

Power of Change honoree: Lori Kaiser on defining success for yourself

Written on Apr 27, 2023

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While the pandemic fundamentally altered the way we work, Lori Kaiser, CPA, CGMA, MBA, decided to switch up the traditional working model decades ago.



"I started this part-time flexible model 30 years ago, when there was full-time work and stay-at-home work and really nothing in between," she said of starting her firm Kaiser Consulting. "And now the world has come to our way of working."

Kaiser started Kaiser Consulting as an alternative to the traditional working model, offering project-based services for clients and more flexible hours for accountants who wanted to work but couldn't be in the office the entire day. The firm is now regularly recognized as a best place to work, has won numerous awards and continues to make an impact on the accounting profession.

Kaiser was named a Power of Change honoree at the OSCPA Women, Wealth and Wellness Conference in July 2022. The award salutes individuals who are advocates for women's initiatives in the workplace and business community, serve as mentors or role models, make a significant impact on their communities and break barriers for other women.

For Kaiser, receiving the inaugural Power of Change award was a culmination of years of her work on the OSCPA Board of Directors and the Women's Initiatives Committee. She said much of her efforts had the goal to raise the profile of women leaders in the profession.

Reflecting on her career, Kaiser said one of the most memorable moments was being asked to give the commencement address at Miami University, her alma mater. Although she said she was already accustomed to speaking in front of groups, she had never spoken in front of a group of more than 7000 people at once and described the experience as "an honor."

Another moment that stands out is when she was able to share ownership of Kaiser Consulting with her management team.

"It was a milestone for me that I built a firm big enough to share ownership with other people who wanted to come into the partnership, and help me lead it to new heights," she said. "When I came up with the idea to start the firm, I originally thought 10 people would be a great firm. And we're at 100 people now."

She said she wants each person on her team to be able to define what success is to them from a holistic perspective, both inside and outside of work.

"The biggest takeaway from my career has been that people matter the most," she said. "We always talk about how we want our team to have a great life, not just a great work life. And I think work can be a really important integral part of that. You don't have to give up everything to have a great career."