

The top people in public accounting — 2025

By [Danielle Lee](#)

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As part of our annual Top 100 Most Influential People in Accounting list, *Accounting Today* asks candidates to name who they think are the most influential people in the field, and here they are, ranked by the number of votes they received from the 151 candidates.

The top nine are listed below, and you can see Accounting Today's full list of the [Top 100 here](#).

No. 9: Kurt Hohl



SEC chief accountant Kurt Hohl received votes from his fellow Top 100 People candidates for his pivotal role in "successfully executing an ambitious agenda" that includes myriad implications for accountants, from "holding the profession to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity" to helping the SEC chair guide PCAOB matters, and his "ability to significantly influence changes in policy regarding financial reporting, accounting and assurance," according to the Top 100.

No. 8: Tom Hood



Tom Hood remains a fixture on the list of the most influential's most influential. With his role as executive vice president of business engagement and growth at the AICPA, that means "relentlessly evangelizing future-ready skills and preparing the profession to lead in times of massive change," as one candidate put it, and as many others chimed in, for always being at "the cutting edge;" which today means ensuring firms are innovative, adopting to AI, redefining their role as finance professionals, and preparing for all the other radical transformations shaping the profession.

No. 6: Erik Asgeirsson (tie)



The CPA.com CEO and president was dubbed a champion and leader by many of his peers, in the critical areas of innovation and technology, as he helps the accounting profession adopt and capitalize on the best tools and resources for their success. He is, according to one T100 candidate, "charting the course, speed and direction for a new wave of tech upstarts" and equipping firms to "compete in a technology-driven economy," as commended by another.

No. 6: Kimberly Ellison-Taylor (tie)



It is rare for the founder and CEO of KET Solutions' name to be mentioned without words like "passion" and "energy" quickly following, and she channels both toward championing the accounting profession to the next generation, as well as promoting diversity within it and continuing to advocate for an overall future-focused strategy. In her public-facing work with the AICPA, state societies and more, she speaks to students and future leaders with "clarity, conviction and purpose," as noted by her peers. Ellison-Taylor, according to one T100 candidate, "is not just talking the talk; she is walking the walk with her words and her actions. She shows why DEI is important as she leads her own company and continues deep work in our profession."

No. 5: Jennifer Wilson



At a time when a stagnating talent pipeline threatens the future of the profession, the co-founder of ConvergenceCoaching remains a force for recruiting and empowering that elusive next generation, through her work with the AICPA's National Pipeline Advisory Group and her consulting efforts that cover everything

important to today's workforce, from culture to flexible work arrangements to innovation to leadership development. Additionally, Wilson is, as one Top 100 candidate put it, "very vocal about her ideas and opinions — and many people listen!"

No. 3: Paul Atkins (tie)



David Paul Morris/Bloomberg

The SEC chair always holds a role of significance to accountants, but even more so as sweeping changes have hit the agency and its oversight of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board. Since Atkins was sworn in this year, he "has stepped into the role and signaled that he's not afraid to shake things up," said one of the Top 100, and is, according to another, "advancing updates to the SEC's position to strengthen confidence across the marketplace."

No. 3: Sue Coffey (tie)



As CEO of public accounting at the AICPA, Coffey has led members through many changes, including those she has spearheaded, like a new CPA licensure pathway to contend with the pipeline problem, which she has also worked to address with her National Pipeline Advisory Group. She was also lauded by the Top 100 for her co-sponsorship (with colleague and fellow top influencer Erik Asgeirsson) of the Dynamic Audit Solution, and her wide-ranging collaboration with regulators and "firms of all sizes in helping them successfully navigate ever increasing complexity and change."

No. 2: Allan Koltin



The many Top 100 candidates voting for Koltin as influential year after year often quip that behind every major deal in accounting, you can find the Koltin Consulting CEO. And that's not much of an exaggeration — his work facilitating M&A transactions has only grown in both volume and scope, as he has also overseen the recent influx of private equity investment into the profession, along with the accompanying new practice structures. And he was praised as much for the quality of his deals as the quantity. "He has a perspective of what firms are looking to do and match-makes deals that have long-term success," said one T100 candidate. He was also commended for having "his finger on the pulse of the profession" and "architecting some of the most impactful deals and transactions that will shape the future of the profession for years to come."

No. 1: Mark Koziel



This year coronated a new No. 1 in the ranking of who Top 100 candidates deem the most influential: Mark Koziel, who took the reins as head of the American Institute of CPAs from last year's first-ranked Barry Melancon, tops this year's list. The AICPA CEO was called a "breath of fresh air" with a "fresh perspective" by his peers, who are eager to watch what his leadership can bring to the profession's largest membership organization at what they describe as "a critical inflection point in the profession." Many of the T100 are hoping he can spur more change within a profession contending with so much transformation, and he has already gotten to work doing just that by leading the AICPA's Future 2040 project, which was established to develop a strategic vision for accounting through the next decade and a half. Most crucially, he and the AICPA are emphasizing it will be a shared vision, building on the membership engagement Koziel has already ratcheted up since assuming his role. As one Top 100 candidate extolled him: "He appreciates the input of members and isn't afraid to push for what's next and what's not the way it's always been done. He'll make great things happen."