

Jennifer Nakao, CPA, MPACy

Director of Operations & Administration

15+ years of success driving business transformation & delivering top line growth.

Accomplished finance and administration executive with extensive experience utilizing a combination of transactional and transformative leadership to build and grow organizations and start-ups, nationally. Considerable experience in turnaround and growth opportunities in diverse industries with a proven track record of leading large capital including complex businesses and operations. Successful in leading teams supporting budgeting and forecasting functions, financial planning and analysis, audit compliance, and new startups. Four years of accounting experience in the Bay Area and a strong track record defining and aligning strategies to achieve aggressive business plans and goals. Excel at streamlining and enhancing business processes and systems to position firms for next level of successful growth.

Highlights of Expertise

- Risk Management & Conflict Resolution
- Team Building
- Financial & Root Cause Analysis
- Capital Strategy
- Coaching & Mentorship
- Financial Reporting
- Process Improvement
- Business Turnarounds
- Change Management
- Financial Modeling

Career Experience

Patent Law Works, LLP, Salt Lake City, Utah

Own the accounting, operations, and human resources functions for the intellectual property firm, including monthly variance analysis, forecasting, and budgeting by utilizing Kaizen methodology towards continuous improvement.

Director of Administration (08/2011 - Present)

Establish the Accounting Department from the ground-up; developed accounting specific policies and procedures, and developed job descriptions for accounts payable and staff accountant roles. Facilitate accurate and timely financial information to executive leaders and recommended and implemented improvements to underlying processes. Provide oversight of accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll and general accounting functions to ensure deadlines are met. Integrate various systems to translate data efficiently and effectively for financial analysis needs. Collaborate with the CFO on multiple tasks including weekly, monthly, and governmental mandated regulatory reports.

- ◆ Implemented ADP Workforce Now for human resources and payroll management to streamline existing processes and integrate towards increased efficiency while minimizing errors.
- ◆ Led all human resource functions to include recruiting, onboarding new hires, payroll and benefits administration, guiding performance reviews, and navigating immigration.
- ◆ Established the firm's 401k, and redeveloped the benefit offerings to enhance engagement.
- ◆ Guided the mediation and resolution of issues and concerns in order to provide a safe work environment that encouraged dialogue.
- ◆ Recipient of the Red Ribbon Award for spearheading the growth of the firm through the development and implementation of an internal structure.
- ◆ Created key financial metrics to measure and monitor performance of professional staff including originations, commissions, and bonus metrics.

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Grant Thornton International LLP, Salt Lake City, Utah

Guided engagement teams performing audits for companies with \$2B in assets and \$900M in total revenue .

Audit Associate – Senior Audit Manager

Supported the execution of financial audits, enterprise risk assessments, operational audits, and investigations. Led the annual SOX internal control assessment process and worked closely with internal stakeholders and external auditors to ensure the testing was performed timely and effectively. Reviewed and compared financial metrics and internal controls against evolving industry trends and best practices, identified gaps, and proposed creative, pragmatic solutions for potential financial risks and control issues. Interpreted the significance of audit findings using data analytics tools, concluded on findings, and made practical recommendations. Educated process owners effectively, including non-finance individuals, on the importance of controls, an effective control environment, and process excellence.

- ◆ Appointed by the local managing partner to assist the professional standards partner with resolving client technical questions and monitoring of compliance with professional standards and firm policies.
- ◆ Identified internal control weaknesses and inefficiencies, recommended formal company policies and procedures in accordance with authoritative accounting literature.
- ◆ Led the firm's National women's initiative to promote more women into leadership positions within the firm, community, and profession.
- ◆ Appointed by the National Managing Partner of International Client Service to assist the Tokyo office for four months by performing on-site US GAAP reviews on multinational companies.

Education & Credentials

Master of Professional Accountancy, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

Bachelor of Science, Accounting, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

Certifications

Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in Utah, 2002 – Present

Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in California, 2000 – Present

Technical Proficiencies

MS Office Suite | FileMaker | Timeslips | ADP Workforce Now | Database Management | Web-based Business and Accounting Software

Community Involvement

Participant, Women's Leadership Institute, 2018 - Present

Co-founder, Utah Women's Charity Golf Classic, 2008 – 2019

Committee Member, Rowland Hall Auction Committee, 2008 - 2016

Committee Member, Salt Lake Chamber Can Do Coalition, 2008 - 2009

Mentor, People Helping People, 2008 - 2009

Member, Utah Association of Certified Public Accountants, 2002 - 2011

Board Member, Japanese American Citizens League, 2002-2005

Member, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, 1998 - 2011

Application Form

Profile

Jennifer

First Name

Nakao

Middle Initial

Last Name

Email Address

Patent Law Works

Employer

Director of Administration

Job Title

Home Address

Suite or Apt

City

UT

State

Postal Code

Mobile:

Primary Phone

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Career Service Council: Submitted

Referred by:

Kerri Nakamura

Qualifications

Please tell us about yourself.

I enjoy working through challenging HR issues with the support of analytical analysis. I leverage my 13 years of public accounting experience which allowed me to balance technical skills with people and client management skills. Additionally, I have built the HR side of my current employer (law firm) from its inception (implementing and managing formal policies and procedures, retirement plans, compensation management, HR management and payroll systems, and performance reviews).

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

In high school and college, I enjoyed being involved in various community service projects. This eventually evolved into boards and committees when I worked in public accounting. When I transitioned from public accounting to administration, I took a break from long-term committees and joined shorter termed committees. Now, I find myself wanting to rejoin a few meaningful committees where my blended skill set of technical accounting and HR management can be utilized. I have passed up a couple of opportunities in the past due to bandwidth and timing but the objective of this committee appears in line with my skill set and interests along with good timing.

What education, work experience, or volunteer experience do you have that applies to the board you are applying for?

I have 22 years of accounting and HR management experience working with various companies and countries. I have worked primarily in California and Utah with large engagements in Montana and Idaho. I also had the opportunity to work in Tokyo reviewing the audit work of US based companies with operations in Japan. I have a bachelors and masters degree in accounting and spent several years reviewing and working with regulators and large companies. I have worked under a performance based compensation structure my entire career and I enjoy the complexities associated with measurement and continuous improvements on career development.

What unique perspectives could you bring to the board?

I believe an organization needs to have clear values and a business strategy that are frequently communicated to everyone within the organization. I have strength and expertise in leading cost-efficient operations through key technical skills, process improvement, training programs and cross-functional collaboration. Educating people on how their roles fit into the big picture/strategy of the organization has proven to be extremely successful in creating a more collaborative environment. This environment, coupled with employees who share the same values as the organization, provides a significant competitive advantage.


Upload a Resume

Demographics

Some boards and commissions require membership to be racially, politically or geographically proportionate to the general public. The following information helps track our recruitment and diversity efforts.

Are you a Salt Lake County employee?

Yes No

Are you a current member of another Salt Lake County board or commission?

Yes No

Race/Ethnicity *

Asian

District *

District 4

Gender Pronouns *

She/Her/Hers

Age Range *

45-54

Languages *

English

Political Affiliation

Independent