

SPRING 2017

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Introducing Albertans to
the CPA Profession



Navigating change.

CPAs WINNING MEDALS
IN RIO, THE PROFESSION,
AND EVERYWHERE ELSE



Contents



27
The rural advantage
 Alberta's small communities can offer big opportunities for CPAs

- 2** Awesome accounting facts
- 3** Events Calendar
- 4** Taking the CPA designation to the next level
- 7** Leaving without burning bridges
- 8** On top of their game
- 12** CPA career connections
- 13** Persistence on the path to success
- 14** The CPA Certification Program: what students need to know
- 20** Creativity on the Prairies
- 27** The rural advantage
- 31** Home sweet home
- 32** Balancing the equation
- 36** CPA Education Foundation Corner
- 40** Student eating 101



4
 Level up your career

Features



7
 How to maintain relationships after leaving a job



8
 Medal-winning CPAs



20
 CPAs contributing to arts and culture in Alberta

CPA Profiles



13
 Persistence is the key to success



31
 The Real Estate CPA



32
 Making strides towards gender equality

A closer look at one of two silver medals won by Ross Wilson CPA, CA at the 2016 Paralympics in Rio. He won silver in Men's Time Trial C1 and in Men's C1 3000m Individual Pursuit. Thanks to Ross for sharing his medals with *Capitalize* Magazine and for being our Spring 2017 cover model!

Fun facts about the 2016 Paralympic medals:

- Each Paralympic medal has tiny steel balls inside to help visually impaired athletes identify the colour. A gold medal contains 28, silver has 20, and bronze has 16.
- Each medal has "Rio 2016 Paralympic Games" written on it in Braille.
- Each medal comes in its own case, which is made from freijó wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (the wooden case is shown in this image).



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Capitalize is a semi-annual magazine that introduces students to the accounting profession in Alberta. Published by CPA Alberta, the magazine is distributed to more than 4,500 readers, including university, college, and high school students, as well as career counsellors and other student-oriented service providers.

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ISSN# 1703-0749

Canadian Publication Mail
Agreement #40064884



AWESOME ACCOUNTING FACTS

Within the pages of *Capitalize*, we regularly shine the spotlight on just a few of the 28,000 amazing Chartered Professional Accountants (CPAs) in Alberta. In this issue, we thought we'd also turn the spotlight on the profession itself and share notable moments from the history of accounting, as well as fun facts about accounting you may not know.



A REGULATED PROFESSION

The first professional accounting organization in the world was established in Scotland in 1854.

FATHER OF ACCOUNTING

The first book on double-entry accounting was written in 1494 by Italian mathematician and Franciscan friar Luca Bartolomeo de Pacioli, who is also known as the "Father of Modern Accounting."

INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING DAY November 10

The average number of hours a team of accountants spends counting Oscar ballots by hand for the Academy Awards:

1,700

The only two people in the world who know the names of all Oscar award winners before they are announced during the live broadcast are professional accountants. The accountants arrive at the ceremony in two separate, secured cars, holding briefcases that have the winners' names in them, and traditionally make an appearance on stage during the award ceremony.

ACCOUNTANTS IN THE MOVIES

Gene Wilder co-starred as accountant Leo Bloom in the 1968 Mel Brooks madcap comedy.

THE PRODUCERS

GHOSTBUSTERS

Rick Moranis played Louis Tully, Sigourney Weaver's accountant neighbour, in the 1984 comedy classic.

Danny Glover played bow-tied accountant Henry Sherman in Wes Anderson's 2001 comedy about an eccentric family of upper-class misfits.

THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS

STRANGER THAN FICTION

Will Ferrell played lonely IRS agent Harold Crick in the 2006 comedy-drama.

The word "accountant" comes from the French word "compter," which means to count or score.

Bubble gum was invented in 1928 by accountant Walter Diemer.

Accounting developed in ancient Mesopotamia along with writing, counting, and money.

Number of accountants employed by the FBI:

2,000

events CALENDAR

From career fairs to sponsorships and information and networking sessions, check out the below list of upcoming activities you should know about!

- February**
- 2 **CPA General Info Session**
Alberta colleges, online
12:00 - 1:00 pm
 - 2 **SAIT Industry Night**
 - 2-5 **Network of Empowered Women Conference**
Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise
 - 3 **University of Calgary Business Day**
 - 3 **CPA Bowl-a-Rama** (hosted by the CPA Education Foundation)
Galaxy Bowling and Pizza, Lethbridge
5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - 4 **University of Calgary Haskayne Accounting Case Competition**
 - 7 **University of Calgary Career Expo**
 - 9 **CPA Bowl-a-Rama** (hosted by the CPA Education Foundation)
Mountain View Bowling, Calgary
5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - 10 **CPA Bowl-a-Rama** (hosted by the Central Alberta CPA Chapter)
Heritage Lanes, Red Deer
6:00 - 8:30 pm
 - 15 **CPA General Info Session**
SAIT, NK109
4:30 - 5:30 pm
 - 20-24 **University of Alberta Rocky Mountain Business Seminar**
Jasper Park Lodge
- March**
- 3 **MacEwan Student Business Conference**
 - 8-10 **CPA Business Challenge** (hosted by the CPA Education Foundation)
 - 23-25 **Alberta Deans of Business Case Competition**
 - 28 **Get Connected**
Telus Convention Centre, Calgary
6:00 - 8:30 pm
 - 30 **Get Connected**
Fairmont Macdonald Hotel, Edmonton
6:00 - 8:30 pm

For more information about these events, please email gettingstarted@cpaalberta.ca or check us out on social media:





Scott Nye CPA, CMA

LEVEL UP

TAKING THE CPA DESIGNATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL

By Andrew Moore | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography

Scott Nye discusses how he used his CPA designation to “level up” to a cool and fulfilling career at video game developer BioWare

EXPERIENCE: much like a hero in a video game, you have to earn it; collect it as you proceed. Along the way you acquire new talents and traits. With every victory, you get better tools and gear. You become wiser and stronger. These are the steps that allow you to progress toward that endgame—or, in the case of **Scott Nye CPA, CMA**, it's how you find a career that makes you happy.

Scott's endgame is to be in a career where he's excited to come into work every day. And at BioWare—one of the world's most successful video game development studios, responsible for producing the award-winning *Mass Effect* and *Dragon Age* series—he's found just that. While he is a gamer, Scott didn't get to BioWare because he's a *Mass Effect* fanboy or because he spends every free minute playing the latest games from Electronic Arts (EA), BioWare's parent company. According to Scott, he got the job because he had the right skills.

“Several years ago, I worked at the Art Gallery of Alberta. People would always say, ‘it must be so awesome to stand around looking at art all day,’” recalls Scott. “I think the first time in my life I stepped foot in an art gallery was my first day on that job. They didn't hire me for my artistic capabilities; they hired me because I was the right fit for the job at the time.”

The same holds true for Scott's current role as Finance Director at BioWare. Sure, he's living in a gamer's paradise, and occasionally gets to test an early version of a game in development, but he's there because he leveraged his education and experience as the right candidate for the position.

“Do something you enjoy, but don't limit yourself to any particular industry,” advises Scott. “I have a great deal of respect for the senior leadership here [at BioWare], which is what's important. You can work in the coolest industry in the world, but if the folks you're working with don't have strong management skills, you might be looking at a career move.”

Like many CPAs, Scott got into accounting because he was good at math in high school. After graduating from university, he started working as a financial analyst at Telus in their rotational program. It was an opportunity that set his

career in motion, providing a variety of professional experience.

“The rotational program was a great experience because it gave me a chance to work in traditional and non-traditional accounting roles,” says Scott. “It was all interesting, but I preferred analyst roles more than I liked doing balance sheets.”

Going against the grain and following his passion, Scott used the versatility of his CPA designation to find work in strategic planning and service development positions. Now, in his current role, he enjoys supporting the team at BioWare and other studios at EA with long-range modeling and trend analysis, as well as by providing recommendations to leadership teams on emerging issues.

“We do little work when it comes to full-cycle accounting,” says Scott. “We're always looking at things a few years into the future. From concept to launch, a Triple-A title can take several years to bring to market, and will require a significant investment in terms of dollars and staff months. Pulling off the big open world games that the market is looking for these days is not for the faint of heart.” (Open world games allow players to move freely through a virtual world.)

A 2015 report from the Entertainment Software Association of Canada stated that 19 million Canadians are gamers, which is 54 per cent of the population. Video game development is growing so fast that it's beginning to rival the film and television production industry as a major contributor to the economy.

So, what does this mean for future CPAs? It means more career opportunities in an industry that can be hard to penetrate. And if you'd rather wear jeans and a *Star Wars* tee to work instead of a suit, you're in luck. Since 2013, hiring in the video game industry has gone up 23 per cent.

If working for a game development studio sounds like your dream job, Scott's advice is to put yourself out there and not to worry too much about the day-to-day.

“People always ask me how I get such cool jobs,” says Scott. “Some doors have opened as a result of my CPA designation and some have been opened as a result of being up-to-speed and being able to get things done. At the end of the day, you just have to work hard and know your stuff.”



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number

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LEAVING WITHOUT BURNING BRIDGES



Executive Coach Denise Burrell discusses how to maintain professional relationships with colleagues after leaving a job

By Denise Burrell, CHRP

Whether you leave a job by choice or through a layoff, it is important to leave with professionalism and grace. Your network is your greatest asset in an increasingly interconnected world. Therefore, it is imperative to leave a positive impression with those who might provide you with a reference or become colleagues or supervisors in the future. Leaving in a huff will not hurt those left behind, it will only damage your reputation.

Denise Burrell is co-founder of The Performance Group OE Inc. She is a natural leader and an engaging teacher, speaker, facilitator, and trainer. Denise is committed to enhancing the development of individuals, teams, and organizations.



Here are some tips on how to leave former colleagues with a great lasting impression of you after departing a job:

- **Explain your reasons for leaving with grace and dignity.** Talk to the people who matter most first. For example, if you are resigning, talk to your supervisor about it before you talk to your colleagues. The grapevine moves very fast in organizations and you want your coach to hear it directly from you. Provide them with a brief and positive explanation about why you're leaving (e.g. "I have the opportunity to use my strategic thinking in my new role" vs "You never let me make long-term contributions, so I'm out of here!"). Dumping on the company at this point might feel good, but it could have major negative effects in the future.
- **Give fair notice.** While the norm is two weeks' notice, provide yourself with enough time to finish key projects or leave them in good shape. Write a brief resignation letter that clearly states you are resigning, the date of your last day of work, and be sure to include a polite thank you.
- **Request a reference.** Let your boss know you'd like to use them as a reference in the future. You should ask them what they would share about working with you. When you do use someone as a reference, contact them beforehand to outline the connection between the job you're applying for and the job you were in.
- **Manage the message.** When you leave, it's important to head off rumours and gossip. After you've talked with your boss, talk to your colleagues personally and e-mail others who will be impacted by your departure. Provide positive reasons for leaving, thank them for their support, and let them know how they can remain connected with you in the future.
- **Continue to contribute.** Do what you can to ease the transition. Don't slack off. Make sure that you share information that will support the next person's success. If people are frustrated because they can't find things, you will become an easy scapegoat. If there is an exit interview, participate constructively.
- **Be an ambassador for the company when you leave or be discreet if you can't be positive.** Your negative comments say more about you than they do about the company to potential employers.
- **Stay connected.** Use LinkedIn to connect and stay up-to-date on what former colleagues are doing. Follow up with your boss and key contacts several months after you've left to keep your network alive.

Make sure not to burn any bridges and keep those friendships alive! You never know when you might find yourself job hunting again in the future or what connections might prove to be valuable in future business endeavours. ☺



On top of their game

Medal-winning CPAs

Every medal is unique—glimmering proof that its bearer has put in every ounce of effort to be the best. And while a medal-winning performance is no easy feat, it's the trials leading up to it that are truly inspiring

By Andrew Moore | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography

Ross Wilson CPA, CA photographed with his bike at Pedalhead Road Works in Edmonton.

Journey to the podium

Five years ago, **Ross Wilson CPA, CA** was overweight. He was 280 pounds when his doctor told him he needed to take charge of his life—something Ross would certainly go on to do as a medal-winning athlete. But, before he got there, the 34-year-old would have to overcome much bigger challenges than just his weight.

Ross was diagnosed with an incurable neurological condition called Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT) syndrome, a disease that affects the nerves and muscles. One of the most important goals for patients with CMT is to maintain movement and muscle strength.

“My doctor told me that given my medical condition, my mobility would be significantly affected by being overweight,” explains Ross. “To manage it, I joined some friends in a ‘biggest loser’ competition and lost 110 pounds.”

As a reward, Ross bought himself a road bike. Unknown to him at the time, this purchase would launch Ross into an incredible journey of hard work, injury, and sacrifice—an adventure that would take him around the world while earning a handful of cycling medals, including two silvers at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio.

“I started riding and fell in love with it,” exclaims Ross. “It kept me in shape, managed my weight, and was exhilarating. On a bit of a whim, I tried racing and found it motivating to push myself harder than I thought possible. It was fast and exciting.”

Momentum was on his side and Ross started racing his way to international glory; despite being a relatively new competitive cyclist, Ross snagged three top 10 world championship performances in 2014, including a third-place finish at the Para-Cycling Road World Cup in Spain.

Then the unexpected happened.

In June 2015, Ross was riding his bike in Switzerland when he was struck by a car. The incident almost took his life, and left him with fractures to his clavicle, scapula, ribs, and vertebrae. Remarkably, Ross was back on the bike only three months later for the 2015 Toronto Parapan Am Games. However, he suffered a crash during the race, which exacerbated his previous injuries and added new fractures.

The road to Rio in 2016 appeared out of

“Comfort is the same as complacency, so you need to learn to be uncomfortable if you want to find out what you can achieve.”

—Ross Wilson CPA, CA

reach. “Canada was using the Track World Championships in Italy, which took place in March 2016, or the World Cup in Belgium, which was held in June 2016, as qualifiers,” says Ross. “To earn a spot in Rio, I needed to medal at one of these events.”

That meant Ross needed to recover from surgery, train, and rehabilitate his shoulder (from an injury that typically takes 12 months to heal)—all in five months. The situation looked bleak.

“Ultimately, through a lot of pain and discomfort, I was able to not only match but better my personal best in the Individual Pursuit,” says Ross. “I took home the silver medal at the Track World Championship and earned a spot on the Canadian Para-Cycling team in Rio.”

Altogether, the road to winning two silver medals at the games in Rio took tremendous strength, perseverance, and 101 stitches. It was an achievement only made possible by having a strong network of supporters. As a CPA and an athlete, Ross says having people to look to for inspiration and encouragement throughout his journey has been invaluable. He particularly credits his parents and the lessons they instilled about making the most of the opportunities available to him—opportunities like becoming a CPA.

Becoming a CPA has provided Ross with a good degree of flexibility, transferability, and remuneration, which has let him pursue outside interests such as cycling.

When he’s not training, Ross is an internal auditor at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). In 2016, NAIT successfully launched a CPA training program, which has allowed Ross to share his knowledge by mentoring and helping students with ongoing development and preparation for the final CPA exam.

“To get new results you need to go outside your comfort zone,” advises Ross. “Comfort is the same as complacency, so you need to learn to be uncomfortable if you want to find out what you can achieve.”

MAN ON A MISSION:

Since buying his first road bike five years ago, Ross has been burning rubber across the para-cycling world. Below are some of the events he’s competed—and won medals!—in:

- 2014 Spain World Cup Individual Time Trial: 3rd
- 2014 Road World Championships, Time Trial: 6th
- 2014 Road World Championships, Road Race: 7th
- 2015 Track World Championships, Individual Pursuit: 2nd
- 2016 Track World Championship, Individual Pursuit: 2nd
- 2016 Track World Championship, 1 km Time Trial: 4th
- 2016 Rio Paralympics Road, Individual Time Trial: 2nd
- 2016 Rio Paralympics Track, Individual Pursuit: 2nd



Ross Wilson CPA, CA

A rising star

Integrity. Respect. Compassion.

These are the words **Betty Xin** uses to describe her grandfather, an accountant who inspired her to pursue a career as a CPA. Since high school, Betty knew she wanted to work in business. What she didn’t know was that she would enter Canada’s accounting profession as the CPA Canada Gold Medalist for her performance on the May 2016 Common Final Examination (CFE), on which she earned top standing in the country.

Much like a medal-winning athlete, a CFE gold medal winner must have impenetrable focus, a rigid training schedule, and the ability to balance competing priorities. Betty admits that she thought she did well on the exam, but would have considered a passing grade tremendous success.

“CPA Alberta’s CEO, Rachel Miller, called me and said ‘I have some great news; you have the highest mark on the CFE across all of Canada,’” recalls Betty. “I was in so much shock and disbelief. I never expected to earn a medal. I couldn’t believe it was happening.”

The CFE is a comprehensive, rigorous, multi-day examination that all candidates seeking to become CPAs must pass to receive their designation. Successful completion of the CFE signifies a mastery of the technical skills, competencies, and business acumen expected of new CPAs.

“It’s a lot of work,” explains Betty. “I started the CPA program at the same time I started my job at Capital Power. It was my first full-time job as a new graduate from university, so not only did I have to learn on the job, I had to balance all of the CPA coursework.”

The juggling act paid off. On the day the marks were released, everyone from Betty’s friends and family to bosses and colleagues reached out to express their congratulations.

“I’m fortunate to have a lot of people supporting me,” says Betty. “In my personal life, my mom and dad have always been



Betty Xin

“I was in so much shock and disbelief. I never expected to earn a medal. I couldn’t believe it was happening.”

—Betty Xin

behind me, motivating me, and providing me with guidance.” She also acknowledges the impact of her colleagues at Capital Power; the sharing of their own experiences going through the program was an advantage Betty doesn’t take for granted.

As Betty moves forward in her career, she’s excited to complete her rotational program and find other opportunities where she can work on strengthening her skills. She looks forward to eventually taking on a leadership position where she can also help aspiring CPAs enter the profession.

For now, she advises candidates never to give up. Although there will be hurdles, you have to keep on believing and trying, says Betty.

Her last piece of medal-winning advice? Ask questions.

“One thing that I did was ask a lot of questions,” says Betty. “Ask your facilitator, ask your peers, ask your manager—just ask questions. When you ask questions, I think you’ll find people are open to sharing their experiences with you, and that knowledge will be invaluable to your success.”

CPA CAREER CONNECTIONS

In December 2016, CPA Alberta hosted its second annual high school event at Western Canada High School in Calgary

Featuring a panel of local CPAs from different career backgrounds, the evening provided students and parents with insight into the many career options available in business and accounting. The panelists spoke about their accounting experiences, the education path to becoming a CPA, and why they decided to pursue accounting as a career.

Several Alberta post-secondary institutions were also in attendance, providing information regarding their school and the

available prerequisite degree programs and courses for the CPA Professional Education Program.

More than 100 students from 19 high schools across Calgary attended this informative event. CPA Alberta looks forward to hosting this event in Edmonton in the spring of 2017.

For more information regarding CPA Alberta's high school program and initiatives, please visit our website at www.cpaalberta.ca/highschool or email highschool@cpaalberta.ca.



CPA Career Connections panelists (from L to R): Johanna Bond CPA, CA, Magda Assaf CPA, CMA, Cory Lockhart CPA, CGA, Vanessa Ha CPA, CMA, and Mount Royal University CPA Campus Ambassador, Taylor Lafave.

PERSISTENCE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Lesley McNamara has it made: she has her own accounting firm, is a proud mother of two, and is a minister in her community. But getting to where she is today meant being persistent, especially when she wanted to give up

By Sanita Shapka | Photography by Trudie Lee Photography

"I DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL in grade 11 and hadn't really made any plans to have a career," says **Lesley McNamara CPA, CGA**, recalling the days when partying on the weekends was more interesting than school. "But years later, after my divorce and being on welfare for several years as a single mom, I decided that I wanted to become 100% self-supported."

Weighing the options of becoming an artist or going into business, Lesley decided that the potential to earn a sound income and the flexibility to study and work at the same time were important factors. As a result, she decided to enroll in an education program to receive her professional accounting designation.

"On the very first day of my very first course, the instructor wrote 'PERSISTENCE' on the chalkboard. He said that was the only thing that would help me successfully complete the program," remembers Lesley.

But with the daily struggles of raising two children on her own, earning her designation was taking much longer than expected. Just before her final year, Lesley was ready to give up.

Luckily, before she threw in the towel, Lesley reconnected with a longtime friend who reminded her to be persistent. "I told her my woes and she said to me, 'Lesley, get your big girl pants on and finish your program!' I have to say that was the very best advice I ever got!" she laughs.

Lesley completed her designation and later decided to start her own public accounting firm, L. E. McNamara Chartered Professional Accountant. "At the start of my practice, I thought to myself, accounting isn't my passion—who cares about boring formulas?" says Lesley. "What I discovered was that *people* are my passion." She explains that providing people with peace of mind when they come to her with their tax and accounting problems and helping them stay on track are very fulfilling.

"Any roadblocks that come up while you are on your path to your designation will fade into the distant past once you are creating and enjoying a powerful career, becoming a trusted advisor, and assisting people."

Lesley McNamara CPA, CGA and musician Amy Bishop (background) photographed at the Calgary Centre for Spiritual Living's Sunday service.

With her passion for supporting people, Lesley also became a licensed minister with the Centres for Spiritual Living. In her role, she supports her spiritual community by serving on the board and initiating community outreach projects, such as peace walks and meditation classes—all of which add to her sense of fulfilment in life.

Lesley is able to balance her career and her role as a minister thanks to the flexibility involved by having her own firm. She has regular office hours and hires staff during the busy tax season, but at other times of the year, she is able to be out in the community more often, staying connected to her clients through a virtual office system. She also recently moved to Alberta from British Columbia and is able to have her firm registered in both provinces, allowing her to continue serving old clients while meeting new ones. "Being a CPA has to be the most portable career ever!" she says.

Given the many ups and downs in launching her career and creating a fulfilling life for herself, Lesley has helpful advice for aspiring CPAs (other than putting on your big kid pants!): "Any roadblocks that come up while you are on your path to your designation will fade into the distant past once you are creating and enjoying a powerful career, becoming a trusted advisor, and assisting people." 🙌



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The CPA Certification Program: what students need to know

The CPA Certification Program—which consists of education, practical experience, and a final examination—is designed to provide future Chartered Professional Accountants (CPAs) with the knowledge and skills to succeed in business.

Degree and prerequisites

An undergraduate degree (in any discipline) from a recognized post-secondary institution is required for admission to the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP). In addition to an undergraduate degree, prerequisite courses must be successfully completed.

A transfer credit guide for Alberta post-secondary institutions is available online at www.cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Subject-Area-Coverage.

CPA Professional Education Program

The CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP) is a graduate-level program delivered part-time over two years. The program includes six modules designed to develop six technical competencies and five enabling competencies. In Alberta, the national CPA PEP is delivered by the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB). CPAWSB delivers CPA PEP to all candidates pursuing their CPA in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut.

Candidates will take CPA PEP while working in a relevant position. For candidates, their CPA PEP education, coupled with practical experience, will complement the development of CPA competencies.

CPA PEP uses a variety of learning methods to help students develop their skills. The program combines online learning, self-study, classroom learning, and teamwork to help CPA candidates develop the competencies expected of Canada's pre-eminent professional accountants.

Modules

Six modules comprise CPA PEP. The program begins with two core modules that are common to all CPA candidates, followed by two elective modules (of which there are four options). Upon completion of these four modules, all candidates are required to complete the two "capstone" modules. The six CPA PEP modules are:

- Two common core modules, which all CPA candidates must take, focusing on the development of competencies in management and financial accounting, and the integration of the six core technical competency areas.
- Two elective modules, which allow CPA candidates to develop deeper skills in areas of their career interest. Four electives are offered: assurance, performance management, tax, and finance. All candidates must choose two of the electives; candidates pursuing careers in public accounting must choose assurance and tax.
- A capstone integrative module that focuses on the development of the enabling competencies, such as leadership and professional skills, and the integration of core competencies.
- A capstone examination preparation module, which prepares CPA candidates for the Common Final Examination (CFE).

Registration into the CPA Professional Education Program

Students are encouraged to apply for conditional acceptance into the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP) prior to the completion of their required courses and degree. Registration as a CPA candidate is required prior to registering for specific modules; however, candidates are encouraged to register for modules once they've submitted their application.

Once a student has applied for CPA PEP, there is a registration validation period in which transcript assessment, verification of degree, and verification of prerequisites will occur. After verification, the student may then participate in Core One.

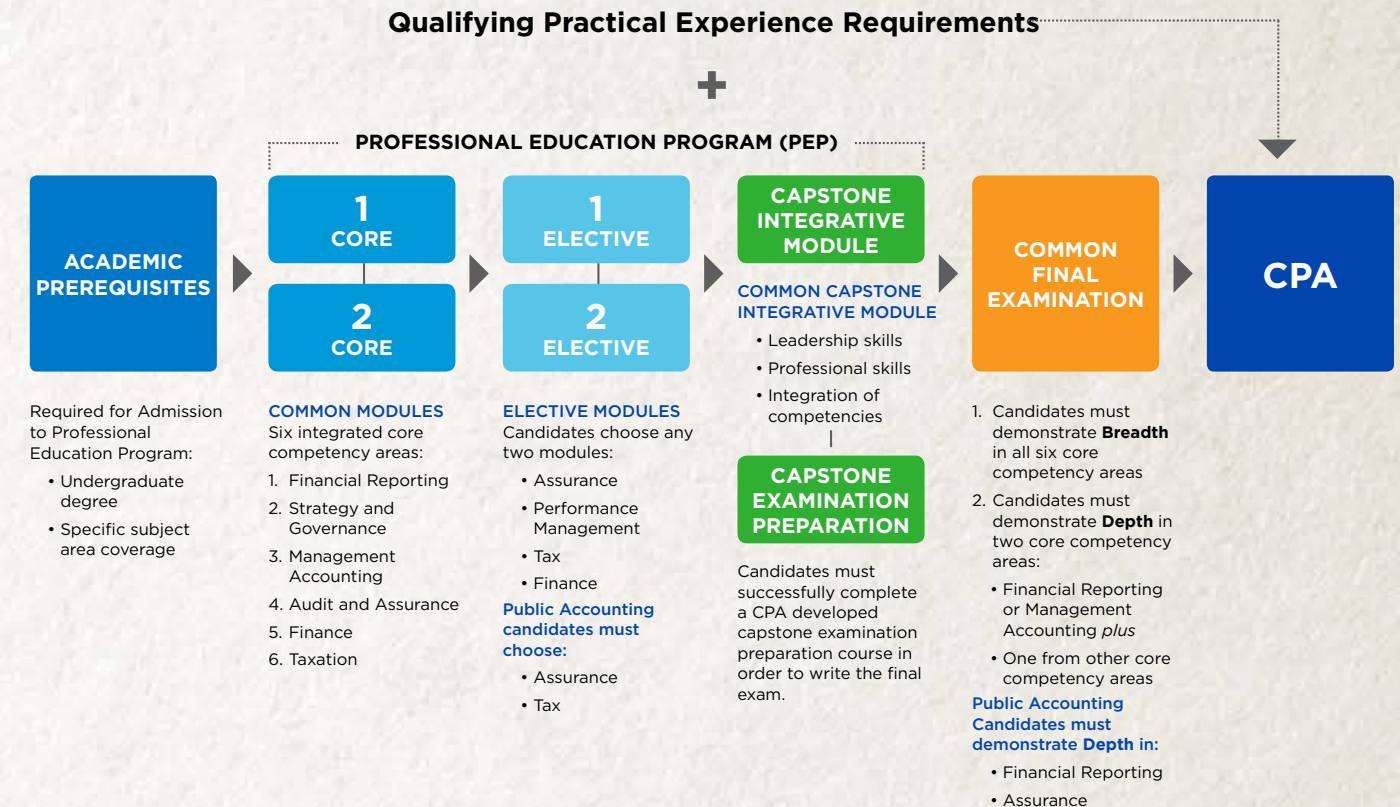
Module registration deadlines are typically six to eight weeks in advance of the module start date. Please refer to the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB) website for key module registration deadlines: www.cpawsb.ca/cpa-program-overview/pep/schedules.

Late module registration is available (subject to availability and an additional fee); however, for Core One, it is mandatory to register at least four weeks prior to the start date.

For more information about the Chartered Professional Accountant program, please visit www.cpaalberta.ca; call CPA Alberta at 1-844-454-1245 (toll-free); or email gettingstarted@cpaalberta.ca.

To inquire about your eligibility for CPA PEP and for admission support, please visit www.cpawsb.ca; call CPAWSB at 1-855-306-9390 (toll-free); or email admissionadvising@cpawsb.ca.

CPA Professional Education Program Overview



Bridging into the CPA Professional Education Program

For students who have completed their degrees but have not obtained the necessary prerequisite courses for the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP), or for students who do not have a degree*, there are two options:

CPA preparatory courses

CPA preparatory courses (formerly known as the CPA Prerequisite Education Program) are a suite of 14 courses that provide all knowledge requirements for admission to CPA PEP. In Alberta, the preparatory courses are delivered by the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB). These courses are available in an accelerated format and are delivered part-time, with options for self-study, online, and classroom learning. Students complete only the courses they require.

Students are eligible for enrolment if they have successfully completed one year (30 credit hours) of post-secondary study or three years of relevant work experience.

**Students are still required to complete a degree before admission to CPA PEP.*

Please contact CPA Alberta at 1.844.454.1245 or email gettingstarted@cpaalberta.ca to learn more about preparatory courses.

Prerequisites through a post-secondary institution

Students can register for the business and accounting courses they are missing through a post-secondary institution approved by the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB). A transfer credit guide is available online at www.cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Subject-Area-Coverage. Students will only take the courses they need for entrance into CPA PEP.

Module Zero

In addition to these bridging options, Module Zero is available to all candidates who meet the CPA competency requirements. The purpose of Module Zero is for candidates to refresh their knowledge of the prerequisite courses prior to starting their first CPA PEP module. All candidates enrolled in CPA PEP are granted access to Module Zero content five to seven business days after their admission application is approved. Module Zero will be available to all candidates until June 2017.

For more information, please visit www.cpawsb.ca/cpa-program-overview/pep/module-zero.

Practical Experience

In addition to formal education, candidates are required to complete a term of relevant practical experience. The knowledge and competencies gained through practical experience complement those developed through CPA PEP. To develop as a professional accountant, CPA candidates must gain relevant, paid employment that is progressively challenging. For the period of practical experience to begin, individuals need to be registered with the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB) as a CPA candidate, be employed in a qualifying position, and have a mentor.

There are two routes to obtain practical experience requirements:

- ➔ **The Pre-approved Program Route (PPR)** in which future CPAs gain relevant experience by choosing a position from a wide range of employers pre-approved by the profession.
- ➔ **The Experience Verification Route (EVR)** in which future CPAs demonstrate competence, and gain relevant experience at a chosen employer.

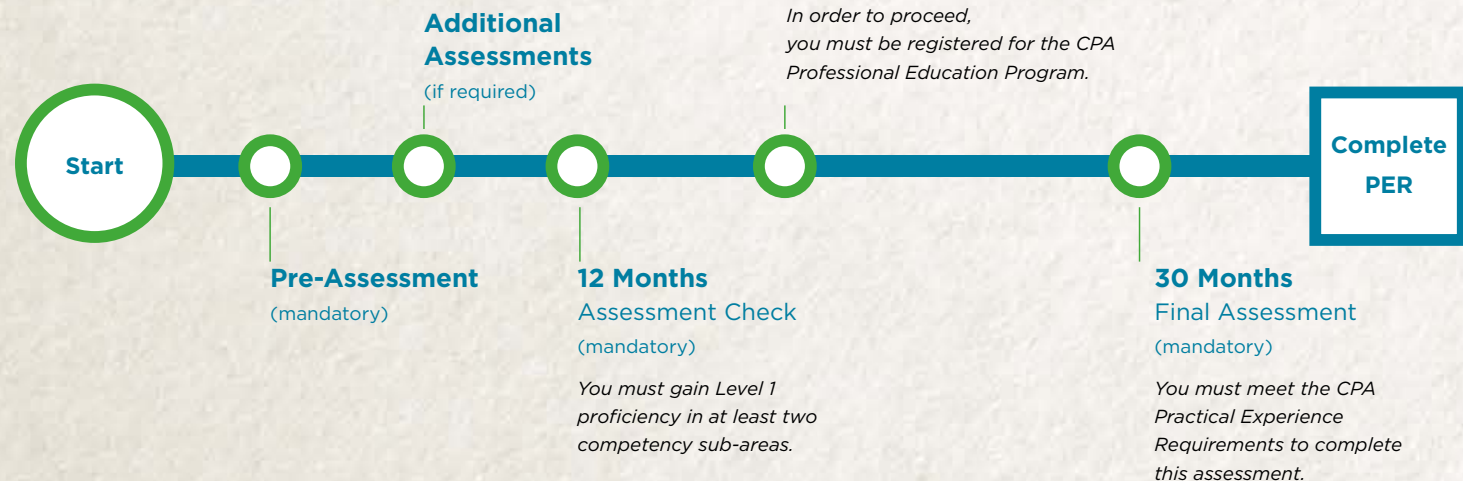
PPR

Pre-approved Program Route



EVR

Experience Verification Route



Future CPAs can gain experience through either route, or a combination of both. The profession may accept up to one year of experience earned prior to registering with the profession. The minimum practical experience requirement for both routes is 30 months; this includes an allowance of up to 20 weeks of time away from work (including vacation time).

There are five common elements that support both routes:

1. Candidates gain relevant experience and develop as a professional accountant in a minimum of 30 months.*
2. Candidates' experience must be appropriately supervised.
3. Candidates must record detailed reports at regular intervals.
4. Candidates must meet and discuss their progress at least semi-annually with a CPA mentor.
5. Candidates' experience is assessed by the CPA profession.

**Practical experience requirements for public accounting practice and professional accounting practice are recognized separately from practical experience requirements for certification.*

CPA Practical Experience Self-Assessment Tool

This tool is intended for individuals who have not yet had their experience assessed by a provincial/regional body but want to understand how their current or prospective position might align with the CPA technical competency requirements for purposes of the experience verification route.

To access this self-assessment tool, visit <https://pert.cpa-services.org/student/TrialAssessment>.

CPA Mentorship

Mentorship is a mandatory component of the CPA Practical Experience Requirements (PER). The focus of the CPA mentorship program is to help future CPAs achieve their enabling competencies. CPA candidates who work in the CPA Pre-approved Program Route (PPR) will be matched with a CPA mentor by the organization that offers the program. CPA candidates who choose the Experience Verification Route (EVR) are required to seek out their own CPA mentor in order to find a successful fit. Recognition may be given for a total of up to 12 months of experience earned prior to registering with the profession. After that time, the qualifying period of practical experience cannot begin until CPA candidates have a CPA mentor. CPA Canada has developed a number of valuable resources to assist CPA candidates in finding a mentor.

Please visit www.cpacanada.ca/practicalexperience for more information.

Common Final Examination

All candidates must write the Common Final Examination (CFE) to complete the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP). The CFE will challenge candidates to demonstrate their competence by responding to simulations and business scenarios representing the kinds of challenges they've faced during their work experience, or will soon be facing in their professional career. Regardless of their selected elective modules, all candidates will write the same CFE.

For more information on your path towards your CPA designation, visit www.cpaalberta.ca/become-a-cpa.



Enhance your skill set with the CPA Canada Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF)

The CPA Canada Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF) is a nationally recognized certificate for those seeking a challenging and rewarding career in accounting and finance, but not as qualified CPAs.

Certificate holders will qualify for intermediate-level accounting and finance positions in business, not-for-profit, and government, as well as CPA-supervised positions in public accounting. Developed by CPA Canada in close collaboration with employers, the ACAF program develops skills in the areas most in demand: strong technical abilities, hands-on experience with industry relevant software, and the workplace skills needed to be successful.

The ACAF builds on skills learned in two-year post-secondary accounting diploma programs or through equivalent on-the-job experience. The ACAF certification solidifies credentials and increases opportunities for advancement.

In Alberta, the ACAF is delivered by the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB).

ACAF provides the applied technical and soft skills most prized by employers—and the certificate that proves it.

For more information on the Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance, visit www.cpaalberta.ca/acaf.

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Brad Taylor, CPA, CA, TEP
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Chris Rasimas, CPA, CA; Janelle Sutherby, CPA, CA;
Daria Thornton, CPA, CMA; Cody Tarrant, CPA, CA;
Natalia Turcan, CPA, CA



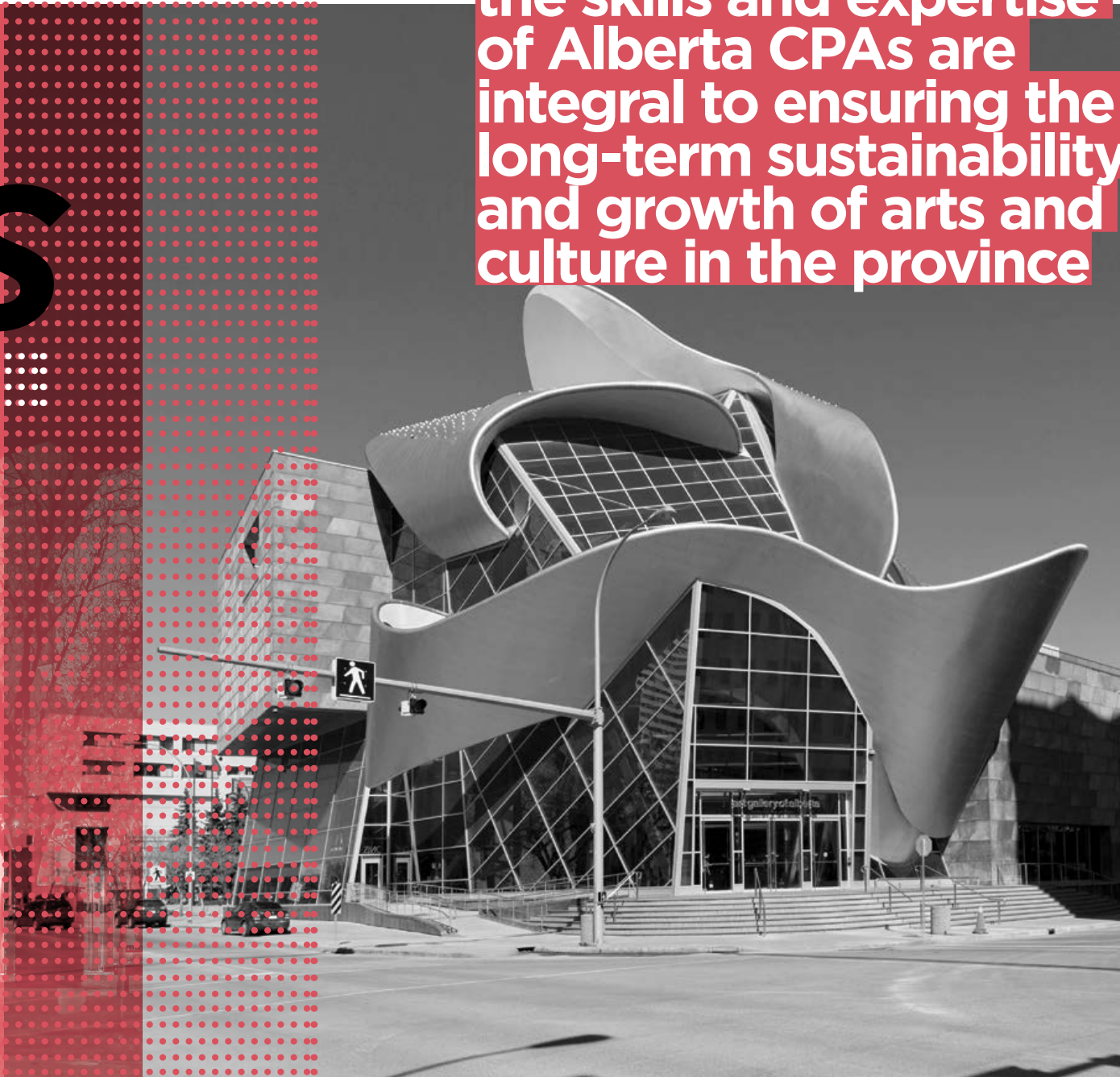
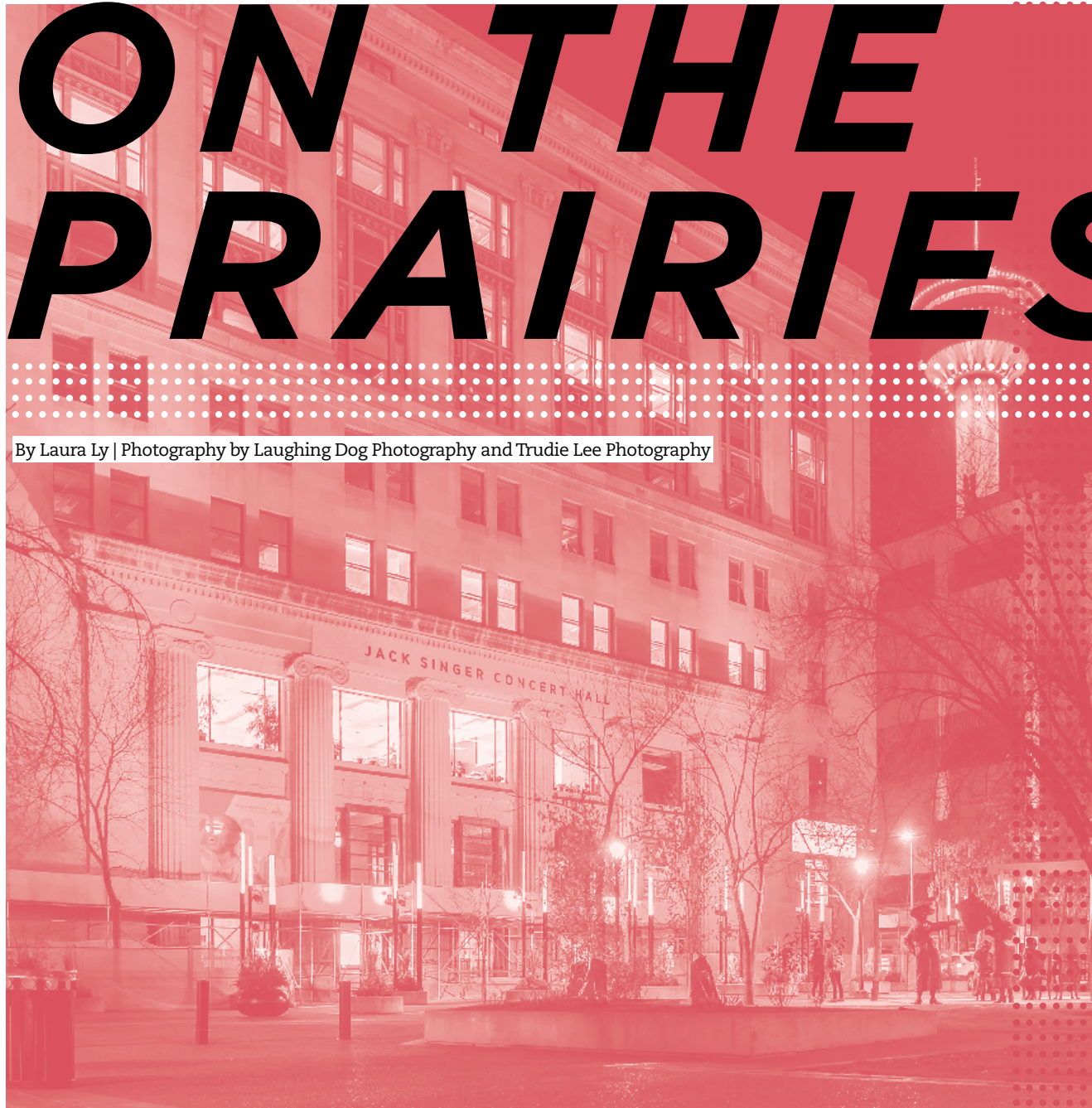
**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SUCCESSFUL
CFE WRITERS:**

Front: Bryan Tonowski, Christine Dirr,
Jacqueline Desrochers
Back: Alan Aburto, Jaswinder Gill and Tyde Harding.

CREATIVITY ON THE PRAIRIES

Although numbers and the arts may seem like an odd combination, the skills and expertise of Alberta CPAs are integral to ensuring the long-term sustainability and growth of arts and culture in the province

By Laura Ly | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography and Trudie Lee Photography



An “oil and gas” province,

Alberta is typically associated with its oil sands and petroleum producers. However, Alberta also has a flourishing arts and culture scene, and many talented artists and creative minds who put Alberta on the map for more than simply oil and gas. And behind that arts and culture scene are dedicated CPAs whose work helps grow and sustain integral arts organizations in the province, ensuring there is a wealth of arts to appreciate for years to come.

Pedro Carriel CPA, CMA



“My world, the accounting side, involves a language that is non-verbal; it’s the language of numbers. And on the art side, there’s also a language that is non-verbal, which is visual.”

—Pedro Carriel CPA, CMA

A staple of Alberta’s arts and culture is the Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA), right in the core of downtown Edmonton. Founded in 1924, the AGA is the only public art gallery in the province and “the only museum in Alberta devoted exclusively to the exhibition and preservation of art and visual culture,” says Pedro Carriel CPA, CMA, Deputy Director of the AGA. In his role, Pedro leads the finance and operation departments, as well as oversees the revenue-generating areas of the AGA, such as the gift shop and art rentals and sales.

Pedro has been with the AGA since 2014, and admits that one of the reasons he accepted the position was because of how much it would challenge him. “It put me in the uncomfortable position of stepping into a completely new environment,” he recalls. “The gallery is a pillar of the visual arts here in Edmonton, and it’s been interesting to see it from the inside.”

While it was a professional decision that led him to the AGA, Pedro quickly fell in with the arts community and discovered a deep appreciation for art and those who create it. He especially praises the collaborative nature of Alberta’s arts community and the respect between collaborators, which is mirrored in his own experiences with the AGA: “There is a duality there. My world, the accounting side, involves a language that is non-verbal; it’s the language of numbers. And on the art side, there’s also a language that is non-verbal, which is visual.”

“I’ve been impressed at how individuals here are very mindful of business, accounting, and numbers, in addition to curating thought-provoking exhibitions,” says Pedro.

As a CPA, Pedro brought a vital skillset that is of particular use to an arts organization. “A CPA brings a grounded, very rational perspective to decision making, and that is critical. The ability to understand numbers, cash, and the role of effective governance and fiscal management—all of those things are fundamental for an organization,” he explains. “We’re responsible for providing value to all of our members, guests, and funders. It’s very difficult to do that if you’re not handling your finances appropriately.”

The journey to becoming a CPA was a winding one for Pedro, who originally started off as a teacher. His first foray into the business

world was pursuing his MBA while teaching in Mexico, and then honing his skills working in the area of general supply chain. One day, he realized that all of his bosses in business were accountants. “It didn’t take me long to realize that an accounting designation adds value. It makes you strategic and it gives insight into what is really going on in an organization,” says Pedro.

However, he advises that while a CPA provides the foundation for success in business, it’s important to build upon that knowledge and identify what sets you apart: “The additional value-add that you bring to an organization is your ability to communicate or your ability to be a good negotiator. What are those soft skills you have, in addition to being really good at finance and accounting?”

“If you can

get the best people in to manage the business side, then that leaves the artistic people to do what they need to do best and what they really know how to do. Having a CPA on the team makes such a huge difference to these organizations.”

—Colleen Dickson CPA, CMA

For Colleen Dickson CPA, CMA, it was her strategic and planning skills that most came in handy when she started with Arts Commons in 2009. Known then as the EPCOR Centre for Performing Arts, the Calgary-based performing arts centre—one of the three largest arts centres in Canada—was facing a looming deficit and preparing for a transition. Colleen was part of the team that helped develop and implement a new plan focused on revenue diversification. “We’ve really grown and diversified our revenue stream, and part of that is utilizing the venues to their capacity, utilizing our people, and really being creative at finding solutions for things,” says Colleen, who currently serves as the centre’s Chief Financial Officer. She was also involved with the centre’s re-branding as Arts Commons in 2014.

The re-brand signals the centre’s shift and evolution to a public space dedicated to the performing arts, music, and the visual arts. The centre is open 365 days a year, and is intended to be a place where any member of the public can gather.

Arts Commons even encourages the use of arts as a way to facilitate learning. In collaboration with classrooms, Arts Commons brings children into theatre spaces, where, for example, they learn about math and engineering by seeing how the pulley system works on stage. “They see things in action, as opposed to learning it in a textbook or on a screen,” explains Colleen.

“Arts provide relevance to our everyday life. It’s really important. Bring the arts to life: that’s what Arts Commons is all about. Giving

life to art means so much more than simply putting art in front of somebody,” she adds.

It’s no secret that arts and culture organizations typically have smaller budgets than other organizations, which can be a big challenge when it comes to long-term growth and planning. Having a CPA on the team is key to optimizing budgets and providing peace of mind to those who are less financially-inclined, suggests Colleen, who adds that large organizations are starting to recognize how valuable a CPA on the team can be. “If you can get the best people in to manage the business side, then that leaves the artistic people to do what they need to do best and what they really know how to do. Having a CPA on the team makes such a huge difference to these organizations.”

“Sometimes when the money isn’t there, you almost do better work because you have to be creative about how you deliver something,” says Colleen.

Being creative and strategic is all in a day’s work for Colleen, whose path to a designation was kick started when a former boss called her a “rebel accountant”: “He came in one day and said, ‘You know, you’re not a typical accountant; you’re kind of like a rebel accountant, and I think you should get your designation,’” recalls Colleen laughing.

There’s no doubt in Colleen’s mind that she made the right decision: “You become a CPA and you can pretty much do whatever you want. It gives you such a good base from which to springboard from. Just look at where CPAs are; we’re doing all sorts of really cool things.”



Colleen Dickson CPA, CMA



One doesn't need to venture away from Arts Commons to bump into another CPA doing "cool things" either: the Jack Singer Concert Hall (one of the many performance venues in Arts Commons) is home to the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra (CPO), where **Andrew Matthews CPA, CMA** works as Director of Finance. Andrew oversees the reporting of the CPO's financial information, and acts as a liaison between management, the CPO board of directors, and other major donors and stakeholders.

A patron of the CPO for 30 years, Andrew is also co-Chair of the Friends of the CPO & Musical Heritage, an advisory committee dedicated to furthering the long-term, sustainable goals of the CPO and the CPO Foundation. One could even say that music is truly in Andrew's blood—his great-great-grandparents owned one of the original Steinway piano franchises in Western Canada and his grandparents, Dick and Joyce Matthews, were founding members of the CPO in 1955. "My grandparents believed that a truly great city must have a great orchestra and that's certainly a view that I share. I think we're fortunate to have such a great orchestra in Calgary, and I'm flattered that I'm able to carry on that tradition as a patron and in my professional role as well," says Andrew.

The CPO makes a concerted effort to present a broad variety of programming that appeals to a wide variety of audiences. While there is still a focus on traditional classical works, the CPO also presents pop concerts and concerts for kids, as well as provides orchestral support for the Calgary Opera and Alberta Ballet. The CPO is bucking the misconception that orchestral music is largely

for an older demographic, and is targeting a younger audience base with its Wolfgang and Mozart patron programs.

"The method to the madness of these patron programs is recognizing that young people like to go out for an evening with their friends. So, we engaged restaurants and lounges around Arts Commons as partners, and provide a rotation of dedicated pre- or post-concert locations for the patron groups," explains Andrew, who is a founding member of both patron programs. "[The goal is] to provide a social, complete evening experience with the concert at the core."

The Wolfgang program has grown from six members when it started to 70 members this year, and the Mozart program—which is in its first year—launched with 10 members. "They're fantastic programs and they've been a resounding success," says Andrew proudly.

Music is a form of storytelling, suggests Andrew, and it's a vital tool for connecting people. "Alberta has always been a destination

for opportunity that brings in people from all over the world. I think to keep those people here, you need a great arts and culture backbone," suggests Andrew.

While music runs in Andrew's family, a deep appreciation for business and finance does, too, as it was his grandfather that set him on his path to becoming a CPA: "He was a lawyer with an undergraduate accounting major. He always said that regardless of where you're at and what you're doing, in order to understand business you have to understand the financial statements and how they're built."

Andrew praises the number of different opportunities that present themselves to CPAs in the province. He is grateful that his CPA designation allows him to make vital contributions to an organization that he cares so much about. "It's a great profession. The designation provides a great opportunity without pigeonholing anyone, and the profession is made up of energetic professionals who really help build organizations within the province."



Andrew Matthews CPA, CMA

"Alberta has always

been a destination for opportunity that brings in people from all over the world. I think to keep those people here, you need a great arts and culture backbone."

—Andrew Matthews CPA, CMA



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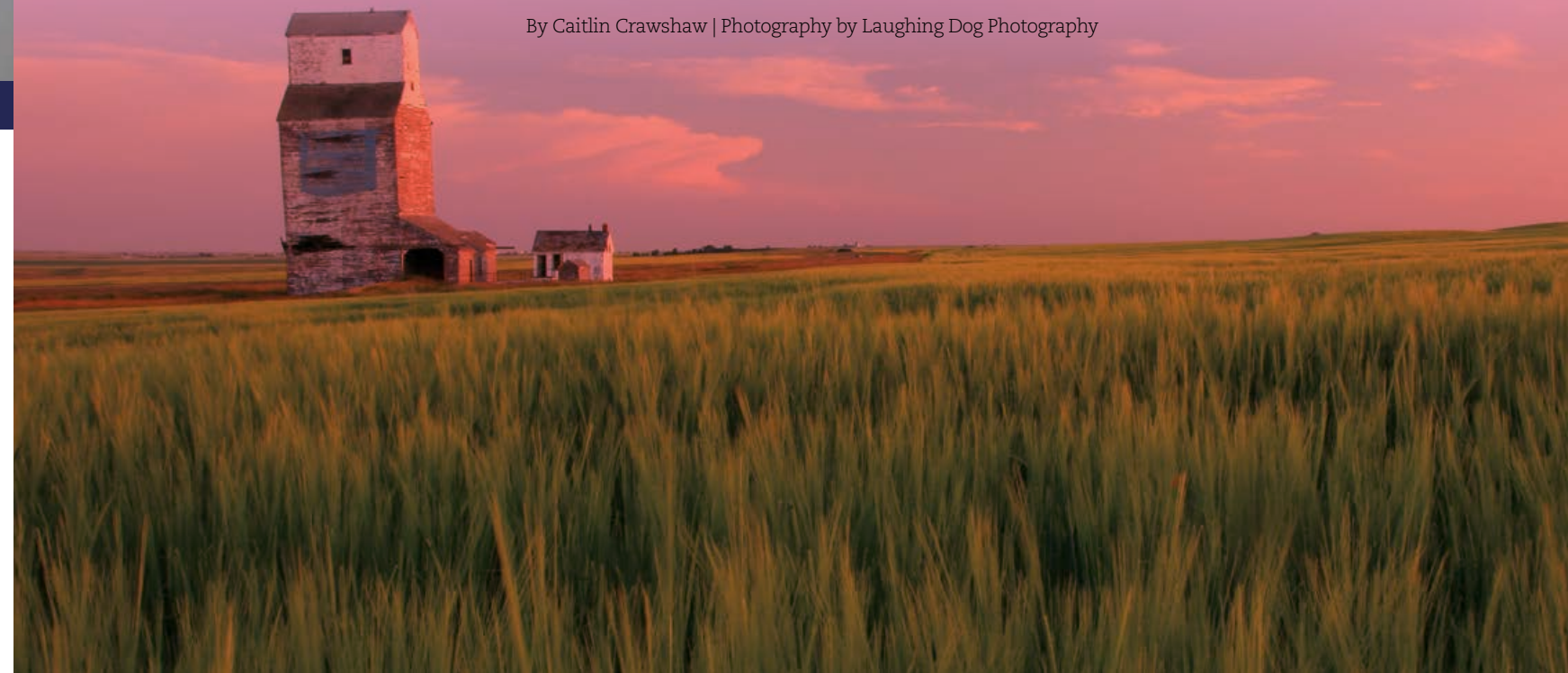
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The rural advantage

Alberta's small communities can offer big opportunities for CPAs

By Caitlin Crawshaw | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography



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-Maria Metchewais
current B. Commerce student

LIKE MANY PEOPLE,

Kristy Jackson CPA, CA found her career path after trial and error. Initially enrolled in education at the University of Alberta, she realized teaching wasn't for her after about a year of study, and began instead pursuing an interest in business and economics. After taking some accounting classes, Kristy realized she was onto something and signed up for the co-op program to get work experience in the accounting field.

It was during her first co-op placement—at the Edmonton branch of MNP—that Kristy decided to pursue her professional designation. "They basically throw you into the work as if you're an articling student, which was awesome," she says. "After those four months, I just knew that was the path I wanted to take."

In 2013, she earned the designation, but her career path became uncertain once again when she fell in love with a farmer who lived two-and-a-half hours southeast of Edmonton. "He definitely threw me a curveball with my future plans," she says. Raised in the city of St. Albert, minutes from Edmonton, Kristy had always lived in the city and figured she'd build her career in the city, too. She wondered if she could find the same career opportunities in smaller communities.

Armed with her CPA designation, Kristy began job hunting and was pleasantly sur-

prised—there were far more job postings than she'd anticipated. "There's a lot of business growth and opportunity once you start looking," she says. Kristy first landed a job at a coal power plant in Forestburg, a village with about 800 residents. As the station accountant, she oversaw the finance and accounting department—a position she doubts she would've found in the city so early in her career. In small towns, there may be less competition from other jobseekers: "For a new professional, being rural can open doors," advises Kristy.

It's been nearly four years since Kristy left Edmonton and she currently works in Sedgewick as an economic development officer for Flagstaff County. Kristy's job involves supporting entrepreneurs and attracting business opportunities in the region. Although the work is very different than the traditional accounting she'd been doing, Kristy continues to rely on her business background and CPA training: "The training prepares you for many different career paths," she says. "It's comprehensive, thorough, and builds a strong work ethic."

"This new role was a bit of a career shift, but it's very rewarding. I like being really connected to this community because it's my home now, and I want to see Flagstaff County thrive," adds Kristy.



Kristy Jackson CPA, CA

“There’s a lot of business growth and opportunity once you start looking. For a new professional, being rural can open doors.”

For **Renée Senko CPA, CA**, living and working in a small community was an obvious choice from the start. That's because she grew up in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, a small community with about 5,600 residents. Renée loved her high school accounting classes, but after earning her degree in accounting in 1991, she realized there weren't a lot of jobs in Saskatchewan and began looking for opportunities in B.C. and Alberta. Renée zeroed in on the small-town opportunities and ended up landing a job with Wilde & Company Chartered Professional Accountants in the town of Vegreville, about one hour east of Edmonton.

"I knew what a small town meant and that was a comfortable thing for me," she says. "Even though I was a young professional, I knew Vegreville would be a great spot. So, I thought I'd give it a try and see what happened."

Renée immediately felt at home at Wilde & Company. The working environment was open and welcoming, with a "family atmo-

sphere," recalls Renée. There was a strong sense of camaraderie with her peers, but also a wealth of knowledge from senior staff.

However, she wasn't sure if she'd stay at the firm after getting her professional designation, knowing that having a designation would open up many different career options elsewhere for her. "A designation gives you an excellent base of knowledge, strategic thinking, planning—all of this at your fingertips so you're ready for whatever next step you take," she says.

Renée earned her designation in 1995 and ultimately decided to stay with Wilde & Company. "The doors that opened were here," she says. "I never really looked for other opportunities as I didn't have a desire to leave. I had interesting and challenging work."

One of the best perks of being a CPA is the opportunity to work for yourself and build a business where other people love to work, which Renée can attest to. She went on to become one of the firm's partners nearly a

decade after getting her designation, and continues to build her career at the firm.

Vegreville has also been a good place to raise a family, says Renée: "The location of this community is really great, so you get the flexibility of smaller town living—no traffic, lower cost of living, and sense of family—but also access to a city less than an hour away for other needs you might have."

Since starting with the company as a new grad, Renée has seen it nearly double in size (there are now 34 people working at Wilde & Company). New graduates are attracted to the firm's friendly culture and end up sticking around to build their careers. Some of these new hires grew up in small communities, others from big cities, but all see the opportunities for career advancement at a small-town firm: "There are lots of opportunities for growth and advancement that they might not have guessed," says Renée. ■

“A designation gives you an excellent base of knowledge, strategic thinking, planning—all of this at your fingertips so you’re ready for whatever next step you take.”



Renée Senko CPA, CA

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Jackson Ho CPA, CGA

By Laura Ly | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography

The purchase of a house—one of the largest transactions a person is likely to make in their lifetime—requires the advice and guidance of skilled professionals. When it comes to Jackson Ho, clients get both a realtor and a CPA who has the financial and realty know-how to close the deal

“Being a CPA gives me that added credibility as a professional who understands finance.”

A CPA designation and a real estate license may seem like an odd combination—Jackson believes he’s part of a niche group as there aren’t a lot of CPA and realtor combos in the field—but the two have more in common than one might think. “Both professions require competent, ethical people with high integrity. I’m upheld to higher standards as a CPA and as a realtor,” says Jackson.

However, as he was a CPA before he was a realtor, Jackson says his CPA training complemented his realty work and has given him an upper edge on other real estate agents. “I’m able to go quite a bit deeper and farther in terms of the analytics than the other real estate agents can. I use a lot of database decision making and calculated risk management in my approach to real estate, and this often leads to added negotiation power for my clients,” explains Jackson. He views a CPA designation and numbers-based expertise as being essential tools to success in any business.

“Professionals should earn the CPA designation, but they also need to go beyond that. In my own experience, the books and theoretical learning only take you so far. How you apply it is also important,” he adds. 📌

“TO ENRICH THE JOURNEY OF OTHERS” is a motto that Jackson Ho CPA, CGA has always taken to heart. So, it seems fitting that his career path led him to becoming a realtor, enabling him to enrich the journeys of others into new homes.

Jackson recalls always having a passion for real estate, which started with his own ventures into real estate investing. That passion was further fueled by his day job as Senior Manager of Finance at a bank, where he managed the mortgage portfolio for internal clients and led the financial and accounting services team. Jackson initially decided to pursue a realty license in order to provide his clients with the best possible knowledge. “I thought, ‘if people are asking me about realty, and I’m interested in it, why not get a license so I can get access to more information?’ That would help me make better informed decisions on my own deals, as well as being able to help clients with theirs,” recalls Jackson.

That was almost two years ago, and Jack-

son is now a full-time real estate agent. (However, he still scratches his finance “itch” with financial management consulting projects on the side.)

Jackson loves being “somebody who actually helps people reach their goals.” He loves meeting his clients’ expectations and being there every step of the way as they go through the house buying and selling process. “When a client sells their house or claims a house as theirs, there’s nothing better for me than being the guy who made that happen,” explains Jackson.

Purchasing a home is likely to be one of the biggest financial transactions a person might make in their life. So, who better to assist them with the transaction than a financial expert like a CPA? “Being a CPA gives me that added credibility as a professional who understands finance,” says Jackson. “Clearly I am able to demonstrate that I have the skills and the professional training that back up my advice to clients.”

BALANCING THE EQUATION

By Sanita Shapka | Photography by Laughing Dog Photography and Trudie Lee Photography

MEET THREE

CPAs who are helping make great strides towards women's rights and gender equality

YES, IT IS 2017.

By now we would hope that equal opportunity and equal rights would be a non-issue, especially in Canada. But you may be surprised to learn that the United Nations recently urged Canada to address a number of barriers to gender equality—from the gender pay gap to poverty and violence against women.

So, what role do Chartered Professional Accountants (CPAs) play in overcoming those barriers? We asked three Alberta CPAs—what they said about equal opportunities in the workplace and social barriers may change how you view the Alberta landscape and the impact of professional accountants on major issues.

Vicki Anne Nielsen CPA, CA



Entering predominately male professions

"When I was working as a labourer, I was determined to keep up with my all-male crew through the long days of intense physical labour," recalls **Vicki Anne Nielsen CPA, CA**.

Vicki started her career working for her family's mechanical contracting firm during the summers to pay for her university education. "There was one other woman who worked with us. She watched me for a few days, and then offered to teach me how to lift by leveraging body weight rather than relying on pure muscle power.

"If there hadn't been another woman who realized how much harder I had to work just to keep up, I might not have been able to succeed," adds Vicki.

Vicki believes that mentorship plays an important role in the workplace, but it's particularly vital to increasing the number of women in the trades. Having experienced it firsthand, she knows that women may find it intimidating to enter the trades because there are so few female mentors to whom they can relate.

According to Statistics Canada, women are underrepresented in the most in-demand trades. In 2012, women made up only four per cent of new registrants in the construction

electrical trade, seven per cent of new registrants in welding, and three per cent of new registrants in carpentry.

"I feel a deep personal connection to the success of women in the trades and other predominately male professions. Helping women break into the industry that I grew up in is very important to me," says Vicki. Her passion for mentorship, coupled with her CPA designation, led her to a past role with Women Building Futures (WBF), an Edmonton-based non-profit trades training center for women.

Today, Vicki is the Senior Director of Finance at Acuren, an industrial technology-enabled asset protection firm in Edmonton, where she oversees the financial function of the organization. But her belief in mentorship remains a cornerstone of her work, and she advises that the support and mentorship of a colleague or leader can be invaluable, regardless of the field anyone chooses.

For aspiring CPAs who want to make a social and political impact on the world, Vicki shares further words of wisdom: "Use your training, experience, and voice. Don't let change overtake you—lead the change and support those who are contributing new ideas, no matter who they are."

"Use your training, experience, and voice. Don't let change overtake you—lead the change and support those who are contributing new ideas, no matter who they are."

—Vicki Anne Nielsen CPA, CA

THE FACTS

- Over **10,000** abused women, their children, and seniors received services from a shelter that is part of the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) in 2015–2016 (ACWS Annual Provincial Shelter Data 2015–16).
- In 2016, women held only **11 per cent** of board positions on Alberta-based, TSX-listed companies (Alberta Securities Commission).
- Women in Alberta were paid on average **63 per cent** of a man's income in 2011 (University of Alberta, Parkland Institute).
- It is estimated that **48 per cent** of the global productivity potential of women remains underutilized, compared to 22 per cent for men (International Labour Organization).

Ending violence against women

"I began to truly see the women and children affected by domestic violence," says **Barbara King CPA, CA**, recalling a tour she received of the Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter a few years ago.

"I was overwhelmed. I could only imagine how brave these women must be and how difficult it would be to drastically leap from your life as you know it, all at once, with the shelter as your only safety net."

Barb is a proud Partner at BDO Canada in Red Deer. But looking for another way to support her community, she started volunteering as a Treasurer at the shelter. "I had to give back to something that truly inspires me."

Each year, the shelter helps thousands of women and children. According to a 2014 report by Statistics Canada, on any given day in Canada, more than 3,000 women and 2,500 children are living in an emergency shelter to escape domestic violence.

The Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter provides short-term housing, food, clothing, trauma counselling, court services, child services, and various other necessities for those fleeing violence.

In her role as Treasurer, Barb is part of an advisory board responsible for providing sound financial advice and business management policies. "As a CPA, I look at the shelter operations from a business perspective. I can understand and review the financial figures with a set of knowledgeable, trained eyes."

Barb says that CPAs are trained to be the drivers of change, and advises students and aspiring CPAs to be proud and open to opportunities: "Being a CPA means you have a varied and wonderful skillset that can be applied in so many ways."



"Being a CPA means you have a varied and wonderful skillset that can be applied in so many ways."

—Barbara King CPA, CA

Barbara King CPA, CA

"My expertise and skills as a CPA are invaluable in navigating highly complex environments."

—Olek Kot CPA, CA

Olek Kot CPA, CA

Addressing the Alberta landscape

"Some people are surprised to find out about areas of high gender inequality in Alberta because our economy has been so strong," says **Olek Kot CPA, CA**, Grants and Financial Analyst for the Government of Alberta's new Ministry of Status of Women.

According to the Alberta Government, the province has one of the highest rates of violence against women and girls in Canada, low representation of women on corporate boards and in senior leadership, and continues to be challenged by a gender wage gap.

The Ministry of Status of Women targets actions and shapes policies that lead to gender equality and strengthen the province as a whole. "I believe in the mandate of the ministry," says Olek proudly.

What led Olek to his position with the ministry was his steadfast belief in equal opportunity, in addition to knowing that the


newly-created ministry would offer him distinct professional development experiences. Since joining, Olek has played an important part in developing the new grants program, which enables the ministry to support other organizations in their work toward gender equality in Alberta.

"My expertise and skills as a CPA are invaluable in navigating highly complex environments," he explains. "Accounting offers a way to describe reality—although from a monetary perspective—in a consistent and translatable way."

Olek believes that being a CPA has enabled him to make social contributions he can be proud of, and encourages future CPAs to do the same.

"Find a cause that inspires you, do your research, be strategic, find how you can contribute best, and start doing it." 🙌





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CPA EDUCATION FOUNDATION CORNER



Need money? We got you covered.

The CPA Education Foundation believes in equipping students with the tools and resources they need to complete their business degrees successfully and pursue a CPA designation. We have scholarships for all types of students; whether your interests involve volunteering, excelling in leadership or academia, or mentorship, check out our scholarships and let us help fund your dreams!

Visit our website for more information on these scholarships, as well as other scholarships funded by the CPA Education Foundation through post-secondary institutions and high schools in Alberta: www.cpaalberta.ca/foundation.

The application deadline for all the following awards is February 28, 2017.

Alberta Post-secondary students:

Aboriginal Student Business Award

Value: \$2,500

One award available to an Aboriginal student with a minimum 3.0 GPA at the time of application and who is enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta.

Alex Tutschek Award for Indigenous Student Post-secondary Achievement

Value: \$1,500 each

Two awards are available to post-secondary Indigenous students enrolled in, or accepted by, business programs at Alberta post-secondary institutions; students must have satisfactory academic standing at the time of application.

David Bentley FCPA, FCA and Janet Bentley Post-secondary Excellence Award

Value: \$3,000 each

Two awards granted annually to students enrolled at any Alberta post-secondary institution in the second or third year of a business/commerce program approved for entry into the CPA Western School of Business, and preparing to enter the third or fourth year of their program. Selection is based on involvement in volunteer activities and an expressed interest in pursuing the CPA designation.

Don Wilson CA Memorial Scholarship

Value: \$2,000

One award granted annually to a fourth-year post-secondary student in Alberta or Saskatchewan who has secured a CPA training position with an industry employer. The student must have satisfactory academic standing and demonstrated leadership within the community or on campus.

Douglas R. Hagerman FCA Entrance Scholarship

Value: \$2,500

One award granted annually to a student from any Alberta post-secondary institution and entering his or her first year in a business/commerce program approved for entry into the CPA Western School of Business. The award amount is \$2,500 and is payable over three years: \$500 first year, \$750 second year and \$1,250 third year. Renewal for the second and third years are based on satisfactory academic achievement in the prior year with a minimum course load of 24 credits.

Generations of Excellence Award

Value: \$2,500

One award available to a second, third, and fourth-year student enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta. Successful applicants will demonstrate an interest in pursuing the CPA designation and will have at least one family member who is (or was) a member, in good standing, of CPA Alberta or one or more of its legacy predecessors.

Peter Kruczko CPA, CA Award in Memory of Gordon Woodman FCA

Value: \$2,000

One award granted annually to a student who has completed at least one course related to the six core competencies for an accounting designation at the post-secondary level. Student must also demonstrate participation in volunteer activities and a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a minimum of 24 credits for the previous academic year.

James C. Miller FCA Bursary in Accounting

Value: \$1,250 each

Two awards granted annually to two students enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta who intend to enter the CPA certification program and reside (or have previously resided) in Medicine Hat (preferred). Selection is based on academic excellence and community involvement.

Kenneth Biggs FCA and Leona Biggs Scholarship

Value: \$2,000

One award granted annually to one Alberta post-secondary student who is registered in the final year of a business/commerce degree program with a declared major in accounting. Applicants must have secured a training position outside of external audit with pre-approved training. Selection is based on demonstrated satisfactory academic standing and leadership in the community or on campus.

Lorenz Richer Currie Award

Value: \$1,500

One award granted annually to a third-year Bachelor of Commerce or Bachelor of Management student enrolled with Athabasca University or Grande Prairie Regional College with a minimum GPA of 2.3 from the previous fall semester.

New Canadian Achievement Award

Value: \$2,500

One award available to an individual who has become a new Canadian or permanent resident within the last five years (i.e., on or after January 1, 2012). This individual must be enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta or the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP). This individual must also demonstrate satisfactory achievement in their academic or professional training program.

Richard Schulli CA Memorial Scholarship

Value: \$2,500

One award granted annually to one student entering his or her third or fourth year of study pursuing an undergraduate business/commerce degree with a declared major in accounting. Selection is based on involvement in volunteer activities (preferably in a mentorship role), satisfactory academic achievement in the prior year of study, and an expressed interest in pursuing the CPA designation.

Young Emerging Professionals Award

Value: \$2,500 each

Two awards available to post-secondary students enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta. In addition to satisfactory academic standing, applicants must also demonstrate the following qualities in their application: professionalism, integrity, ethics, and leadership.

Alberta High School students:

Alex Tutschek Award for Indigenous Student High School Achievement

Value: \$1,500

One award is available to a high school Indigenous student enrolled in, or accepted by, a business program at an Alberta post-secondary institution.

David Bentley FCPA, FCA and Janet Bentley High School Excellence Award

Value: \$2,500

One award granted annually to one student in Grade 12 at any Alberta high school. Preference will be given to applicants who will need to relocate within Alberta in order to attend a post-secondary institution. Selection is based on involvement in volunteer activities, satisfactory academic achievement, and an expressed interest in pursuing the CPA designation.

Young Emerging Professionals Award

Value: \$1,500 each

Two awards available to Alberta high school students. In addition to satisfactory academic standing, applicants must also demonstrate the following qualities in their application: professionalism, integrity, ethics, and leadership.

Alberta CPA Professional Education Program candidates:

David Bentley FCPA, FCA and Janet Bentley CPA PEP Excellence Award

Value: \$3,500

One award granted annually to one CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP) candidate who has secured and begun training as a designated accountant in a public practice setting. Selection is based on involvement in volunteer activities, satisfactory performance in CPA PEP modules and training, and an expressed interest in pursuing the CPA designation.

New Canadian Achievement Award

Value: \$2,500

One award available to an individual who has become a new Canadian or permanent resident within the last five years (i.e., on or after January 1, 2012). This individual must be enrolled in business or commerce at a degree-granting post-secondary institution in Alberta or the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP). This individual must also demonstrate satisfactory achievement in their academic or professional training program.

Mature students:

Alex Tutschek Award for Mature Indigenous Students

Value: \$1,500 each

Two awards are available to Indigenous adults at least 21 years of age (as of February 28, 2017) who are beginning/returning to pursue a post-secondary education after a minimum three year absence from the educational sector. Successful applicants will be enrolled in, or accepted by, business programs at Alberta post-secondary institutions.

9 tips to cash in with the CPA Education Foundation

We get it: applying for scholarships can be daunting. And, with the CPA Education Foundation offering hundreds of scholarship opportunities to high school, post-secondary, and CPA PEP students, it can be hard to know where to start.

We've compiled these nine tips to help you navigate the tricky road to scholarship glory. Past recipients of the Foundation's scholarship program also weighed in with their words of wisdom to help you find your competitive edge.

1. Exhaust your resources

Take a little time to do online research on available scholarships, meet with academic advisors and career centres, and keep an eye out at sponsored events (especially those put on by CPA Alberta!). "I learned about Foundation scholarships from the CPA Alberta Get Connected event I attended in January, as well as from the University of Alberta Accounting Club newsletter," says Molly Moore, recipient of the 2016 James C. Miller FCA Bursary in Accounting.

2. Make note of deadlines

Scholarship applications require time and we know how short-on-time students tend to feel! However, an application that arrives on time really attests to a student's work ethic, which works in your favour when the review committee considers your application. For 2017, all application materials—including recommendation letters—must be received by February 28 by midnight.



3. Apply for the scholarships that are right for you

Christina Figueora, recipient of the 2016 Peter Kruczko CPA, CA Award in Memory of Gordon Woodman FCA, advises that being selective can strengthen your application: "I applied knowing that I'd be entering a competitive pool of qualified and accomplished students. So, I chose a scholarship that spoke to my own strengths so I could devote time to making sure I stood out from the crowd."

4. Read the application requirements carefully

Foundation scholarships are awarded on a points system based on application specifications. So, double check to make sure you've completed all the tasks set out in the criteria and that you've included all necessary elements in your application package.



5. Go ahead and brag

Your scholarship application is your opportunity to sell yourself, so don't be shy about your accomplishments and goals. You want us to remember you, so be confident. Pinder Sangha, recipient of the 2015 Richard Schulli CA Memorial Scholarship, says: "Never let uncertainty cloud your mind. Show the adjudicators that you have taken the time to invest in your education. The CPA Education Foundation is here to help you bring out the best in yourself."



6. Make the most out of recommendation letters

The Foundation makes it easy for students: you can use the same recommendation letter for multiple scholarship applications. However, make sure your references know which scholarships you're applying for and consider offering your reference a list of accomplishments to help them personalize your letter. We want to know how you're an exceptional person.

"Never let uncertainty cloud your mind. Show the adjudicators that you have taken the time to invest in your education. The CPA Education Foundation is here to help you bring out the best in yourself."

—Pinder Sangha, recipient of the 2015 Richard Schulli CA Memorial Scholarship

7. If you have a financial need, tell us about it

Financial need is not always part of the scholarship criteria, but we know every little bit helps to fund your educational goals. "The money you can receive makes a noticeable difference and alleviates stress," confirms Anson Leung, recipient of the 2014 Douglas R. Hagerman FCA Entrance Scholarship. So, if you have a financial need, take a sentence or two to let us know.

8. Proofread

We recognize that writing might not be your forté, but we appreciate students who take the time to put together a well-formulated application package that is polished to the best of their abilities.



9. Just go for it

Don't let the fear of competition or stress of putting together an application prevent you from applying. We love individualism and Foundation scholarships recognize a variety of talents, regardless of whether your interests lie in volunteering, leadership, academic excellence, or community building. Andrew Min, recipient of the 2016 Young Emerging Professionals High School Award, knows what it's like to get over that hump. "I was reluctant to apply initially," he says, "but from looking at the required contents of the application, I realized that the scholarship was suitable for me and I had nothing to lose by applying."

Whether you're applying for Foundation scholarships or applying to another scholarship program, we wish you the best of luck! For a full list of scholarships from the CPA Education Foundation, go here: cpaalberta.ca/foundation.

When I got a job in the accounting field after graduating it clicked right away. It was all very well referenced to what we had learned at NAIT.

Greta Wierenga (BBA'10)
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STUDENT EATING 101

Dietician Emily Mardell provides tips for healthy eating on a student budget, showing that student eating doesn't have to be a diet of ramen and pizza

By Emily Mardell

AS A STUDENT, YOU LEAD A BUSY LIFE. Your time is filled with classes, labs, assignments, and extra-curricular demands. Add in a social life, and your already tight schedule becomes even more packed. Of course, you're likely trying to do all of the above with a limited, student budget. So, it's no surprise that healthy eating becomes a challenge. Without a plan, everyday stresses, late nights, and changes in routine can lead to a semester of regrettable food choices.

The good news is that you can quickly become food smart! Eating regularly and choosing healthy options—as well as good portion sizes—give you more mental and physical energy to study and socialize. You will also feel good about yourself and enjoy better health. A little meal planning will help you maintain a healthy eating pattern and keep your body and brain fueled for success—all without breaking the bank.

So, how does a student learn to cook healthy food on a budget? Here are some easy-to-follow tips to get you started:

Meal planning

Planning meals doesn't have to be a chore. Set aside 30 minutes at the start of each week to plan meals and write your grocery list. This ensures that everything you buy will be used, and curbs the urge to order pizza because you don't know what to cook.

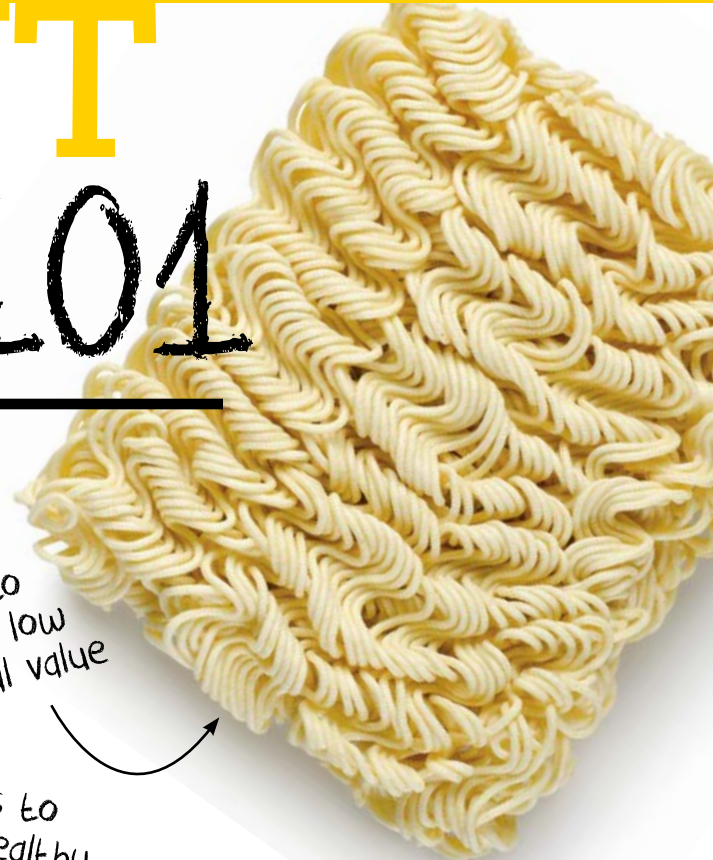
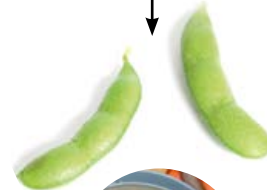
Are you new to meal planning? Start simple: plan for Sunday and Wednesday only, and then use the leftovers for two other meals. Cooking twice a week is better than not cooking at all. If you're unsure of what meals to try, check out meal ideas, hacks, and recipes by visiting YouTube channels like "Fit Men Cook," and "The Domestic Geek."

Eat seasonally

Seasonal fruits and vegetables are more nutritious and affordable—not to mention more delicious!—than their out-of-season counterparts. Stock up on seasonal fruits and vegetables, and freeze them for later use.

Say no to food with low nutritional value

Say yes to these healthy and convenient foods



The best produce buys in the spring include asparagus, broccoli, pea pods, rhubarb, red leaf lettuce, and strawberries. You can enjoy frozen fruits and vegetables year-round.

Power with pulses

Protein is essential to maintaining a healthy diet. This important nutrient keeps you feeling satisfied and builds muscle mass. Foods like beans, chickpeas, lentils, dried peas, and tofu cost mere nickels compared to meat and fish, but still pack a protein punch.

One of my favorite affordable and dorm-friendly snacks is edamame. Found in the freezer section, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup contains about nine grams of protein. It's a quick and easy late-night snack for a cram session.

Other protein-rich meals are almond coconut granola, frittata, or minestrone soup. You can also make chicken fajitas and invite a friend over! You can find all of these recipes on the Food First blog.

With these quick and easy tips you will be well on your way to healthy eating—and on a student budget!

Emily Mardell is a registered dietitian with Food First. Visit www.choosefoodfirst.com to learn more about healthy eating, and check out the Food First blog to find the meals mentioned in this article and other healthy and tasty recipes!

LEARN FROM BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS

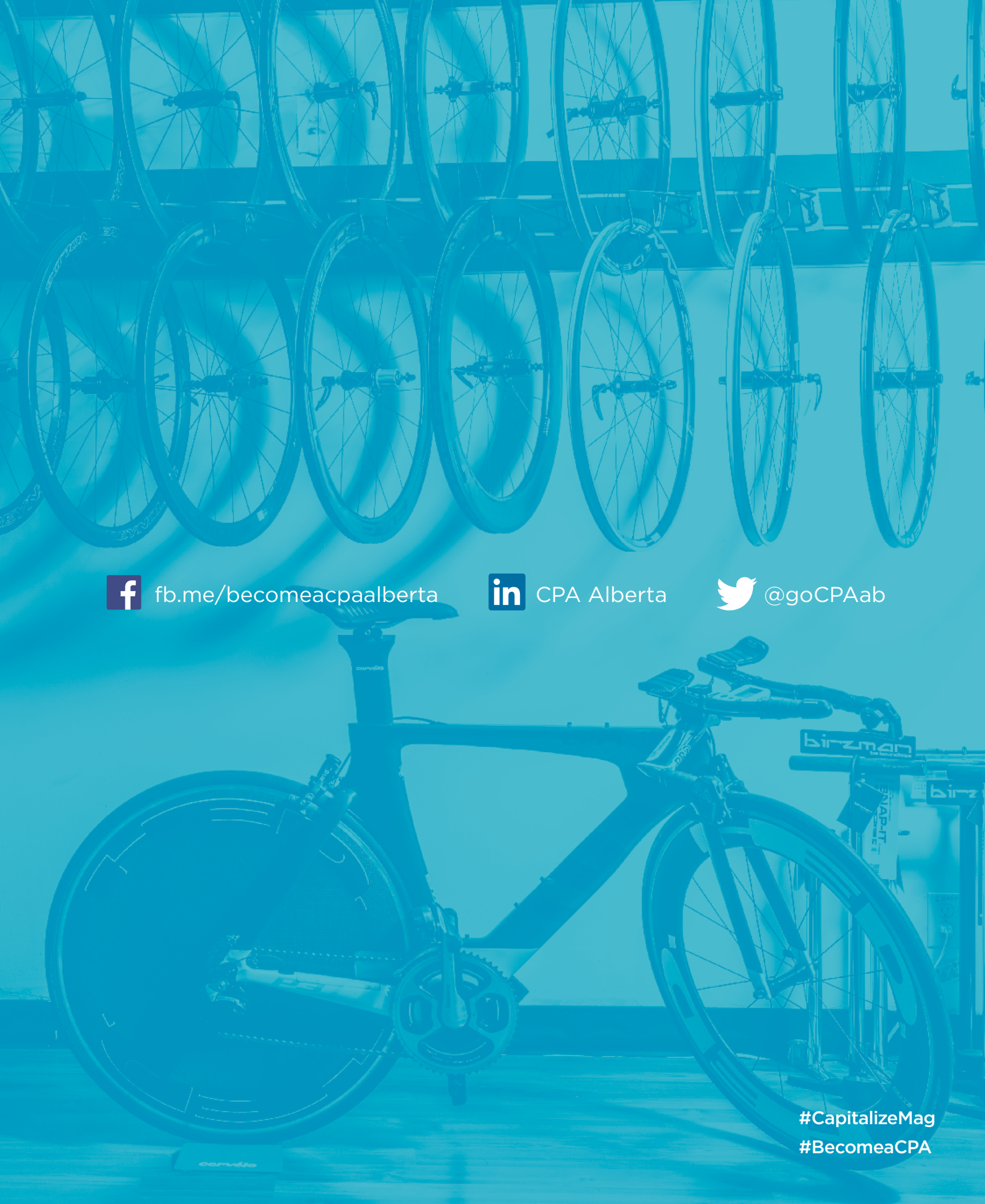


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