

## Winning Workplaces

### Thousand CPA Services

Like most accountants, Nicole Thousand began her career working for a large accounting firm. During her tenure at the larger firms, she realized those firms were not meeting the needs of small-business clients.

“It seemed like small business owners get caught up in either overpaying or not getting the services larger companies are getting or they are not getting the tax help they need,” she said. “You can’t really run and grow a successful business unless you really understand your financial statements.”

She decided to change that. In 2009, at the tender age of 29 and with few customers, Thousand began Thousand CPA Services out of her home. “I wanted to provide the level of service I had learned from the mid-sized accounting firm to more of a small-business type client because small businesses don’t become big businesses without some sort of advisor. My goal was to provide that top-notch service and not just provide a transactional service.”

She quickly grew out of her home, and today the company, celebrating 10 years in business, has 10 employees. She also added Matt Ott as a partner in 2017.

“I was drawn to this industry by my family,” she said. “My

**Founded:** 2009

**Employees:** 11

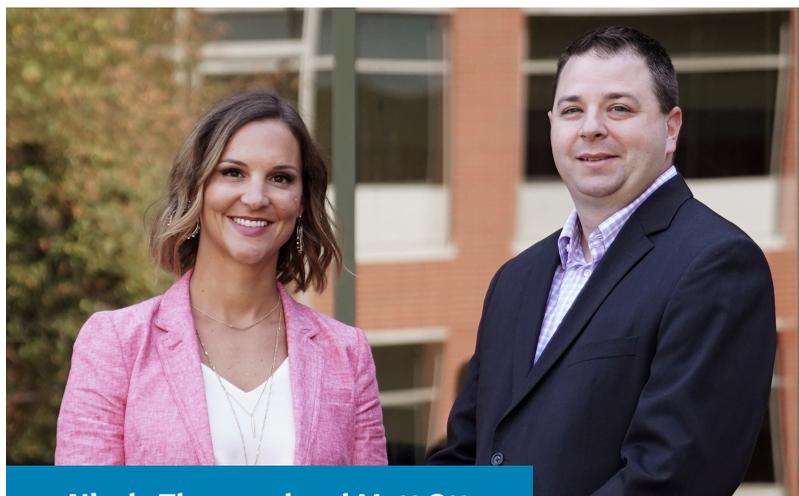
**To Name Just One benefit:** Four week, paid sabbatical after being employed for 5 years, which includes reimbursement for a vacation (up to \$5,000)

Dad was a dentist and he was also a very good business owner. Through high school, I’d work in his dentist office and he really taught me about business ownership. That intrigued me. Seeing him run his own business definitely inspired me.”

When it comes to the company’s culture, Thousand takes the approach of helping her employees inside and outside of the office. For example, she created an incentive for her employees by creating a 4-week paid sabbatical after being employed for five years. Not only do employees get four weeks off and paid, if they take a vacation during that time (which she encourages) Thousand will reimburse that employee for that vacation, up to \$5,000.

“I love to travel, get out and see things,” Thousand said. “A lot of people don’t have the opportunity to do that, whether it is because of time at work or money. I decided I wanted to provide the sabbatical, with salary paid, and also offer a travel allowance. It’s a reward. You’ve been with us for 5 years and now it is time for us to pay the favor. It’s time everyone needs to self-reflect. Everyone needs a little time to recharge and come back to work with a new energy.

“When do you ever get to take a month off? You don’t. You wait to retire. That is ridiculous. Everyone should take a month off every 5 years.” ■



Nicole Thousand and Matt Ott