

TXCPA's 2024

Rising Stars

BY DELYNN DEAKINS, TODAY'S CPA MANAGING EDITOR

TXCPA's Rising Stars Program recognizes CPA members aged 40 and under who have shown outstanding leadership qualities and active engagement with TXCPA, the accounting profession and/or their communities. A TXCPA selection committee named the following 18 emerging leaders based on their contributions to both the accounting profession and their communities. We are pleased to introduce the 2024 Rising Stars honorees, listed alphabetically.



Lauren A. Albrecht, CPA

Audit Manager
Collier, Johnson, & Woods, PC
Corpus Christi

Lauren Albrecht is an Audit Manager at Collier, Johnson & Woods, PC, where she oversees all stages of financial statement audits, reviews, compilations, and preparations. She also mentors junior associates, focusing on improving project efficiencies and delivering high-quality client work. Her commitment to delivering exceptional results is supported by over six years of experience in public accounting. She received her Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Texas A&M University and her Master of Accountancy from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Outside of work, Lauren is deeply involved in her community. She serves as a board member and on the finance committee for the Purple Door, a nonprofit organization supporting survivors of domestic violence.

Lauren is also the incoming Chair of the Portland Chamber of Commerce, having previously served as the Chamber's

Treasurer. Additionally, she contributes to TXCPA Corpus Christi, assisting with "Counting on Santa,"

a local initiative that collects toys for Catholic Charities. Lauren is also participating in the Leadership Portland program.

Her dedication highlights her passion for making a positive impact, embodying leadership driven by compassion and purpose.

Candelaria (Candy) Arroyo, CPA

Senior Tax Manager
Weaver and Tidwell LLP
Permian Basin



Candy Arroyo is a Senior Tax Manager at Weaver and Tidwell LLP. She has been a strong leader within the accounting field, as well as in the community. She has mentored interns and associates and contributed significantly to the firm's Learning and Development team. After passing her CPA

Exam, Candy became passionate about helping others succeed as well, serving as a CPA Exam coach and mentor.

She is well-connected with the local college, regularly attending events for aspiring accounting students, and is an active participant in TXCPA events, where she expands her network and supports others. Additionally, Candy is a member of her local Junior League chapter and a former board member of Casa de Amigos, a nonprofit organization. Whether it is work-related, personal assistance or anything in between, she is not afraid to jump in and help others to grow. Candy is clearly a Rising Star in the accounting profession.

Andres Chavez, CPA

Tax Manager
Condley and Company LLP
Abilene

Andres Chavez joined Condley and Company, LLP as a Tax Associate in June 2018 and was promoted to Manager in June 2023. In his current role, Andres leverages his expertise to oversee tax compliance and planning for a diverse client base. He has become the firm's go-to resource for Texas franchise and state-related tax matters, and he stands out for his management qualities, consistently choosing actions that benefit his team and the firm. He is known for fostering strong relationships across departments and maintaining a "one firm mentality," which has strengthened collaboration at Condley.

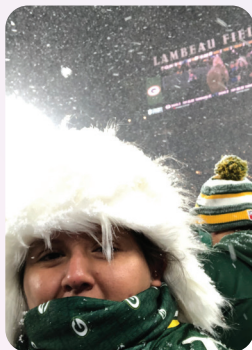
In addition to his career achievements, Andres is deeply involved with the Abilene community and TXCPA. He regularly attends TXCPA meetings and has played an active role in Condley's financial literacy service projects, particularly with local elementary schools. His commitment to financial education aligns with TXCPA's mission. His skills in staff development, client services and community engagement make him a trusted advisor and an influential leader.

Katie Brown, CPA, CFF

Supervisory Senior
Huselton, Morgan, & Maultsby P.C.
Fort Worth

Katie Brown is a Supervisory Senior at Huselton, Morgan, & Maultsby P.C. She has made a significant impact on social media by actively supporting and encouraging newly licensed CPAs. Through her authentic and engaging presence, Katie provides valuable guidance, career advice and resources to those entering the accounting field, helping them navigate the early stages of their careers with confidence.

Her relatable approach resonates deeply with new TXCPA members, creating a sense of community and connection in what can often be an overwhelming time for many. By fostering this supportive environment, Katie not only helps individuals succeed but also contributes to the broader growth of the accounting profession in Texas. Her use of digital platforms to connect with others highlights her forward-thinking approach to mentorship, showing how networking is evolving in today's digital age. Her guidance serves as a model for how individuals can use technology to make a meaningful difference.

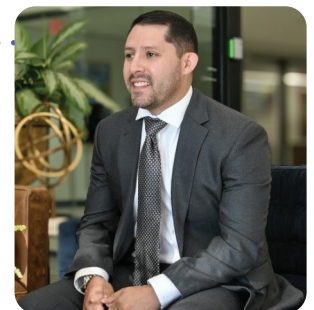


Jennifer Cadena, CPA

Financial Accountant
USAA
San Antonio

Jennifer Cadena serves as a Financial Accountant Lead at USAA, where she has become a standout leader. With years of service as Co-Chair of TXCPA San Antonio's Jr. Duel Financial Literacy Committee and an active member of the Financial Literacy Committee, Jennifer has made it her mission to inspire the next generation by visiting schools at all levels and sharing her experience as a CPA. Her enthusiasm for educating young minds about financial literacy and promoting the CPA license earned her the Outstanding Committee Chair award in 2021.

Since 2017, Jennifer has also served on the TXCPA San Antonio board. Her willingness to step up and volunteer, often on short notice, underscores her eagerness to assist wherever she is needed. Whether in her role at work or her volunteer efforts, Jennifer consistently rises to the occasion, embodying the values of coaching and service. Her contributions reflect her passion for assisting others and her determination to help shape the future of the profession.





Monica Corey, CPA

Partner
Haynie & Company
Permian Basin

As a Partner at Haynie & Company, Monica Corey held multiple roles, including Office Lead for the Midland/Odessa region, Tax Lead Committee Member, and Learning and Development Director. As Office Lead, Monica oversaw the Midland team, guiding them in their career development and ensuring high-quality client service. She left Haynie & Company on October 31 and is taking some time off before leveraging all of her experience as a partner in public accounting in the Career and Organization Development space.

Beyond her roles at Haynie & Company, Monica is deeply involved with TXCPA Permian Basin and has volunteered extensively within the organization. She has served on the Board of Directors and contributed to several chapter committees, where her knowledge and expertise have had a lasting impact. Through her involvement with TXCPA, Monica is an outstanding advocate, promoting educational initiatives and supporting the growth of future CPAs. Monica is a driving force and key figure in the Permian Basin accounting community.

Austin Fleet, CPA

Internal Auditor
Southside Bank
East Texas

Austin Fleet is an Internal Auditor at Southside Bank and an active member of TXCPA East Texas, where he serves on multiple committees. As a member of the Golf Committee, he has been instrumental in organizing successful fundraising events. He also serves on the chapter's Pipeline Committee. In this role, he dedicates his time to engaging with students and young professionals, introducing them to the world of accounting and inspiring the next generation of CPAs. His passion for education also extends beyond his role on the Pipeline Committee. He volunteers through his job at Southside Bank and TXCPA East Texas to visit schools to talk about essential financial concepts.

Austin's focus on his community and profession is evident in everything he does. Whether he's volunteering at a local school, coordinating a chapter event or working diligently at Southside Bank, he is consistently focused on giving back and making a positive impact.



Evan M. Green, CPA

Audit Partner
Whitley Penn LLP
Permian Basin

As an Audit Partner at Whitley Penn LLP, Evan Green supervises and performs audits for public and privately held companies primarily in the energy industry, focusing on upstream, midstream and oilfield service providers. Evan has extensive experience in audits with foreign currency translation, complex derivatives, business combinations and equity valuation. He leads a team of direct reports and plays a key role in staff recruiting efforts, training interns and new hires, and delivering presentations at campus recruiting events. Passionate about professional development, Evan invests time in attending and hosting networking events and training sessions.

He currently serves on the Board for TXCPA Permian Basin. He also serves as President of the Petroleum Accountants Society of the Permian Basin and on the Rawls College of Business Recent Alumni Board for his alma mater Texas Tech University. Evan is a frequent speaker on audit topics and he is passionate about mentoring the next generation of CPAs.



D'Andra (Izzy) Isabel, CPA

PwC Consultant
MBO Professional Services
Houston

D'Andra Isabel is a results-driven consultant partnering with PwC to serve as a pivotal leader for client engagements across diverse industries with a focus on optimizing accounting practices and operational efficiency. Renowned for her strategic foresight, pragmatic solutions and results-driven approach, D'Andra utilizes cross cultural communication to drive the success of global accounting and finance teams. With over 14 years of experience including directorial roles across industries and companies including EY, PwC, Schlumberger, Fifth Third Bank, and Fiserv, D'Andra demonstrates proficiency in managing high-visibility projects.

Outside of her professional contributions, D'Andra is dedicated to the community both domestically and abroad. She's been an active mentor with Big Brothers and Big Sisters Houston and utilized her TESOL certification to teach listening and speaking at a government high school in Prachuap Khiri Khan Thailand. She's been recognized as 40 under 40 by Tennessee State University National Alumni Association. D'Andra continues to foster the next generation by actively engaging in mentorship initiatives, workshops and speaking engagements.



Ashlei Lewis, CPA
 Client Accounting Solutions Manager
 Armstrong Backus & Co LLP
 San Angelo

Ashlei Lewis is a Client Accounting Solutions Manager at Armstrong Backus & Co LLP. Her colleagues recognize her as someone who will go the extra mile to get the job done, consistently standing out for her willingness to tackle any challenge. Whether training clients or staff, Ashlei is an exceptional manager and educator.

Beyond her work responsibilities, Ashlei is deeply engaged in the community, particularly through her work with TXCPA San Angelo. As a longtime active member and most recently as chapter president, she has coordinated events such as speaker engagements, luncheons and the local CPA tour. She is a strong advocate for introducing young people to the many opportunities in accounting. In addition to her chapter involvement, Ashlei teaches an accounting class at a local junior college. She consistently gives her time, energy and expertise to help others succeed, making her a valued leader and role model in her firm and the community.

Luis Lopez, CPA, CFE
 Manager, Assurance Services
 Burton McCumber & Longoria LLP
 Rio Grande Valley



In his role at Burton McCumber & Longoria LLP, Luis Lopez serves as a Manager of Assurance Services in the McAllen office, where he focuses on governmental and non-for-profit clients. His work has been instrumental in driving new firm initiatives, including integration of advanced technology to streamline the audit process. During his time as manager, the audit department has seen steady growth, contributing to the firm's success. Most notably, the firm earned a spot on the IPA Top 500 firm list, a testament to the team's high performance.

In addition to these responsibilities, Luis continually looks to give back to the community. Early in his career, he served as a board member of the Palmer Drug Abuse Program, a nonprofit organization that provides counseling and support to at-risk youth. He has also served on the Board of TXCPA Rio Grande Valley. His leadership and expertise have greatly contributed to the advancement of the accounting profession in the region.

Andrew Peterson, CPA
 Manager
 The Bonadio Group
 Dallas



Andrew Peterson is a highly regarded Manager at The Bonadio Group. He works with the SALT team to assist clients with a variety of state tax matters, primarily focused on sales and use taxes including fuel taxes. In his role, he is recognized as one of the most talented and valued members of the team. His expertise and knowledge not only benefit his clients, but also contribute to the overall success and reputation of the firm.

Andrew's journey is marked by significant achievements, including his graduation from the TXCPA Dallas 2023 Leadership Development Academy, a prestigious program designed to cultivate leadership skills among emerging professionals. He is actively involved in TXCPA Dallas, and has participated in the Young Professionals Group, CPA Involvement committees and the CPE Council. His participation with these groups and chapter activities underscores his passion for the accounting field and his commitment to community engagement and continuous learning.



Kyle Noack, CPA, CFP®
 Chief Executive Officer
 Keller & Associates CPAs PLLC
 Victoria

As a managing member and Chief Executive Officer of Keller & Associates CPAs, PLLC, Kyle Noack's accomplishments are integral to the firm's success. His extensive knowledge and expertise are complemented by a forward-thinking and innovative approach, always seeking ways to enhance both client satisfaction and the employee experience. In addition to his work responsibilities, Kyle is a dedicated and long-standing member of TXCPA Victoria, where he served as chapter president in 2017. He also serves on the boards of the Victoria College Foundation and the University of Houston-Victoria School of Business Dean's Advisory Board.

Kyle's passion for developing the next generation of CPAs and business leaders is evident in his mentorship of young professionals. He has served as an adjunct professor at Texas A&M University in their Financial Planning Program. In this role, Kyle bridged the gap between academia and the workplace, providing students with real-world insights and preparing them for their future successful careers in accounting and financial planning.

Jordan Payne, CPA
 Senior Manager
 Connor Group
 Houston



As a Senior Manager, Jordan Payne identifies the finance and accounting requirements of clients to provide tailored solutions that address their needs. He also helps create efficiencies by streamlining processes and procedures within the accounting function. Since relocating from Canada to Texas, Jordan has contributed significantly to various TXCPA Houston committees. As an active member of the Membership Committee, he provides insights into the evolving needs and aspirations of today's young professionals, helping shape initiatives that support their career development. Jordan also plays a key role in welcoming newly licensed CPAs, accounting students and newcomers, ensuring they feel supported and connected.

Beyond his work with the Membership Committee, Jordan contributes to the CFO/Controllers and Business and Industry Committees, playing an instrumental role in planning the 2023 CFO/Controllers Conference and 2024 Spring Accounting Expo. His expertise helps ensure these events deliver high-quality educational experiences. TXCPA Houston eagerly anticipates Jordan's continued contributions and involvement in shaping future programs and events.

Alan B. Pruitt, CPA

CEO
Pruitt Prep CPA
Houston

Alan B. Pruitt is the CEO of Pruitt Prep CPA, a dynamic CPA firm committed to empowering mental health professionals. With a focus on minimizing tax liability, enhancing growth potential and implementing effective strategies, Alan provides invaluable support. A proud husband to a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor for over 13 years, with her own thriving practice, Alan understands the unique challenges faced by mental health providers. Together, they nurture their three young children.

Alan's expertise is grounded in practical experience; he successfully implemented the Pruitt Prep Profitable Performance Playbook in his wife's practice. This hands-on knowledge, and his guidance for private practices ranging from six to seven figures, equip him to navigate the complexities his clients face. He has also been a prolific speaker and presenter at events and in various media appearances. Alan's mission is clear: to help those who dedicate their lives to caring for others. He transforms the financial landscapes of mental health professionals, enabling them to thrive both personally and professionally.



Elsa Selleck, CPA

Owner
Selleck Accounting & Finance, PLLC
East Texas

As the managing shareholder of Selleck Accounting & Finance, PLLC, Elsa Selleck oversees all aspects of the full-service firm, which provides accounting consulting, assurance and tax preparation services. She is responsible for managing the firm's staff and has a focus on areas such as ERISA audits for employee benefit plans, non-profits, small to mid-sized construction companies, privately owned businesses, Yellow Book audits, Single Audits, internal control assessments, and process improvements. Elsa also handles all client relationships and ensures ongoing, personalized service through regular communication and interaction.

Elsa has been an active member of the TXCPA East Texas Young and Emerging Professionals Committee for many years, demonstrating her passion for the profession and her goal to mentor young individuals. Deeply engaged in her community, she frequently volunteers to speak with students and future CPAs about pursuing a career in accounting. She is a shining example of a Rising Star, showcasing her leadership in fostering connections among students and young professionals.

Paige Smith, CPA

Controller
Principal Industries
San Angelo

Paige Smith is the Controller at Principal Industries, where she plays a crucial role in overseeing a \$100 million revenue company, ensuring its financial health and stability. A charismatic and driven leader, Paige has led the successful integration of strategic acquisitions that significantly grew the company's size and market presence. She supervises the accounts receivable and payable teams, ensuring the timely and accurate processing of transactions. Her strategic financial insight drives key decisions, enhances profitability, mitigates risks and capitalizes on growth opportunities.

Paige is also an Adjunct Professor at Angelo State University. She teaches a Principles of Accounting course. She is also actively involved in TXCPA San Angelo, currently serving as President for 2024-2025, and she volunteers for local charities. Her exemplary background, dedication to service and community involvement make her an outstanding representative of the CPA field. Her contributions, both professionally and personally, position her as a true leader.



Jaimie Yang, CPA, CIA, CISA

Senior Manager, IT Audit
McKesson Corporation
Dallas

As a Senior Manager, Jaimie Yang leads a team of three auditors, overseeing full-cycle IT and integrated audits. She places a strong emphasis on coaching, following an "I show, we do, you do" mentality to nurture each auditor as they learn foundational skills and methodologies. Jaimie also leads a department initiative to continuously improve audit processes and is highly skilled in building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, ensuring that she keeps communication lines open.

Jaimie's leadership extends beyond her professional role. In 2019, she participated in the TXCPA Dallas Leadership Development Academy and is starting her fifth term as chair of the Partners in Education Committee. Her hard work towards advancing the committee's mission through performing outreach to schools has made her stand out among younger members and resulted in exceeding state student impact goals for the last two chapter years. With her management skills and commitment to excellence, Jaimie shows significant potential to make an impact across the state.