

Message from the Chair



Take a Bow, Volunteers |

BY JOHN B. POLLARA, CMA

I've always believed in giving back to the organizations that have given so much to me. Apart from my alma mater, the organization I've devoted the most time to is the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA®), where I've spent the past 30 years in various leadership positions at both the local and national level. And if

there's one thing that I especially appreciate now as Board Chair, it's the critical role that volunteers play in driving the success of this association.

Perhaps the highest-profile volunteer roles at IMA are those filled by our Board of Directors. More than 50 members now serve on this Board, half of whom are appointed by a nominating committee and the other half by the 24 IMA regional councils. In selecting the composition of the Board, IMA aims to reflect the demographics not only of our membership but also of the profession. Recently, for example, we've added Board members from Turkey and China. And 40% of Board members are women, which is more than the 30% composition of our membership and moving toward the 60% composition of the entire profession.

All of these Board members spend an incredible amount of time and effort on IMA's behalf: three in-person meetings annually, a yearly training meeting, and countless hours of reading advance materials and frequent conference calls. Many Board members pay their own way for these meetings—and sacrifice valuable time away from work and family to fulfill their volunteer commitment.

Not only do our Board members have general responsibilities, but each also serves on one of five Board Committees: Governance, Planning & Development, Performance Oversight & Audit, External/Member Relations, and Volunteer Management. Each of these Committees conducts monthly conference calls and face-to-face meetings as needed, representing another level of commitment that these Committee members

give to our organization.

In addition to the Board of Directors, IMA also maintains both Standing and Advisory Committees that address specific strategic needs. These volunteers are usually “tapped on the shoulder” because they have expertise in the subject at hand, and, again, all spend considerable time in meetings, planning, and conducting Committee business. Standing Committees, which are permanent, include the Board of Regents, which oversees the Certified Management Accountant (CMA®) exam; Ethics; IFAC Compliance and Monitoring; Financial Reporting; FAR (Foundation for Applied Research); and our newest Standing Committee, Young Professionals. Advisory Committees are usually formed for shorter periods. Chapter and Council Structure as well as Recognition and Compensation are just two examples.

And that's only the volunteer roles at the national level. Thousands of members serve on IMA chapter and regional council committees, and these volunteers also deserve our recognition for their devoted efforts.

While the expertise and experience of these volunteers may differ, these

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IMA members all share: a willingness to expend their personal time, talent, and often money to help further the goals of IMA.

If they're like me, they do it for several reasons: to develop leadership skills, to be sure, but also because they appreciate this organization and want to better the profession by helping IMA to realize its mission and vision.

Every year IMA holds a national leadership nomination period for open Board positions. If you've ever wanted to make an impact on the profession, consider submitting your name for a volunteer leadership role. It's a great way to make a difference.

I welcome your comments at jpollara@imanet.org. ■