

# CLA Promise Report

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At CLA, our Promise is more than words — it's the foundation of everything we do. We exist to create opportunities: for our clients, our people, and our communities. And in 2024, we didn't just keep that promise — we elevated it.

We serve the heartbeat of the economy: privately held businesses, nonprofits, government entities, entrepreneurs, and more who are shaping the future. But we don't just support them; we empower them and the communities and organizations that surround them. Through Impeccable Client Service™, democratization of artificial intelligence, and future-forward strategies, we help them navigate change — not by reacting, but by anticipating and co-creating what's next.

This year, we took bold steps to solve some of the most pressing challenges in our profession and beyond. We tackled the professional services employee pipeline problem head-on, launching CLA Academy, expanding high school internships, and championing additional pathways to CPA certification.

We reinforced our commitment to being an independent, succession-driven firm — one that doesn't follow industry trends, but sets them.

But what truly sets CLA apart isn't just our innovation or our impact. It's our culture — our greatest competitive advantage. Culture isn't something we talk about; it's something we live, every single day. It's why CLA is more than a workplace — it's a family. A place where people feel seen, supported, and inspired. A place where careers flourish, well-being is prioritized, and self-discovery is embraced.

To our clients and communities — thank you for trusting us to be your partner in possibility. And to our CLA family — thank you. Your dedication, passion, and belief in our shared vision make this firm extraordinary. Together, we're not just shaping the future. We're building it.

With gratitude,  
Jen Leary,  
CEO, CLA





# LIVING THE CLA PROMISE



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# We serve the *heartbeat* of the economy

Our roots are deeply entrenched across the country, in living rooms and factory floors, in hospitals and classrooms, in boardrooms and in farm fields. We know our clients inside and out and provide professional services across the spectrum, from business start-up to business sale, from individual tax preparation to extensive wealth advisory.

We promise to know you and help you. That isn't just a tagline, it is deeply engrained in everything we do, in how we provide Impeccable Client Service™ to all of our clients. Our long-term relationships, some spanning decades, are a testament to our dedication and professional experience.

These relationships are built on trust and a commitment to delivering results that matter. We take pride in our ability to adapt swiftly to market changes, experiment with novel ideas, and pivot quickly in response to client feedback and industry trends. This agility enhances our clients' capabilities, enabling them to build robust and resilient businesses.



# 2024 in review

Welcomed Engine B, generative artificial intelligence (AI) platform

Enabled entire firm with Microsoft CoPilot Enterprise License

Named among Top 80 Companies for Executive Women by Seramount

Certified as a Great Place to Work®

Named the firm's first chief data officer

Grew CLA footprint in New Mexico; Houston; Austin, Texas; Georgia; California

Named top employer for working parents by Seramount for second year

CLA Wealth Advisors named 45 on *Barron's* Top 100 RIA Firms list

Launched CLA Academy, first of its kind training program

Collaborated with NABA and Accenture to launch CLA, Accenture, and NABA (CAN) certification program

Named 2024 Top U.S. Construction Accounting Firm

Building three state-of-the-art Learning and Event Centers in Phoenix, Charlotte, and Minneapolis

Won Campus Forward award for recruiting efforts

Advanced more than 800 people to leadership positions



# CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CLIENTS



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CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CLIENTS

## To know you and to help you

Knowing our clients as well as we do means that our connection goes beyond a single engagement.

Our deep experience spans tax, audit, wealth advisory, consulting, and digital services, helping us meet a wide range of client needs. With specialized knowledge across 14 industries — from construction to health care, nonprofit to education, real estate to agribusiness — we are distinctly equipped to serve diverse sectors.

Each CLA professional understands the specific challenges and opportunities within each business or industry. We tailor our strategies and guidance, bringing together cross-functional teams that include industry professionals dedicated to addressing specific pain points. This collaborative effort brings our clients holistic, informed, and effective guidance, leveraging the full spectrum of CLA's capabilities.

Our commitment to seamless service means that no matter where our clients are in their journey, we can support them with an integrated approach that helps drive success and growth. This fosters a resilient and thriving business environment, enabling our clients to navigate complexities and seize opportunities with confidence.



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## 2024 client service at a glance

At CLA, we pride ourselves on our industry leadership.

Serving 14 distinct industries, our team collectively brings literally hundreds of years of deep, collective experience to the table. This extensive knowledge allows us to provide unsurpassed insights and strategies tailored to the distinct needs of each sector. From construction to manufacturing, nonprofit to technology, agribusiness to government, our industry-specialized professionals understand the strategic, operational, financial, and regulatory issues that affect your organization, and use their core knowledge to help you achieve your goals.

Our commitment to industry leadership helps you, our clients, benefit from informed, innovative, and effective professional services.

<b>202,300+</b>	Active clients
<b>7,700+</b>	Clients engaged in global capabilities
<b>4,500+</b>	Clients engaging employee benefit plan capabilities
<b>104,600+</b>	Private households served
<b>12,400+</b>	Nonprofit organizations served
<b>3,700+</b>	Government organizations served
<b>580+</b>	Higher education organizations served
<b>5,500+</b>	Financial institutions served
<b>8,200+</b>	Health care organizations served
<b>33,600+</b>	Clients engaging outsourcing capabilities
<b>7,700+</b>	Clients engaging wealth advisory capabilities



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# Bringing generative AI to our clients

In May 2024, CLA acquired Engine B — a U.K.-based technology company that specializes in delivering generative AI solutions for the professional services industry.

This strategic move — CLA's first global acquisition — underscores the firm's commitment to harnessing cutting-edge technology to enhance client service and enable CLA professionals to focus more on Impeccable Client Service™ while pursuing new business opportunities. Bringing Engine B into the fold further accelerates CLA's \$500 million investment in digital technology and artificial intelligence. By harnessing Engine B's capabilities, CLA can enhance how we serve clients while also innovating for the future.

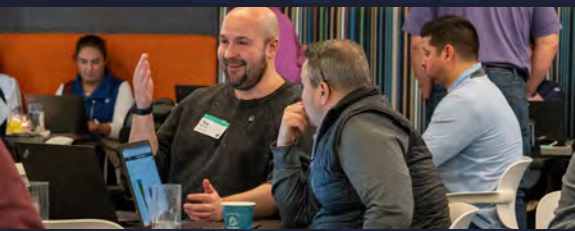
"At CLA, we are early adopters, staying ahead of industry trends, always looking to enhance the services and digital solutions we provide to our clients. The automation capabilities that Engine B brings to the table enable us to redirect valuable time toward client engagement while pursuing new business opportunities."

— James Watson, Chief Solutions Officer



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## Building strength by welcoming others

CLA experienced significant milestones in 2024, showcasing the firm's commitment to innovation, global reach, and data-driven strategy.

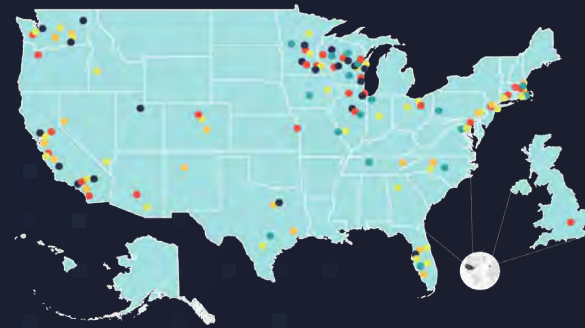
Overall, 2024 has been a year of growth and transformation for CLA, setting a solid foundation for future success.

**May: Ronald Blue & Co. CPAs joined CLA**, with offices in Atlanta, Georgia; Tempe, Arizona; Knoxville, Tennessee; and Santa Ana, California.

**May: Engine B integrated into CLA.** This AI-driven, U.K.-based tech firm was CLA's first global addition.

**July: CLA appointed new executive leadership positions** with Chief Data Officer Spencer Lourens and CFO Ray Price, Jr.

**August: Axiom CPAs joined CLA**, with an office in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



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# CLA Global

Under the leadership of newly appointed CEO Paul English, CLA Global continues to strengthen its executive team and innovate its operations.

CLA Global welcomed new member firms from around the world, showcasing its commitment to global growth and collaboration. CLA Global's strategy also includes bringing in new alliance members in the United States, further solidifying its U.S. presence and influence.

CLA Global is now the 12th largest network in the world, a feat accomplished in only the last 24 months. CLA Global is a member-led organization that is ambitious to serve the needs of our clients and people, today and tomorrow.



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## CLA Global actions in 2024

- January: Alliance member in **Germany**
- February: Alliance members in the **Netherlands and United States**
- April: Alliance member in **United States**
- June: Network members in **Mexico and Brazil**
- July: Network member in **Malta** and alliance member in **Luxembourg**
- August: Alliance members in **Bulgaria, Georgia, and Switzerland**
- September: Network members in **Saudi Arabia, Romania, and Turkey**
- October: Held first ever CLA Global conference in **Germany**



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# Our great place to work

In 2024, CLA was recertified as a Great Place To Work® based on employee workplace experience, further validating our efforts to build a supportive and inclusive community.

Our CLA family members take great pride in being part of our inclusive and supportive culture. 82% of the CLA family responded to the survey, our highest participation rate ever! A total of 88% of the CLA family are proud to call CLA home, with 94% feeling they are treated fairly and 92% saying CLA is a welcoming place to work. This positive feedback reflects our dedication to creating an environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

This milestone highlights our commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive workplace for all who join the CLA family. To measure our progress, CLA engages Great Place To Work, the global authority on workplace culture, to conduct surveys among our family members. These anonymous surveys, conducted since 2021, provide valuable insights into the workplace experience and culture at CLA.



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## Our culture and belonging

CLA is committed to investing in and being representative of the communities we serve.

Belonging at CLA embraces connectivity, fosters empathy, and thrives to build a bridge between cultures — creating an environment where family members have a profound feeling of inclusion, acceptance, and belonging.

Our belonging ambassadors and enthusiasts span our 130+ locations and work hard to embrace belonging, celebrate the diverse cultures across CLA, and engage our CLA family members in a meaningful way. CLA virtual belonging communities connect CLA family members across spectrums to learn and grow and prosper. Our common interest groups champion supportive gathering among individuals navigating similar life experiences or holding shared values. In 2024, we launched our belonging and inclusion week to highlight and celebrate belonging across all our locations.



“What is belonging? To me, it’s a feeling of security and support where there’s a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity. It’s about being part of something bigger than myself and feeling safe there. I am honored to work with our connection team toward that goal for CLA to become a place where you feel you belong!”  
— Sharey Wang, *Managing Principal of Connection Team*



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## Our people

We strive for a workforce that is appropriately represented and feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their special perspectives and talents.

Throughout 2024, we made significant connections with universities and increased engagement across diverse professional organizations including ALPFA, Ascend, Disability:IN, and NABA, by:

- Hosting and attending local chapter events
- Supporting CLA family members serving as board members for the local chapters
- Mentoring students across local student chapters

- Sponsoring and presenting at national conventions
- Utilizing resume databases to source talent

CLA engaged with more than 500 students at the ALPFA and NABA conventions and continued our involvement in regional conferences across the country to expand our network and presence.



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The first CLA Academy cohort took place in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Recruited from local education and community groups, this CLA Academy represents not just a real investment in the firm's future workforce, but also an investment in the communities where we live and work.

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## CLA Academy

The CLA Academy is a transformative 12-week certification program designed to address workforce development needs.

This program was developed specifically targeting individuals who may be embarking on a second career or do not possess a four-year degree. Its purpose is to provide these individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to transition into the financial field, thereby opening new career opportunities. CLA meticulously developed the curriculum to align with the high standards of the profession and equip participants with practical, hands-on experience.



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## CLA Connection Centers

CLA announced a major investment in 2024 with the creation of connection centers in three locations across the country: Minneapolis, Phoenix, and Charlotte.

This is a cross-country strategy to provide dedicated spaces for learning and development, leadership training, collaboration, events, client meetings, and more. CLA selected three locations to bring its professionals together at various times throughout the year.

- The firm will open the first connection center at the Viking Lakes Complex in Minneapolis in May of 2025.
- The combined connection center and office space in Charlotte will be located in Ballantyne Village — a corporate park and shopping center with more than 30 restaurants and retail stores. This space is expected to be complete by December 2025 and will serve as a designated office space for team members in addition to a connection center.
- The space in the Hayden Ferry development in Phoenix will serve as a connection center and dedicated office space for CLA's roughly 100 professionals and is expected to be complete by December 2025.



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Our family members' inspired careers:

<b>2,260</b>	People joined CLA
<b>218</b>	Advanced or transitioned to director path
<b>238</b>	Advanced or transitioned to principal path
<b>154</b>	Pursued mobility opportunities
<b>327</b>	Alumni rejoined CLA
<b>1,369</b>	Declared a new industry
<b>800+</b>	Advanced to leadership positions
<b>89</b>	Percent retention rate

## Our inspired careers

At CLA, we believe not only in our promise, but in the spirit of our people. We listen to their needs, to their desires and their inspirations. And we act to help focus on their inspired careers.

We are prioritizing not only mentoring and coaching but also fostering direct connections and regular check-ins with supervisors to provide continuous feedback on performance and future opportunities, helping the CLA family to grow and thrive. Embracing transformative technologies, including AI, we are reshaping our futures. We recognize that the next generation of leaders is ready to revolutionize the way we assist our clients. This is transformational. This is positive disruption.

We also believe in opportunities. Mobility at CLA is a cornerstone of our dynamic work culture, offering family members the flexibility to explore diverse career paths and broaden their professional horizons. Whether transitioning from one industry focus to another or relocating to a different geographical location, CLA provides ample opportunities for growth and development. This mobility not only enriches the individual experiences of our team members but also infuses fresh perspectives and innovative ideas across the organization. We are primed to lead in new ways that will enhance our client service experience and provide our people with new tech-driven, inspired career opportunities.



# Live Well

The CLA Live Well philosophy emphasizes the importance of self-care as the foundation for personal and professional excellence.

By prioritizing activities such as physical movement, recharging, connecting with others, healthy nourishment, and effective stress management, we can enhance our interactions with our clients, teammates, and families. The Live Well team, led by a licensed clinical mental health professional and a certified nutrition and fitness professional, is dedicated to educating and coaching the CLA family to embody and practice this philosophy, fostering a culture of well-being and success.

## Live Well Champions

They help amplify the efforts of the team by sharing various wellness initiatives with CLA family members. The program has expanded significantly, now boasting over 66 formal Live Well champions who represent more than 35% of our CLA offices.

## Thrive Global

A platform designed to support well-being and productivity. From January to August 2024, an impressive 41% of our users returned to the platform 13 or more times per month on average – significantly surpassing Thrive’s own benchmark of 16%.

## TRlumph Movement Challenge

On August 17, nearly 1,500 CLA family members across the country united to walk, run, swim, or cycle for the CLA TRlumph Movement Challenge. This firm-wide initiative was dedicated to promoting health and wellness while fostering a sense of community and shared commitment to well-being.



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE

## Lead Well

At CLA, we believe softs skills are *power skills*, essential ingredients that power our success in the business world.

These hands-on workshops, assessments, and coaching sessions are rooted in emotional intelligence, enabling our family members to leverage their strengths and become the best versions of themselves. We pour these teachings into our people from day one and expand on this foundation at every step of our careers, with courses on leadership styles, facilitating change, and team management. This belief grounds our approach to leadership development and the courses offered in our Lead Well curriculum. In 2024, we touched more than 5,000 CLA family members through this leadership progression.

**250+**

Teambuilding participants, including CLA's executive and leadership teams

**4,000+**

In-person and online workshop participants

**500+**

Individual coaching assessments

CPAs | Consultants | WealthAdvisors



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A person is standing on a stage in front of a large presentation screen. The screen displays the text "Launching our Growth Culture" with a blue upward-pointing arrow. The background is dark with several large, semi-transparent logos of the firm, consisting of a circle with the letters "CLA" inside. The overall scene is dimly lit, typical of a conference or presentation.

# CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITIES



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CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

# Employee-driven philanthropy

The CLA Foundation, funded solely by donations from our CLA family members, believes in collective action.

Through the Community Action Fund, we are bringing our CLA family members' voice to the forefront of our grantmaking process, fostering a regional approach that allows our local offices more say in our philanthropic efforts. CLA is deeply engaging our people to identify community organizations that align with our mission.

The CLA Foundation also provided \$2 million to develop the next generation of accounting and professional service leaders, while also sparking further exploration of trade careers. Scholarship America received \$1.5 million to distribute \$15,000 scholarships in various communities where CLA has offices nationwide. SkillsUSA received \$500,000 to create learning opportunities in construction, manufacturing, agribusiness, and additional industries.

Looking ahead, the CLA Foundation is committed to impact and growth. We remain steadfast in our mission to connect diverse networks and create career opportunities through education, employment, and entrepreneurship.



*This year, we celebrated a remarkable achievement:*  
**\$2 million was allocated to  
119 organizations through our  
Community Action Fund.**



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CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

# CLA Foundation invests in our future

**2015**

CLA Foundation established

**776**

Grants since 2015

**\$13M+**

Granted since 2015

**3**

Strategic investment grants in 2024

**119**

Community Action Fund grants made in 2024

**\$4.4M**

Raised for community grantmaking in 2024

**3**

Areas of focus: education, employment, and entrepreneurship

**60+**

CLA offices nominated, studied, and determined grant recipients

**2**

Grants awarded through CLA's high school internship program in 2024

**100%**

Owner giving in 2024





*We'll get you there.*

CPAs | CONSULTANTS | WEALTH ADVISORS

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