

Message from the Chair



Transitions | BY JOHN B. POLLARA, CMA

Change isn't always easy. But it can often lead to better things than before.

As some of you may know, the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA®) just named a new acting president and CEO: Jeffrey C. Thomson. Jeff, who succeeds Paul A. Sharman, joined IMA in 2005 and has

spent the past three years as part of IMA's senior leadership team, most recently as vice president, research and applications development.

Response to Jeff's appointment has been overwhelmingly positive—from our staff, our membership, and our external constituency. I share that enthusiasm and am confident that Jeff will be a strong and capable leader during this interim period.

Jeff was the natural choice to fill this role, thanks mainly to the impressive contributions he's already made to IMA. For example, he served as one of the principal architects behind IMA's strategic plan, which sets the course for the organization's growth for the next several years. From where I see it, who better to help implement this plan than one of its chief creators?

Jeff has also been the driving force

behind the revitalization of IMA's research practice and advocacy efforts. He developed and launched the IMA Research Center of Excellence, which delivers global applications, tools, and guidance for management accountants in their role as strategic business partners. Jeff is also an internationally recognized thought leader in Finance Governance, Risk, and Compliance (FGRC®), which I discussed last month in this column and which has become a core focus area for IMA and its members. In addition, he serves as program chair for IMA's Global Conference and our Annual Conference & Exposition.

Not only has Jeff helped to shape IMA's future, but he also enjoys considerable industry expertise as well. Before joining IMA, he spent more than 20 years at AT&T in various

financial, strategic, and operational roles, most recently as CFO for business sales. This operations experience will serve Jeff well in his new capacity as IMA's senior executive officer.

Jeff's transition to IMA president and CEO also presents a perfect opportunity to mention another transition: my departure as IMA Board Chair. My term expires June 30, and I must say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve IMA in this way. I've always believed that you mainly get to do two things as a leader: finish things that other people started and start things for other people to finish. That has certainly been true for me. During my one-year tenure, I've been proud of what we've accomplished together, such as introducing a Chinese-language version of the Certified Management Accountant (CMA®) exam; establishing new committees, such as Young Professionals and Small Business Financial and Regulatory Affairs, that address more of our members' needs; and improving recognition of IMA within the business community and academia. We've also devoted a lot of time and resources to increasing the acceptance and relevance of the

continued on page 16

[PERSPECTIVES] *cont'd from p. 8*

CMA certification. We've made progress, but there's still more to do.

My immediate successors, Fred Schea as incoming Chair and John Brausch as incoming Chair-Elect, have my best wishes for much success. IMA—and the future of management accounting, I believe—are in very capable hands.

As always, I welcome your comments at jpollara@imanet.org. ■