

Gaining Insight and Resources through the AICPA Not-for-Profit Certificate Programs

At CapinCrouse, our core values include a commitment to professional excellence and lifelong learning. This enables us to provide insight and support that empowers our clients to achieve their mission.

As part of that commitment, all our firm's managers and partners have completed or are in the process of completing the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Not-for-Profit Certificate programs. While CapinCrouse only serves nonprofit organizations and our team has a strong background in this area, the certificate programs enhance our existing knowledge and provide new resources for assisting our clients.

Rounding Out Our Tool Belt

Two certificate programs are available and each offers professional development specifically for those who work for and with nonprofit organizations. Not-For-Profit Certificate 1 provides a comprehensive, foundational overview of not-for-profit organizations' unique financial needs. Not-For-Profit Certificate II is designed to cover more complex topics.

"The programs have helped to supplement and round out our tool belt for serving nonprofits — and not just on the accounting and audit side, but operations and tax as well," said Chris Gordon, who serves as a partner in the firm's West region.

Both Chris and Mark Hepner, a senior manager in the Indianapolis office, said that the nonprofit tax information provided was helpful, including details on the various tax

status types. Mark noted that while CapinCrouse has a dedicated nonprofit tax team, the information gained in the program helps to make him a well-rounded auditor with a better understanding of the tax nuances clients face.

"The information about governance issues has also been helpful," Mark said. "It's given me the perspective to better understand what the boards and audit committees at our clients care about, and tailor my focus on the areas that are most important to them."

Kelsey Brooks, an audit manager in the Denver office, has found the program information useful in her work, including material on fair value and programmatic investments. She also said it has given her a better understanding of the accounting issues clients deal with daily.

"Many times we are looking at things from a high level when we're doing an audit, but we don't always get into the finite details our clients are working with," Kelsey said. "I've gained a better understanding and am able to come alongside clients when they are determining how to handle certain accounting areas well."

The programs have also provided our team with resources they can use in serving clients. "We've been able to use guides, transcripts, and other resources provided through the programs to assist clients with specific issues," Chris said.

How You Can Benefit

Chris, Mark, and Kelsey said they would recommend the certificate programs to those working in accounting or finance at nonprofit organizations. "I think these are great programs for clients. They would be particularly helpful for those who have come from a for-profit background and want to learn what makes nonprofits unique from for-profits," Chris observed.

The certificate programs are enhancing our existing knowledge and providing new resources for assisting clients.

Mark noted that the programs can give clients a more thorough understanding of the results and recommendations of their audits. “It would also help clients to see how everything fits together, especially from a financial reporting perspective,” he said. “The information gained in these programs would help some of our clients better understand the intricacies of their own financial statements, including how all the numbers tie in and the reason behind certain disclosures. Ultimately, seeing the big picture of how everything flows in the financial statements can help them prepare ahead of time for questions we might ask,” resulting in a streamlined audit process.

“I highly recommend that financial professionals working with nonprofits consider taking these programs. They’ll acquire the confidence that comes from having the additional industry insights and benefit from the CPE credit available.”

“I took this as a consulting partner at the firm to ensure that I was up to date with the audit and tax information you need as a consulting and advisory professional in the not-for-profit space,” said Stan Reiff, partner and Professional Practice Leader – Consulting. “I learned critical knowledge that I wish I’d had access to in my prior roles as a nonprofit chief financial officer and chief operations officer. I highly recommend that financial professionals working with nonprofits consider taking these programs. They’ll acquire the confidence that comes from having the additional industry insights and benefit from the CPE credit available.”

“The programs are really convenient,” Kelsey added. “Rather than having to schedule a class, I can work through the materials when I have a free hour or two. And I can test my learning through the exams. I’m not just listening — I’m applying the information in real-time.”

Special Offer for CapinCrouse Clients

We have arranged with the AICPA for our clients to receive a substantial discount on both certificate programs. In addition to gaining specialized knowledge, you can earn up to 40 hours of CPE credit with Not-For-

Profit Certificate I, and 30 hours with Not-For-Profit Certificate II.

You can learn more about the benefits and the special discount [here](#).

And you can read more about how we’re using the certificate programs — and why we recommend them to clients — in this [AICPA case study](#).

Please contact us at info@capincrouse.com with any questions or to learn more about our audit and assurance, nonprofit tax, and consulting services.

Note: This article was originally published in September 2016. It has been updated.

About CapinCrouse

As a national full-service CPA and consulting firm devoted to serving nonprofit organizations, CapinCrouse provides professional solutions to organizations whose outcomes are measured in lives changed. Since 1972, the firm has served domestic and international outreach organizations, universities and seminaries, foundations, media ministries, rescue missions, relief and development organizations, churches and denominations, and many others by providing support in the key areas of financial integrity and security. With a network of offices across the nation, CapinCrouse has the resources of a large firm and the personal touch of a local firm. Learn more at capincrouse.com.

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