

Message from the Chair
By John C. Macaulay, CMA



Sharing the Message

When students learn about IMA® and its activities, they usually want to join and participate, so it's up to all of us to spread the word.

I recently was invited, as part of a team organized by IMA's Dallas Fort Worth Area Chapter, to speak with a group of students at a university in the Dallas area. The group was led by two very enterprising young women who, with the school administration's support, wanted to create a campus group that was open to interested accounting and finance students and that would supplement the honor society. About 30 students showed up, all willing to devote an evening of their precious study time to hear what we had to say.

I spoke to these students about IMA and the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant)—about the advantages of membership in our organization and the global reach and respect of our esteemed certification. I must admit that the experience was both discouraging and encouraging. Discouraging, because I was struck by how few students knew about our association or our well-regarded designation. Encouraging, however, because I saw just how interested these students were in what our

organization has to offer once they were introduced to it. After the official remarks, the students showered us with questions, particularly about the logistics of earning their CMA. They really liked that they could take the exam while they were still students (as opposed to some other certifications that wouldn't let them do this). One student, who was from China, even asked if he could take the exam here in the United States and then use his certification when he returned home (which he can). It's clear that the more these students learned about IMA, the more they realized the benefits the organization could offer for their professional futures.

I'm certain that opportunities like this exist all across the U.S. and internationally—students who haven't been introduced to our organization and certification but who would certainly be very receptive if they were. Although our academic members play an important role in sharing this message, it also falls on our general membership to help “spread the word.”

I know you've probably heard this before, but it bears repeating: Talk to students as well as your peers, colleagues, and friends

about IMA and the CMA. As members, we are truly IMA's person-to-person sales force, and we can actively participate in helping increase the recognition and awareness of our organization and the CMA.

We are making progress by increasing the number of students and other members. News about our student activities is extremely encouraging. In fact, the number of IMA student chapters has more than doubled in the past two years, from 40 to 85, which reflects IMA's increasing importance as a source of learning, career, and networking opportunities for the future leaders of our profession. Since the start of 2013, we have already added five more student chapters in the U.S. We also recently began a new Campus Advocate Program, which is aimed at attracting more faculty members to serve as coordinators for IMA activities on campus and to help promote IMA and the CMA certification among students. Although we consider our progress good, the number of U.S. colleges and universities is enormous, and much more work remains to be done.

Another idea for members who

continued on page 61

Perspectives

continued from page 6

want to make a tangible contribution to the efforts of our organization on behalf of students is to consider participating in one of the many IMA scholarship programs. You can contribute monetarily to general IMA scholarships, scholarships to help defray the costs of the IMA Annual Student Leadership Conference (which continues to gain in popularity and success), and even scholarships offered through the Stuart Cameron McLeod Society (SCMS). To learn more, please visit www.imaonlinestore.com/personifyebusiness/DonateNow.aspx.

I invite you to share your thoughts with me on this or any other subject at jmacaulay@imanet.org. **SF**