

# ERNST & YOUNG –

## What Makes a Great Place to Work: An Executive Perspective

### Diverse experiences are truly valued at Ernst & Young

#### Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young, a global leader in professional services, is committed to restoring the public's trust in professional services firms and in the quality of financial reporting. Its people pursue the highest levels of integrity, quality, and professionalism in Ernst & Young's core services of auditing, accounting, tax, and transactions.

#### Employees:

With 107,000 people in more than 140 countries, Ernst & Young is committed to an inclusive culture that leverages the differences of our people to create diversity of thought and quality service to the marketplace.

#### Master's of Accountancy program:

Your Master Plan is a unique program offering primarily non-accounting business majors the opportunity to earn their masters of accountancy degree from the University of Notre Dame or the University of Virginia while working for EY. For more information visit the Ernst & Young Web site, or contact Tekla Thornton, (216) 583-1551.

#### Website:

[www.ey.com/us/careers](http://www.ey.com/us/careers)

#### Why did you choose to join Ernst & Young?

I knew I could get great international tax work at any of the Big Four accounting firms. But what made the difference for me with Ernst & Young was the people, many of whom I already knew from my days at the IRS. Not just their technical and people skills, but their reputations in the tax world as top notch advisors. I knew them all to be people of integrity.

#### Aside from technical skills, what does it take to succeed? Give us three ideas!

You really do have to have people skills because so much of what Ernst & Young does is built on good teamwork; you have to have the soft skills with which you can build a team, and be part of a team. And you have to be flexible and open to constant learning to be able to soak up everything, because everyone is smart here and there's so much to learn. Above all, be open to the possibilities of what you can do here.

#### What is special about Ernst & Young?

I think growing up we often think we have to take the most direct path to a destination, and go from A to Z in a predictable way. But you don't, and Ernst & Young is a place where diverse experiences truly are valued; it's not a cookie cutter environment. Leaders here are very good at helping you find the opportunities to discover what you do best, and encouraging you to contribute that to the organization.

#### Why do you think that minority students have ranked your company as a top employer?

I think when people look at a company, they ask, 'Is there anyone like myself in top management?' I certainly did that. And for me, seeing that three women in a small office were partners made me feel that there were a lot of possibilities for me here. We still have a lot of work to do, but Ernst & Young has done a great job forging strategic alliances with the historically black colleges and universities and reaching out to the campus champions at all universities. That has helped students see that not only have minorities reached high ranks at Ernst & Young, but they



#### Lilo Hester

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**Education:** J.D., University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, School of Law  
B.S., University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

#### Professional/Community Affiliations:

- Circle of Friends' Advisory Council of the American Legacy Foundation
- Professional Women's Network of the National Museum of Women in the Arts
- Washington, D.C. Bar Association, Tax Section
- Active participant in various community activities through Delta Sigma Theta sorority and Metropolitan AME Church

are being retained, and are active, key players in the organization.

#### What are the opportunities like at EY?

When you graduate, you worry: 'Do I have the basic skills I need to succeed?' Ernst & Young will give you the work experiences you need to build a strong core and grow, along with opportunities to further your education, both formal and informal. There are daily opportunities to learn. You have to crawl before you can walk, and people here really take your development seriously and see it as a shared responsibility.