

## IMA's Student Chapters

By Frank Shuman, CMA, CPA



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**B**eing involved in IMA® has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career. During my studies at Utah State University, I took an advanced cost accounting class from Dr. James Brackner. He encouraged me to pursue the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) credential as well as the CPA (Certified Public Accountant) because having both would give me a broader view of the accounting world and expand my horizons. After graduating from Utah State in 1989, I started working as an accounting analyst for General Dynamics. After passing the CPA exam in May 1990, I followed Dr. Brackner's advice and earned my CMA in June 1991. In 1992, I returned to Utah State as a lecturer and worked closely with Dr. Brackner, who was then the faculty advisor for the University's IMA Student Chapter. After I assisted him with the chapter, he handed me the reins in 1995.

Utah State's IMA Student Chapter has achieved IMA's Gold Award of Excellence for 19 consecutive years and Outstanding Student Chapter for five of those years. For the 2012-2013 academic year, our chapter won the Best Practice Awards for Strategic Plan, Programs and Activities, and Communications. These awards are a testament to the outstanding student leaders I've had the great opportunity to work with and the mentorship from faculty members that I've been able to pass on.

During my tenure as faculty advisor, service has been one of our chapter's themes.

Included in our mission statement is "providing exceptional service to our fellow classmates, college, and community." We hold an annual raffle fundraiser for the local Sub-for-Santa organization. Last November, we raised \$725 and were able to sponsor and purchase gifts for 11 children. My hope is that our student members will continue to have a service orientation as they move into the professional world.

Our chapter also emphasizes the CMA and the benefits of having dual certifications. Last year, we played the "CMA survivor" game and had students work retired CMA exam questions for prizes, an idea we got from IMA's Student Leadership Conference (SLC). This year, we had a presentation by Lon Searle, CMA, the CFO of YESCO, on how the credential has helped his career. Five Utah State students are enrolled in the CMA Scholarship program and on their way to becoming CMAs.

Being a part of IMA has been a blessing—from serving two years on the Salt Lake Area Chapter board, to attending the past 11 SLCs and learning from professional speakers and fellow academic members, to currently serving on the CMA exam review committee. As great as these experiences have been, receiving the 2014 Ursel K. Albers IMA Campus Advocate of the Year Award tops them all, especially because Jim Brackner wrote a letter supporting my nomination. I'm truly honored to be a member of this great organization! **SF**