

**Seattle Chapter Meeting
 Tuesday, December 14, 2004
 Bellevue/Seattle Joint Meeting**

COAST HOTEL
 725 116TH Ave NE
 BELLEVUE, WA 98004
 (CORNER OF NE 8TH ST & 116TH AVE NE- NEXT TO
 DENNY'S)
 425.455.9444

1 hour CPE

Social Hour 6:00 pm
Dinner 6:30 pm
Speaker 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Menu Broiled Chicken Seasoned with Herbs,
 Roasted Baby Red Potatoes and Fresh
 Seasonal Vegetables

- or -

Pasta Primavera, sautéed vegetables and
 fettuccini pasta

Both served with tossed green salad, fresh rolls,
 and coffee.

Members/Faculty \$21.00

Guests \$25.00

Students \$12.00

Reservations need to be made by **1 pm,
 Wednesday, Dec 8**, in order to guarantee a spot.
 Seattle standing reservations **will not** apply.
Cancellations must be made no later than **noon on
 Monday, Dec 13**.

*Due to the change in day & week, all Seattle chapter
 members need to make reservations. All non-
 cancellations will be billed.*

For questions, please call **Diane Cunningham,
 Arrangements Chair, at (206) 467-8645** (ASWA
 voice mail) or e-mail at
arrangements@aswaseattle.org.

**Tuesday, December 14, 2004
 Dinner Meeting
 Joint with Bellevue**

Program: Estate Planning
Eleanor I. Johnson, CPA, CLU
Managing Principal
Highland Capital Brokerage

Eleanor I. Johnson is a Certified Public Accountant and
 Managing Principal of the Northwest Offices of Highland
 Capital Brokerage (known formerly as the R.E. Lee Group),
 which includes offices in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco,
 Honolulu, Salt Lake City, and Denver, among others. The
 west coast R.E. Lee offices, along with a number of R.E.
 Lee partner companies, were acquired by Highland Capital
 Holding Corporation in 2001 to form a wholesale brokerage
 unit under the Highland umbrella.

Ms. Johnson works primarily with insurance professionals,
 their clients and their clients' advisors to design and
 implement appropriate life insurance programs, which
 integrate with the client's estate and business planning.

She speaks regularly to estate planning councils, bar
 associations, CPA groups, financial planners and
 insurance professionals regarding business and estate
 planning strategies. She was the 2000 chair for the 45th
 Annual Estate Planning Seminar, a two-day nationally
 recognized meeting that is the second largest of its kind in
 the country. Ms. Johnson was a featured speaker at the
 Association for Advanced Life Underwriting 2003 Annual
 Meeting in Washington, D.C. Most recently, she presented
 at the June 2004 Million Dollar Round Table Annual
 Meeting in Anaheim, California, a premier event attended
 by the nation's top financial professionals. A University of
 Washington graduate, Ms. Johnson is a past president of
 the Eastside Chapter of the National Association of
 Insurance. She is a member of the Association for
 Advanced Life Underwriting, the Estate Planning Council of
 Seattle, the Washington Planned Giving Council, and the
 Seattle chapter of the Society of Financial Service
 Professionals.

Ms. Johnson has also served on numerous planned giving
 boards and committees.



American Society of Women Accountants
Box 237
800 5th Avenue, Suite 101
Seattle, WA 98104-3191

President's Message December 2004

Greetings to Members:

The fall season would not be complete without an ASWA National Conference! I experienced my first National Conference (referred to as the ASWA/AWSCPA Joint National Conference or "JNC") in Chicago in November. Now I understand why it is highly recommended for everyone to attend! It was an opportunity to check out another city I had not seen, to represent Seattle Chapter at the ASWA Annual Business Meeting, to earn some CPE, and, not to mention, to have a great time with friends, old and new! There were six members representing Seattle Chapter at the JNC who all attended the Annual Business Meeting as delegates.

At the Annual Business Meeting, Seattle Chapter proposed an amendment to the National Bylaws, and the amendment passed with flying colors. Last Spring, Rhonda O. led the efforts to compose and present this proposed amendment. And, thanks to all the active members in the Seattle chapter, input was provided to develop language for the amendment that members nationwide could accept. As a way of background, this is the third time the amendment was proposed, however it is Seattle Chapter's first attempt. The amendment has to do with the approval procedures for new members.

A few other notes regarding JNC: At the Annual Business Meeting, Sharron O. was elected as first alternate to the National's Nominating Committee. She had just a few moments to present herself to the membership and we, the delegates, are proud of her! Sharron would serve on the committee in the event one of the committee members is unable to serve at the next September's National Conference in Philadelphia. Liz P. was elected to the Board of the Educational Foundation for Women in Accounting. Also, yours truly was elected to be the Vice President of the Chapter President Council this year.

Chapter goals: As a reminder, the Board set the following goals in July: 1) 25 new members – to be approved no later than June 9, 2005, 2) Retain 90% of current members, 3) 75% membership participation.

We have approved 8 new members, retained approximately 83% of current members, and 44% membership participation. The bottom line is we need everyone's help in achieving our goals! We are almost halfway through the year, but not quite halfway toward some of the goals!

In the next few months, the nominating committee will be talking to everyone regarding your participation next year. Please kindly take some time to talk to them and provide your feedback so we can continue to improve our chapter! If you wish to get a head start, please contact Rhonda O. to provide your thoughts.

Have a wonderful holiday season! Until next month, please remember to make ASWA part of your productive day!

Tonya Chin

president@aswaseattle.com

206-467-8645, press 3



**FALL TAX SEMINAR
 DECEMBER 10**

ASWA Seattle and Seattle University are pleased once again to co-sponsor the Fall Tax Seminar on advanced tax topics. . On December 10, 2004, we are offering 8 hours of continuing professional education technical credit

This is **8 HOURS of quality CPE** for **ONLY \$125**, which includes **continental breakfast, box lunch, and free parking!**

This has to be one of the best CPE deals, offering live presentations with a chance to ask your questions right then. It will be a great learning experience.

The topics cover many areas that tax practitioners face in their practices. The estate planning topics will cover issues that arise when you have blended families and divorcing spouses. Since we live in a world of the continuing growth of global commerce, we will hear about new and continuing foreign tax issues than concern individual taxpayers. On the compliance side, we will be reviewing the new IRS audit process and reviewing the rules and procedures for reporting sales of business property using Fom 4797.

The speakers come from a variety of backgrounds but each has long experience in her or his respective field. More information including a link to the registration flyer (a printable PDF file which includes driving and parking directions) is at
<http://www.aswaseattle.com/entryDetails.cfm?eId=64>
 Or just go directly to the registration flyer at
<http://www.aswaseattle.com/Fall Tax Seminar 2004.pdf>

Your **reservation is requested by this Friday, December 3**. You may register by phone or email and send your check to arrive next week, or you can provide credit card information by phone or email (or call to fax). **If you missed the deadline**, please check to see if there are still openings available. Please join many of your colleagues from the North End Tax Roundtable at this terrific seminar. We hope to see you there!!

To sign up, click on above links or go to seminar@aswaseattle.com.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Please remember that the dinner meeting is moved up to **Tuesday, December 14** and will be a joint meeting in Bellevue!

Need some last minute and/or tax CPE? Reserve a slot for the **December 10** Tax Seminar. See details on this page.

TAX TIDBITS

DO BEFORE YEAR-END

Charitable Giving, especially appreciated stocks. If stock is depreciated, sell it first and contribute the cash. A donee cannot benefit from a capital loss but you can.

Gifting. The annual exclusion for gifts is \$11,000. If you plan to gift to anyone, gift \$11,000. now before yearend and \$11,000. again after yearend. The gift will not be taxable for gift tax purposes.

If self-employed, open a KEOGH account before yearend, even if you don't plan to fund it until 2005 for the 2004 tax year.

Get more tips at the December 10 Tax Seminar!!



“Select the Conference Theme” CONTEST!!

The Seattle Chapter of ASWA is hosting the Northwest Regional Conference 2006. The planning committee is holding a contest to select the theme, which will be chosen after the January dinner meeting. If your suggestion is selected, you will receive a **\$25.00 discount** off your registration for the conference. Multiple entries will be accepted. Respond to NWRC06@aswaseattle.com . Submissions will also be accepted at the December and January dinner meetings.

Conference Theme: _____

Your Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Do you care what is for lunch? If so, help us plan this fun and educational event; subcommittee positions are available. Speakers and topics suggestions are now being collected. For any of these issues please contact the committee at NWRC06@aswaseattle.com .

Carrie Noess,
 Planning Committee Secretary

Speaker Highlights – November 2004

How to Successfully Navigate the Hiring Process

You've just discovered a dream-job opportunity that would top the charts of the Best Jobs Rated Almanac. But wait, before you start mentally decorating that cubicle or corner office, you probably face one slight hurdle before unpacking your briefcase. Unless your Uncle Bob runs the company, you face the dreaded job interview: What in the world should you say (or not say)? What in the world should you wear (or not wear)? And chances are, your dream job has attracted more than a few other starry-eyed job candidates, so how do you make your star shine the brightest during the dreaded interview?

On November 17, the Seattle chapter of ASWA, including student guests for our annual Student Night, learned exactly that from Tina Schaaf, top accounting recruiter with *Robert Half* in Seattle. If you've ever left a job interview wondering what they really thought about you, this presentation provided the inside scoop on what impresses, and distresses, hiring managers during the interview process.

For example, do you know what the 80/20 rule is? As Tina explained, 80% of what influences the hiring decision is based on the candidate's personality and how the candidate will "fit into" the organization. Surprisingly, only 20% of the decision is based on technical skills, or the perceived ability to get the job done. Also, do you know what 32% of executives from Fortune 1000 companies value most in a job candidate? While educational attainment or cost-saving wizardry would seem likely, post-Enron executives awash in Sarbanes-Oxley regulations are most impressed with honesty. How about how to dress in attire that announces that you're the best candidate for hire? Tina answered all of this and much more as she walked us through the before, during and after stages of how to successfully navigate the hiring process. Below are highlights from the strategy-packed presentation to help you win that next dream job:

Phase One – Preparation and Practice:

- *Practice active listening:* Activate your active listening skills by maintaining eye contact and repeating key concepts and you're certain to captivate your interviewer. According to Tina, interviewers believe that candidates that reiterate key points back to them will make the most-informed decision about the position's appropriateness for their interests and skill set.
- *Practice responses to common interview questions:* Anticipating and preparing in advance for the three most common types of interview questions, open, closed and leading, can leave you less white-knuckled when face-to-face with the hiring manager. Be prepared to discuss your strengths, and while they may be few, your weaknesses, as relates to the position. Also, anticipate leading questions about your greatest professional achievements as well as your three-to-five year professional plan. Finally, expect at least one open-ended question about how you will contribute to the company's bottom line.
- *Practice positive body language:* Remember when Mom always scolded, "Sit up straight" and you'll be sitting pretty during the interview. Upright posture is often interpreted as being alert and enthusiastic, traits which hiring managers believe will carry-over into daily job performance.
- *Do your homework:* Thoroughly research the company, industry and key competitors using sources such as *Dun & Bradstreet's* or *Hoover's Online* just as if you were researching airfare and hotel rates for a few weeks in a tropical paradise. Research prior to the interview will leave you prepared to ask relevant questions during the interview.

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Phase Two – Presentation Skills:

- *Look and feel your best:* Even if the office is so casual the employees look ready to hit the trails on Mt. Rainier, opting for a tailored suit in conservative colors and patterns is almost always a safe bet according to Tina, who has actually heard complaints from hiring managers about candidates who were dressed too casually and therefore perceived to not take the interview seriously.
- *Keep nerves at bay by being organized and prepared:* Bring two or more copies of your resume to the interview and ask five-to-ten pointed questions. However, the first interview is never the best time to bring up compensation or benefits, according to Tina.

Phase Three – Effective Interview Strategies:

- *Make a great first impression:* Start off on the right foot by arriving on time, being pleasant to everyone you are introduced to and letting the interviewer take the initiative and you're almost guaranteed not to be left out of the final hiring decision. Tina advises arriving approximately fifteen minutes prior to the interview to gain your composure and review your notes on the company and position.
- *Avoid interview blunders:* Leave that cell phone at home – even a Mozart-inspired ring will sound a sour note to the busy interviewer who may doubt your priorities and resent being left on hold for a moment.
- *Ask questions that make them question why they don't hire you:* Tina warned that inappropriate questions are just as bad as inappropriate answers and often occur when interviewees try to wing it at the end of an ill-prepared interview. The best way to avoid this is to do your homework on the company and industry so that you can center your questions around the company, position and the future.
- *Ending the interview positively:* Finish the interview on a positive, upbeat note by smiling and showing enthusiasm for the position. If you already know that you are truly interested in pursuing the opportunity, Tina explained that hiring managers appreciate hearing where you stand as early as possible in the hiring process.

Phase Four – Evaluation and Follow-Up:

What do you mean, follow-up after the interview? Aren't I done after I survive a round of face-to-face drills with the dream-job gorilla squad? Well, actually no, according to Tina.

- *Write a follow-up letter:* To hand-write and snail mail or e-write and e-mail, that is the question for many of today's time-stressed and tech-savvy candidates. However, in today's increasingly global and impersonal environment, it may be worth your while to take the time to prepare a hand-written note that includes the following elements: Express gratitude for the opportunity to discuss the position, reiterate interest in the position, highlight your abilities and "fit" with the company culture and end on a positive note.
- *Shake hands with the interviewer:* A firm handshake and warm smile end the meeting on a positive note and will have the interviewer remembering your interview highlights, not interview blunders.

Regards, Anne Taylor Chair – Marketing Committee

If you would like to receive a copy of the PowerPoint slides of the presentation by Ms. Schaaf, please contact Anne Taylor at (425) 869-6403 or email at ad-taylor@earthlink.net.

Baby Boomers, Beware! Don't Let Your Resume Date You!

If you're a job seeker of the Baby Boom generation, you may be feeling a little left out by the job market. You're certainly not ready to retire, but the young recruiters you send resumes to don't seem to respond to your skills and experience. If you're feeling symptoms of age discrimination, you should know that your resume could be the culprit, categorizing you as out of date and over the hill.

There are three ways your resume can put you in the over the hill category. Your resume is due for an update if it contains:

- 1. Outdated technology skills**
- 2. Outdated industry or occupational terminology**
- 3. Outdated resume trends**

Don't despair if your resume is out of date. You can perform an extreme resume makeover by using the tips below.

- 1. Make sure you are up to date on your industry's technology.**

Check multiple job descriptions within your industry to see what technologies employers really want. Determine which technologies are missing from your resume. Then decide what you need to learn or do in order to fill that technology gap. Consider adult education classes, college classes, or even online learning.

You should be aware that technology terms are often used as keywords to filter the best resumes from electronic databases. If your resume doesn't have them, it may never be seen. Make sure your technology skills aren't leaving you behind.

- 2. Make sure your resume is using current terminology.**

If you have just been adding to the same old resume over the years, then your early entries may be using outdated terms. One way to bring your resume up to date is through publications from your industry's professional associations. If you don't belong to any professional associations, you might be missing out on the latest industry-speak.

Another good resource is job descriptions. Search job descriptions in your field for recurring terms. Learn to use the current terminology for your industry correctly and effectively.

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3. Make sure your resume reflects today's trends in resume format and style.

Ten or fifteen years ago, the old-fashioned reverse-chronological format may have worked for you. But now that you have more experience, it may not be the best choice. The more advanced hybrid format may be much better at promoting your skills and expertise, providing you with a more professional presentation. With the hybrid resume, potential employers will form an impression of you based on your best accomplishments, not just your most recent job description.

You should also realize that some of the old resume rules just don't apply any more. For example:

"Limit your resume to one page. This is a really old idea that limits your ability to show all of your skills and expertise.

"End your resume with References Available Upon Request". You don't need to say that; it's assumed.

"You should show every job you have ever held and give each equal importance". Your employment history should only go back as far as it related to your current employment objectives. Think of your resume as a marketing piece that highlights the best parts rather than as a tell-all.

"Your resume should go back no more than ten years". Don't use an arbitrary number to determine how much to include on your resume. Use the rule of relevancy to decide how many of your jobs to include.

"One resume should handle everything". Not anymore! In addition to tailoring your resume to different fields or industries, you'll also need to tailor the way that you save it.

You'll want to have (1) a standard Word format (for printouts and as email attachments), and (2) a Plain Text version for online forms. This will save you a lot of time in repairing lost formatting, which often occurs when cutting and pasting a Word document into a text-only form.

Let your experience work for you rather than against you. Using these tips to update your resume can make a noticeable difference in interest from employers. And your new resume will be a better reflection of your hard-earned skills, talents, and expertise.

Deborah Walker, CCMC

Resume Writer ~ Career Coach

To see resume samples and read more job-search tips visit www.AlphaAdvantage.com

Email: Deb@AlphaAdvantage.com

The Quilt Project

Please contact either Rachel Petrich or Diane Cunningham to RSVP and get driving directions to help at the quilting sessions. They are open to all who are interesting in learning about this incredible process, not to mention that the proceeds from the raffle will benefit the Scholarship fund.

Raffle tickets are currently on sale for \$1 each from all Quilt Committee members. All proceeds benefit the ASWA Seattle Chapter Scholarship fund. The drawing will be held at the **January, 2005** Seattle Chapter Dinner meeting. Your support for this project and the personal growth it allows is greatly appreciated. The Scholarship recipients will also thank you.

Rachel Petrich
Accountant
University Village
quilt@aswaseattle.org

Calendar of Events

**Next Journal Deadline:
Tuesday, December 14**

The Journal is published monthly by the Seattle Chapter of the American Society of Women Accountants to serve its members' interests. If you have news or an article you would like published, contact **Jan K Cobb** via e-mail at journal@aswaseattle.org.

- Dec 10 Tax Seminar Joint with Seattle University**
Seattle University
- Dec 14 Joint Meeting with Bellevue Chapter (Tuesday Night)**
Bellevue-Coast Hotel
- Jan 26 Dinner Meeting-Program-Tax Update**
College Club
- Feb 23 Dinner Meeting-Program-TBA**
College Club
- Mar 23 Dinner Meeting-Program-TBA**
College Club

ASWA Mission Statement

The mission of the American Society of Women Accountants is to enable women in all accounting and related fields to achieve their full personal, professional, and economic potential and to contribute to the future development of their profession.

ASWA Claim Statement

For women who seek advancement in the accounting profession, ASWA is a professional membership organization that provides the leadership skills required for success. ASWA provides experienced mentors and a supportive, non-threatening environment to practice business management and establish a professional reputation among peers.