



Message from the Chair



A Formal Welcome to Paul Sharman

BY LARRY WHITE, CMA, CFM, CPA, CGFM

I'm extremely pleased to announce that Paul Sharman has formally accepted the position of IMA President and CEO. Paul has been the interim executive director since January 2004, but his role has now been made permanent.

So what's the big deal? Well... IMA now has a world-class management accountant guiding its future! Paul isn't a management accountant just because he has worked as a professional accountant in business. He has spent the last 17 years as a leader in the implementation of activity-based costing/management, organizational performance measurement, and strategy formulation. Prior to forming his own consulting practice, he worked as a business unit controller for Northern Telecom. His professional focus is decision support, planning, and control of the value-creating operations of organizations from the inside.

As a student in Great Britain, he chose the management accounting route over the public accounting route and has never looked back. Now, as IMA President and CEO, I know he wants to make that same

choice as clear and available to today's students and professionals as it once was to him. Paul also brings an international focus to IMA: British citizen living in Canada and working in the U.S., plus extensive experience with consulting clients in Europe and the Middle East.

I met Paul at the first IMA national educational event I attended in 1993—a two-day workshop called Activity-Based Costing: A Model Approach. His passion for the subject and his business insight impressed me greatly. I had convinced the industrial manager for the Coast Guard base where I was comptroller to attend, and we left that workshop, reanalyzed what was driving our overhead, and proceeded to implement a hugely successful strategy to become the most desirable Coast Guard installation for our targeted types of maintenance

work. I remembered Paul and periodically noticed him listed as a speaker in brochures I received in the mail. I didn't speak with him again, though, until 2002 when we found ourselves on the same interest group at the Consortium for Advanced Manufacturing-International's (CAM-I) Cost Management Section. Over the next two years, we saw each other quarterly and came to the growing realization that management accounting needed a champion and that champion had to be IMA.

This isn't the final column of my term as IMA Chair, but being able to announce that IMA will have the ongoing active leadership of Paul Sharman as President and CEO feels like leaving a legacy. All members should be confident we have a chief staff officer who is committed to building and enhancing the profession of management accounting, who has a clear vision of management accounting's role in the accounting profession and society, and who has the personal capacity to lead and articulate the uniqueness and importance of management accounting.

Reenergizing management ac-

counting, rebalancing the accounting profession, promoting the professionalism of CMAs and CFMs, differentiating management accounting expertise, exploring new horizons in management accounting, and seizing a leadership role for management accounting globally—these are the topics I've written about this year, and you can feel confident these themes are shared by, and in many cases inspired by, our new President and CEO Paul Sharman.

Thoughts? Please e-mail me at lwhite@imanet.org. ■