



MIAMI UNIVERSITY
FARMER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Department of Accountancy

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Meet Lori Kaiser

AAG Member Feature

Lori Kaiser '85 has served for the past three years as a member of our department's Accounting Advisory Group (AAG). She leads Kaiser Consulting Group, an accounting and finance consulting firm based in Columbus, Ohio. It was recently named a "Progressive Organization" honoree by Smart Business Magazine and earned a "Best Places to Work in Columbus" nomination from Columbus Business First because of its unique business model: seeking out employees with great experience in business and finance who have chosen to work less-than-fulltime hours.

The Best of Both Worlds

Kaiser employees are typically pursuing the "secondary career" in families where one parent has chosen to take on the primary tasks of managing their childcare and household needs—while also pursuing a career. "We've been able to offer another choice to those accountants who previously had to choose between a 50 to 60-hour workweek, or quitting their jobs," Lori adds.

This business model has a few advantages for clients: flexibility, responsiveness, and low employee turnover. Their experienced consultants are able to hit the ground running. Lori tells of a recent client that needed their cash basis financials converted to GAAP in preparation for a sale. Kaiser's team was able to supply consultants within 48 hours—allowing the company to complete the sale a couple of weeks later.

Their long-term clients value the low turnover of their project staff—less than 5% over the last 5 years. Because of their good work locally, larger clients such as Honda have requested Kaiser's services in their international subsidiaries, including Canada and Mexico.



A Good Start

In a recent lecture to Miami accountancy students, Lori shared her career journey after leaving Miami. She worked in audit at KPMG for seven years, working her way up to senior manager. At KPMG, she learned how to practice what she calls "success skills" to get ahead—doing your job to the best of your ability, seeing "more work" as learning opportunities, delegating and training your successor, forming personal relationships, and making your career goals and accomplishments known.

All this work paid off. Shortly after having her first child and leaving KPMG to stay home for a time, former clients started calling and asking if she would do some project work with them. She started accepting projects as her schedule allowed, setting her own terms. She recruited another accountant in the same life situation, and this started a new phase for a journey that would—withstanding a controllership and MBA along the way—end up being the Kaiser Consulting Group, now 55 employees strong—the 10th largest accounting firm in Columbus and the largest in Ohio with only one owner.

Lori credits her "fearless entrepreneur" father, as well as solid financial planning, for her confidence and ability to craft her career choices. "I always ask myself, 'what's the worst thing that could happen?'—and if I'm comfortable with that scenario, I go for it," she adds.



Fun Facts:

Lori's daughter works for Facebook subsidiary Oculus in Seattle, and her son is currently studying for the CPA exam.

Lori is working on her private pilot license, and landed her first 150-mile flight at the Miami University Airport.

Coming Back Full Circle

Lori's passion for leadership and mentoring has led her to come back, full circle, into academia. Miami's AAG was one of the first opportunities she took to get involved, where her interest is in helping to make sure students have the skill sets to match business needs. Recently, she was offered a teaching position at Ohio State University. Starting in January 2017, she'll be teaching an MBA class on accounting for decision-making at the Max M. Fisher College of Business. She's looking forward to investing in the next generation of students, helping them understand that "accounting is necessary not just for businesses to understand what happened in the past, but also to help them assess operations and overcome business challenges for the future."