Many management accountants I know share a couple of passions: their profession and their love of humanity. They demonstrate these passions in the energy they dedicate to their work and in what they’re willing to do for others. In an earlier “Perspectives” column, I wrote about the benefits of service. In this one I’m writing about another way to benefit others—through philanthropy.

The word philanthropy is derived from ancient Greek and means “love of humanity.” This is love in the sense of caring, nourishing, developing, and enhancing “what it is to be human.” It affects both the benefactors (by identifying and exercising their values in giving and volunteering) and the beneficiaries (by what it enables them to do). Note that I draw a distinction between philanthropy and charity because philanthropy benefits both giver and receiver.

The World Giving Index catalogs data on philanthropy by countries and measures philanthropy around the globe. In 2013, in terms of philanthropic contributions, the No. 1 and No. 2 rankings on that measure were held by Myanmar (85%) and the United Kingdom (76%). The United States ranked 13th, with 62% of Americans reporting that they had made a financial donation in the previous month. An interesting aside is that, worldwide, women were more likely than their male counterparts to report giving money, despite lower earnings. Thus philanthropy is present around the globe and knows no gender limitations.

Every year, IMA demonstrates its sense of caring, nourishing, developing, and enhancing our profession by making a number of opportunities possible for students, researchers, and future leaders. These opportunities include funding scholarships, grants, and leadership training for students along with providing grants and publishing opportunities for researchers. The funding comes from IMA and other related organizations, such as the Stuart Cameron McLeod Society (SCMS), as well as individual members and private foundations. Making a financial contribution to support students, research, and leadership can enable you to demonstrate your love of humanity as well as benefit your profession.

One of the best ways to support students is by contributing to IMA’s Annual Student Leadership Conference (SLC). This past November, the SLC celebrated its 14th year with nearly 600 students from 32 schools across the country in attendance. At the Conference general sessions, these students heard from veteran practitioners about the critical role of accountants and financial professionals. Concurrent sessions featured industry and IMA leaders and afforded students numerous opportunities for both networking and fun. They were eager to hear about ethics, leadership development, the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) certification, and job search techniques. You can help shape the profession’s future—its professionals and its leaders—by making a financial contribution to the SLC.

Another significant way to benefit the profession is by supporting IMA’s research activities. IMA continues to devote resources to management accounting research. In fact, a number of important publications and studies exist today because of it. This research continued on page 63.
benefits the public interest as well as the profession and helps IMA maintain its position as a thought leader in management accounting. Research is expensive, and funding levels depend on the annual budget and philanthropy.

An additional way to benefit both students and the profession is through support of IMA’s Leadership Academy (IMALA). IMALA is a unique and innovative program whose objective is to develop the softer skills alongside the professional skills management accountants need in today’s world. The popular webinars the Leadership Academy presents are very well attended.

The easiest way to support one or more of these initiatives is through IMA’s Annual Giving campaign. A financial contribution through IMA’s Annual Giving will help subsidize the cost of the Student Leadership Conference or drive student scholarship opportunities. A contribution to IMA’s research activities will contribute to the management accounting knowledge base. A contribution to IMALA will help develop the profession’s future leaders. You can learn more by visiting www.imanet.org/IMAGIVING.

Once more, you can demonstrate your love of humanity and the profession and can benefit both yourself as the giver and another as the receiver. No contribution is too small or too large. Join me in philanthropy, and contribute to IMA’s students, research, or IMALA. Your philanthropy will make a difference.

I welcome your comments at wknese@imanet.org. SF