

Crystal A. Ekanayake
Partner, Assurance Services

(916)638-1188 | cekanayake@gallina.com

"I'm an entrepreneurial person who enjoys developing and constantly improving things and helping clients do the same. So I'm glad to be with a firm that allows its professionals the freedom to identify a client need and take steps to meet it, or to see an opportunity to make things better and to help that happen. I believe in not just doing what needs to be done the way it's always been done, but in making things the best they can be."

Experience and Expertise

Before joining GALLINA in 2002, Crystal worked as the general manager and controller of a privately held sales and distribution company and as an operations manager at two financial institutions. At GALLINA, Crystal also works with clients in a number of industries, including construction, commercial real estate, multifamily housing, and related industries.

Crystal's strengths include a passion for going beyond compliance to come up with ideas for improving the businesses of the clients she serves. She is adept at devising solutions to difficult problems and in helping clients with implementation and execution of strategic initiatives. She also has an incredible network of professional contacts she can refer clients to for the other services and resources.

Crystal has been instrumental in building the firm's employee benefit (ERISA) audit practice, which she now leads. Crystal is co-author of Knowledge Based Audits of Employee Benefit Plans, a Wolters-Kluwer publication and has written articles for a variety of industry publications. She is a frequent speaker at national level industry conferences and presents an annual seminar series on best practices and current topics related to employee benefit plans.

In addition to her responsibilities at GALLINA, she also teaches graduate level accounting courses at the University of California at Davis and previously taught similar courses at California State University Sacramento. Crystal also serves as a Director of Five Star Bank, where she serves on the Loan Committee and chairs the Audit Committee.

Approach

Crystal believes in treating clients like valued customers. For her, this means taking an active interest in each client's business, listening and spending time with them, and developing a relationship that doesn't just endure, but also adds value. To this end, Crystal goes out of her way to answer clients' questions, give frank opinions, and proactively look for ways to benefit them. She never treats an audit as simply a compliance task, but as an opportunity to identify ways to do things better.

Involvements

- Sacramento Construction Management Education Foundation (SCMEF), executive board member
- Five Star Bank, director, loan committee member and audit committee chair
- University Enterprises, Inc. (auxiliary organization of CSUS), executive committee member and

audit committee chair

- Western Pension & Benefits Council, board member
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), member
- California Society of Certified Public Accountants (CalCPA), member
- National Institute of Pension Administrators (NIPA), member
- CSUS College of Business Advisory Council, member

Education

- Bachelors of Arts from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
- Master of Business Administration and Master of Accountancy degrees from CSU Sacramento
- Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS) designation from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania
- Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF) designation from the Center for Fiduciary Studies

Other Interests

- Traveling abroad with her husband of 17 years — has visited interesting and remote parts of the world including all seven continents
- Sponsoring construction of medical clinic which continues to serve over 100 patients each day
- Sponsoring construction of primary school facility, three libraries and a community livestock operation