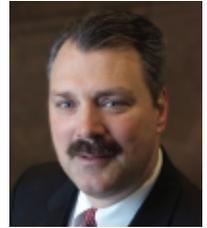


## Message from the Chair

By John M. Brausch, CMA, CFM, CPA



# Mentoring Makes a Difference

One of IMA's most valuable benefits is that it provides members wonderful opportunities to mentor someone and to be mentored. All of us should take advantage of that benefit whenever possible.

The news of the past month hasn't been dominated by the worldwide economic crisis, natural disasters, or even wars or rumors of wars. No, the headlines this past month have been thoroughly dominated by the death of pop icon Michael Jackson. I've been mesmerized by the 24/7, completely saturating, worldwide media coverage following his death. As I've watched, two thoughts have come to mind: the out-of-proportion impact that celebrities seem to have on our lives and, by comparison, the fact that, all too often, we underestimate the impact that we have on our friends and colleagues—and that our friends and colleagues have on us.

By the time this column is published, the media will probably have moved on to the next big event. Yet the impact that we are making on others every day as members of the accounting profession will continue to be felt.

One of the qualities I appreciate most about the Institute of Man-

agement Accountants (IMA®) is that it provides our members with the opportunity to mentor and be mentored. The mentoring process takes place at many levels: within our chapters, councils, and national and international networking events; through our listservs and LinkUp IMA, our proprietary online community; and in our certified community as those who have made the journey to certification work with those still on the path toward certification.

As IMA Chair, I'm especially cognizant of the importance of the role that we all play in mentoring others within our profession and helping to raise awareness of the business-building values of professional accountants in business. *Webster's* defines a mentor as a wise and trusted guide. I strive to live up to that definition with my colleagues day to day, and I'm surely grateful for those who have successfully done so in my own life.

My first mentor within the profession was my father, a lifelong IMA member, who taught me the importance of belonging to a professional association because of the networking and continuing education opportunities it affords. He also taught me how important

becoming a Certified Management Accountant (CMA®) could be to my own career. He knew that IMA and the CMA could help differentiate me within my chosen profession, and he understood the value provided by the lifelong learning required by certifications such as the CMA. My career certainly would have been different without that good advice.

When I entered graduate school at the University of Montana, I took the program's only required accounting course from the dean of the school of accounting. He was an IMA member who imparted to his students the sheer joy of accounting, and he made learning the intricacies of the profession enjoyable. I haven't seen him in more than 20 years, but I can honestly say that not a day goes by that I'm not aware of his impact on my life.

Mentoring benefits everyone: both those who do it and those who receive it. It's important because we need that personal connection in a world where it has become easy to live in a bubble with our BlackBerrys, laptops, and cell phones. Too many professionals these days (accountants among them) could do their jobs in their

*continued on page 13*

basements and avoid the human interaction that once was so prevalent. The process of mentoring provides a way of reaching out to others who are fighting the same battles—or who fought those battles many years ago and are willing to share their experience.

IMA is taking the mentoring process one step further with the development of the Global Leadership Academy. The association has long recognized the need to create a well-defined Global Leadership Process in order to help train and mentor tomorrow's leaders today. This program will be available to all IMA members next year and will add yet more value to your IMA experience. Look for further details in upcoming issues of this magazine and other IMA communications.

So be a mentor or get a mentor. Better yet, do both.

As always, I welcome your comments at [jbrausch@imanet.org](mailto:jbrausch@imanet.org). **SF**