

BUSINESS

Straight Talk

Jennifer F. Flinchum

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Jennifer F. Flinchum, a certified public accountant and most recently a manager at Keiter Stephens Hurst Gary & Shreaves, recently was promoted to partner at the Glen Allen-based CPA firm. Flinchum has more than 10 years of tax experience and has worked with two publicly traded companies, including PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. Her work has included coordination of tax compliance, strategic consulting and the structuring of a potential acquisition. She is the third female partner in the 25-year history of Keiter Stephens Hurst Gary & Shreaves. She also is an active member of organizations such as the Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Title: Partner

Organization: Keiter Stephens Hurst Gary & Shreaves

Previous position: Manager

Education: Bachelor of Business Administration degree, College of William & Mary; Master's of Taxation, Virginia Commonwealth University

Career turning point: "I don't know that I had one turning point. From the starting point I have enjoyed coming to work every day. I have enjoyed the clients I work for."

The promotion

"It's exciting. It really is an honor. When I started out I looked at people who were partners at the time and wondered if I would join them. I've been fortunate to work with people that took a lot of pride in developing people under them. I owe my accomplishments to some very good people that I've worked with along the way. I feel like it's something I've worked for since I started my career as an associate. I've worked very hard for it."

Career path

"I decided that I wanted to be an accounting major early on. I had a good background coming out of school. I was able to work with a lot of good companies, a lot of good clients and interesting projects. When I started working in public accounting right out of school, I found that I really liked the different issues that would pop up throughout the day."

Priority No. 1: Client Service

"This business ... it's very much a people business. I think that extraordinary customer service is being extremely responsive to clients. It also involves anticipating what client needs are and being proactive in trying to serve the client. It's certainly challenging sometimes to figure out what they need and how you can best serve them, but that makes it exciting. When somebody entrusts me with their business, when they have issues and questions, I take that very seriously and work hard to resolve issues. I try to be respectful of what my clients' needs are and try to help them run their business as if it were my own."

The future

"This is probably the top honor. If you work hard you can do it. My goal now is to develop younger staff and bring people along, to help them learn to be well-rounded business advisers. I would hope that I am a role model within this profession. I would like to be a role model for all the staff, especially the women."