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U.S. CPA License Increases International Employment Options for Japanese Accountants

TOKYO, NEW YORK, and NASHVILLE (January 25, 2013) – A recent American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) and National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) survey of Japanese U.S. CPA candidates showed that improving skills (68.2%) and expanding career options (64.2%) were the main motivating factors for taking the Uniform CPA Exam and becoming licensed U.S. CPAs. Increasing chances of working abroad (39.9%) or for an international company (34.8%) were also found to be key driving factors. When asked directly if they wished to work abroad in the future, a total of 83.7% of respondents said that they did.

The results indicate that the U.S. CPA license is perceived to empower people to better tap opportunities in an increasingly globalized Japan.

Mika Kobayashi of the Japan Society of U.S. CPAs (and a consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers Aarata) said, “2012 was a record year for outbound M&A, driven by a strong yen and an aging and shrinking domestic population. As a global standard accounting qualification, the U.S. CPA allows people to benefit from Japan’s current push for international economic growth.”

Further backing this analysis, the results show that 84.2% of those surveyed agree or strongly agree that the CPA license is becoming more valuable in the job market, with 68.0% seeing it as more valuable than other accounting credentials. As to the benefits of holding the U.S. CPA, 70.4% said it improves professional ability, 57.3% felt that it improved self-confidence, while 52.9% saw it as demonstrating English language capability.

“The U.S. CPA is the Gold Standard qualification in accounting, and demand for professional accountants is increasing worldwide,” commented NASBA Executive Vice President & COO Colleen Conrad. “Beyond accounting, the qualification opens up career paths in diverse fields as management consulting. And the number of Japanese candidates is increasing - Japanese citizens account for approximately 60% of all international candidates.”

“The accounting profession in the United States is [expected to grow](#) by 16% over the next ten years, creating 190,000 jobs. The U.S. CPA is backed by a rigorous exam, strict licensing requirements and a stringent code of ethics. Taking the exam and becoming a licensed CPA is a great way for an accountant to prove their capability to a potential employer – in Japan, the United States and worldwide,” said [Craig Mills](#), AICPA vice president of examinations and CPE.



According to Robert Half's 2012 Accounting & Finance Salary Guide, the CPA is the most requested accreditation in the accounting and finance professions.

Of those responding to the survey, the vast majority (76.2%) of respondents were in permanent full-time employment. This is reflective of AICPA/NASBA data that indicates that Japanese candidates are more likely to be young professionals or mid-career candidates, in comparison to the U.S. or Middle East (where the international exam program also operates), where candidates are more likely to be closer to university age.

A total of 36.2% of respondents said that the convenience offered by now being able to sit for the exam in Japan had influenced their decision to become a U.S. CPA. The international exam, offered in English, has been available in Japan since August 2011. It is the same as the U.S. exam administered by the AICPA, NASBA, and Prometric in the United States. The exam is available to candidates in Japan at test centers administered by Prometric in Tokyo, Osaka and Kanagawa.

Starting from January 1, 2013, the U.S. CPA Exam is offered to candidates in Japan during the first two months of each three month testing window, the same as candidates sitting for the exam in the 55 state board jurisdictions, rather than the second month only, as had been the case to date.

The survey polled answers from a total of 592 respondents, who completed the survey between September 26 and October 28, 2012.

About NASBA

Celebrating more than 100 years of service, the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy ([NASBA](http://www.nasba.org)) serves as a forum for the nation's State Boards of Accountancy, which administer the Uniform CPA Examination, license over 700,000 certified public accountants and regulate the practice of public accountancy in the United States.

NASBA's mission is to enhance the effectiveness and advance the common interests of the Boards of Accountancy. The Association promotes the exchange of information among accountancy boards, serving the needs of the 55 U.S. jurisdictions.

NASBA is headquartered in Nashville, TN, with a satellite office in New York City and an International Computer Testing and Call Center in Guam. To learn more about NASBA, visit www.nasba.org.



About the AICPA

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) is the world's largest member association representing the accounting profession, with nearly 386,000 members in 128 countries and a 125-year heritage of serving the public interest. AICPA members represent many areas of practice, including business and industry, public practice, government, education and consulting.

The AICPA sets ethical standards for the profession and U.S. auditing standards for audits of private companies, nonprofit organizations, federal, state and local governments. It develops and grades the Uniform CPA Examination and offers specialty credentials for CPAs who concentrate on personal financial planning; fraud and forensics; business valuation; and information technology. Through a joint venture with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), it has established the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation to elevate management accounting globally.

The AICPA maintains offices in New York, Washington, DC, Durham, NC, and Ewing, NJ.

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