhere with my wife and two children (Fiji would be nice).
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I'm married to my high-school sweetheart.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: an architect.

W.G. Spoor joined the Spoor + Associates, PA team in 1997. He became a principal in 2007 and is responsible for the firm's domestic and international individual and entity tax practices. Spoor specializes in helping clients with tax compliance and consulting issues. He has extensive experience with business acquisitions, succession planning, retirement planning and representation before the IRS and the Florida Department of Revenue.

Spoor earned a master's in accountancy from the University of South Florida and a bachelor's in accounting from Florida State University. He is a Personal Financial Specialist; Chartered Global Management Accountant; Registered Investment Advisor; and QuickBooks ProAdvisor. He is an AICPA member and has served on the AICPA Uniform Accountancy Act Committee. He serves on the FICPA Board of Governors. ➔

Thank You

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Maria A. “Mia” Thomas



*Mia A. Thomas, CPA
Orlando*

Alan West



*University of Florida
Gainesville*

- My best asset is: my faith.
- My dream vacation is: being with my family on a two-week or longer cruise – the destination could be anywhere.
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I volunteer with orphans in Kenya.
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: The owner of a restaurant with an attached jewelry/gift shop. I'm also a part owner of a video-production company and I love brainstorming story boards that I'd love to someday produce.

- My best asset is: During my career, I've developed skills that allow me to help guide employees through their own professional development.
- My dream vacation is: an historical tour of the Mediterranean.
- Something that would surprise people about me is: I love to surf. I'm still learning, but I love it!
- If I weren't a CPA, I'd be: a lawyer with a goal of eventually serving as a justice on the Florida Supreme Court.

Thomas has provided accounting and tax services for over 29 years. Her clients include closely held businesses, not-for-profit associations, physicians, professional athletes and domestic and international individuals and companies. She performs due diligence, business plans and financial audits and reviews. She consults for non-profit boards on accounting and board governance. She is a frequent speaker for organizations on topics including income taxes; international tax issues; 1031 Exchange; financial accountability and strategic planning; and business etiquette and protocol.

Thomas is FICPA board chair-elect, chair of the FICPA Accounting Careers Committee and a trustee emeritus and past president of the FICPA Educational Foundation. She is a chapter director of the Central Florida Chapter and a director of the Florida CPA/PAC. Beginning Oct. 1, she will serve on the AICPA Council.

West has been with the University of Florida (UF) since 2006. Currently, he is a senior associate controller and oversees the university's treasury management and bursar functions. Previously, he was the controller for the UF Foundation. He is a member of the AIPCA.

West worked in public accounting with James Moore and Company in Gainesville and has over seven years of public accounting experience throughout Florida. He earned two bachelor's degrees from the University of South Florida and an MBA from Nova Southeastern University. He and his wife, Debra, have two children.

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