



## ISCPA Member spotlight

Kayla Vandehaar  
Altoona

**Hometown:** Pleasant Hill, IA

**Alma Mater/Degree:** Iowa State University, bachelors in accounting and finance

**Where do you work and what's your role?** I am a tax accountant at the Lauridsen Group, a manufacturing company in Ankeny. Working for a diverse global company in a post-tax reform era has its challenges, but that's the exciting part. The business is growing and evolving and I'm thankful I get to be along for the ride. While my title says tax, I do much more. For example, understanding treasury needs, analyzing transactions, evaluating new structures, etc.

**How do you unwind?** My husband and I are big sports fans. Whether we are watching the game live or relaxing at home, filling out a bracket or drafting our fantasy football teams, there never seems to be an off-season in our house. We love Saturdays in Ames or Sundays in Kansas City!

**What's one thing you can't make it through the day without?** A pen and a notebook. I learned very early on in my career (probably day one) that you never go to a meeting without some way to take notes.

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years?** I can honestly say I don't know, that's the beauty of the profession. The opportunities are endless, you just have to be willing to take risks and work hard. Don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone and try new things. In 10 years, I want to continue to be in a role that I feel challenged, empowered and know that I'm making a difference.

**What (or who) motivates you the most?** This is cliché, but my family and my faith. I have an amazing husband, a crazy 3-year-old little boy who keeps us on our toes and a 1-year-old daughter who is super close to walking! There is nothing better than walking into the house after work and getting an enormous hug followed by a sloppy kiss. I can't imagine life without them! A favorite go-to verse is Proverbs 3:5-6.

**What ways have you been involved in ISCPA and how have they benefited you?** I've been on the LEAP Committee since I joined the Society in 2013. It's a great committee to meet fellow CPAs as well as help shape the future of the Society. Building relationships in this industry is crucial and joining a committee or attending events are great to get your foot in the door.

**What made you want to become a CPA?** In college, I learned that many people in key management positions had their CPA, even though their titles may not be accounting specific. I learned that it was a way to differentiate myself from others and help propel my career forward. I've had several unique opportunities that would not have happened or even been an option without being a CPA.

**What's your best piece of advice for a college student thinking about becoming a CPA?** Again, building relationships is key. You never know when you'll meet a future co-worker, boss or even client. Be genuine and authentic, don't try to rattle off code sections or recite depreciation methodologies that you learned in college. I think in any business, showing that you care about people can take you further than just having the degree/designation.

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**Kayla joined ISCPA in 2013. She is a member of the ISCPA LEAP Committee and has participated in the Society's 2017 Virtual Career Showcase for students and volunteered for Iowa CPAs Month of Service. She and her husband Matt have two small children, Brady (3) and Peyton (1) who keep life busy and fun.**

**Outside of being a CPA, Kayla enjoys cheering on the Cyclones and volunteering with Polk County Extension and 4-H.**

You can contact Kayla through ISCPA's Member Directory at [www.iacpa.org/membership/directory](http://www.iacpa.org/membership/directory).