

Winter 2024

# capitalize

Introducing Albertans to the  
CPA Profession

THE ROAD TO  
SUCCESS

WITH THE CPA DESIGNATION

KEMI AWONIYI IGE CPA, CGA





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**TOGETHER**

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*Capitalize* is a semi-annual magazine that introduces students and others 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.

Visit [capitalize.cpaalberta.ca](http://capitalize.cpaalberta.ca) for even more *Capitalize*!

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## Message from the CEO

Dear Alberta students:

Welcome to another term! I hope you had a restful break and are ready for all this new term has to offer.

The road to achieving a CPA designation—and the journey a CPA takes in their career once they've achieved that milestone—can be winding. It can be full of ups and downs, twists and turns. But every CPA I have the pleasure of meeting agrees: the designation is worth it.

So far, my own CPA journey has been quite an adventure. I earned my designation in 1999, worked with firms across the country, sat on various boards, and currently serve as the CEO of CPA Alberta. One of the most exciting milestones of my journey was when I helped lead the evolution of the profession from three designations (CA, CMA, CGA) to one designation (CPA) in 2015—with the help and guidance of many other CPAs and staff at CPA Alberta, of course!

But one of the most rewarding parts of my entire career is having the opportunity to welcome new Alberta CPAs into the profession every winter at our annual convocation celebrations. If you plan to be one of those new CPAs in a few years, I look forward to being there to shake your hand and help guide you to the next point in your journey.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Capitalize*, which features several CPAs on their own journeys, the 2024 class of *Capitalize* Campus Stars (who are, hopefully, future CPAs!), advice for you to start your own CPA journey, and so much more.

I and CPA Alberta look forward to supporting your student experience and helping you reach the CPA destination.

Rachel Miller FCPA, FCA  
CEO, CPA Alberta



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CPA Alberta and *Capitalize* acknowledge the land we call Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land, and their histories and culture influence our community to this day.

Spanning generations, acknowledgment of the land is a traditional custom of Indigenous peoples. In the spirit of reconciliation and building respectful relationships, we recognize our offices are situated on the following traditional territories:

Amiskwaciwâskahikan, or Edmonton, is situated on Indigenous land in Treaty 6 territory. We acknowledge the language, culture, and heritage of the Nêhiyawak (Cree), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux people.

Moh'kins'tis, or Calgary, is situated on Indigenous land in Treaty 7 territory. We acknowledge the language, culture, and heritage of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations), the Stoney Nakoda First Nations (Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), Tsuut'ina, Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, and the Métis Nation Region 3.

We make this acknowledgment as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on. CPA Alberta is committed to building a profession where Indigenous peoples and their voices and experiences are heard, valued, respected, and celebrated.



# EVENTS CALENDAR

## CPA Alberta events



### Network-Wing Wednesday

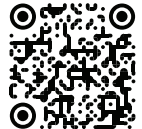
Join CPA Alberta for Network-Wing Wednesday, a fun and casual event for accounting and business students to meet CPAs. Too chicken to network? Activities like bowling, skee-ball, and darts will help you break the ice. For more information, visit: [cpaalberta.ca/Network-Wing-Wednesday](https://cpaalberta.ca/Network-Wing-Wednesday)

#### **Calgary**

**March 13** • 6 – 8 p.m.  
Banquet University District

#### **Edmonton**

**March 20** • 6 – 8 p.m.  
GRETA Bar



### CPA Education Foundation Business Challenge Case Competition

**March 6 – 8**

The CPA Education Foundation Business Challenge is an intense case competition between students from post-secondary institutions across Alberta. It provides an opportunity for students to experience what it's like to be a professional solving real-world business problems.

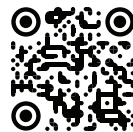




## Campus events

CPA Alberta partners with student clubs at post-secondary institutions across Alberta to sponsor events throughout the year and also appears at various career fairs and open houses.

**Learn more about these events and many, many more at [capitalize.cpaalberta.ca/events](https://capitalize.cpaalberta.ca/events)**



# WHAT DOES “BEING PROFESSIONAL” REALLY MEAN?

**Learn how to balance the personal and the professional**

BY EMILY BYRNE

**As a Career Advisor** for post-secondary students, I get to be in the unique position of seeing both sides of the hiring process—the candidate’s (students and alumni) and the employer’s. A lot of feedback I hear from hiring managers is they are looking for new grads with the interpersonal skills necessary to exhibit professionalism without being taught everything on the job.

“Being professional” is a term we often hear, but it’s hard to pinpoint exactly what that means when you’re about to dip your toes into the workforce for the very first time. Essentially, professionalism comes down to the ability to represent the company you’re working for in a positive light. Here are some of the key skills I focus on to help students develop this ability.

## **TEAMWORK**

Many jobs involve working in teams, so teamwork and problem-solving skills are highly sought after. Will you support your team members? Are you easy to work with? Are you willing to jump in to help?

## **COMMUNICATION**

Whether writing an email, doing a presentation, or meeting with clients to discuss project requirements, being respectful, clear, and direct in your communication will take you a long way in your career. And DO NOT be afraid to ask questions—this is encouraged and appreciated.

## **GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK**

Be prepared to receive feedback on your work without taking it personally, especially when starting out. But just as important is the ability to give feedback to your coworkers or even superiors. It’s a skill that is essential but definitely requires some practice!

**PROFESSIONALISM COMES DOWN TO THE ABILITY TO REPRESENT THE COMPANY YOU’RE WORKING FOR IN A POSITIVE LIGHT.**







## ACCOUNTABILITY

Last but not least, have you learned how to follow through on what you promise? Do you manage deadlines and finish projects on time? Take responsibility for your mistakes? Can your team or clients depend on you? Are you WHERE you need to be WHEN you need

to be? These might seem like small things, but they show that you care about the work, your team, and the impression you're giving.

**Many students** voice concerns with feeling like they have to hide their authentic selves to be professional, but this isn't

the case! Just learn to set boundaries. Be friendly and share details about your life with your coworkers, but know where to draw the line. And at the end of the day, focus on being the type of person YOU would want to work with. You can never go wrong with that! 🎯



Emily completed a Bachelor of Communications at MacEwan University and her Career Development Practitioner Certification at Simon Fraser University. After spending several years working in marketing on the West Coast, she pivoted to career development and has worked as an Advisor at Capilano University and SAIT. When she's not working, Emily can be found curled up with her cat, Finn, enjoying a book and a warm cup of coffee. She also enjoys running, taking dance classes, and listening to live music.



# DESTINATION: CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT

THE PATH OF BECOMING AND  
BEING A CPA CAN BE WINDING,  
BUT IT'S ALL PART OF THE  
JOURNEY TO A SUCCESSFUL  
AND FULFILLING CAREER

BY SARAH MALUDZINSKI

**The road to becoming**—and being—a CPA is different for everyone who gets to add those three letters to their name. Some methodically plan their route from start to finish; others end up in accounting without truly knowing how they got there. Some begin with a different destination in mind but fall in love with accounting along the way. And some end up there after stopping at a few other places first.

But no matter what, the designation provides a solid roadmap upon which CPAs can plot and plan their own unique journey. ▸

ALICIA FOWLER CPA, CA  
LAUGHING DOG PHOTOGRAPHY





KEMI AWONIYI IGE CPA, CGA  
HARDERLEE PHOTOGRAPHY

## HITTING THE ROAD

"I actually first intended to become a French immersion teacher. I never in a million years thought I would become an accountant,"

**Alicia Fowler CPA, CA** says with a laugh. "My biological father is an accountant, my biological grandfather's an accountant, and my stepfather's an accountant. And it really was not something I wanted to pursue."

But then she had the opportunity to join a scholarship program to do a business diploma.

"I thought 'Well, this is a good opportunity to learn a different skill set. I'll never go wrong with doing a business diploma, and I'll learn a lot of valuable skills,'" says Alicia. "And within four months, I realized I really, really liked accounting—and this is not good! I didn't want to be an accountant...but I'm very much an accountant."

What really made the decision for her was talking to several teachers and accountants and asking them one big question: If you had to do this again, would you still pursue the same career? "And every single accountant I talked to said yes," says Alicia.

**Kemi Awoniyi Ige CPA, CGA**, on the other hand, always knew she wanted to be an accountant. "In high school, I had the option to go into the sciences or commerce, and I went into commerce because I realized I enjoyed accounting," she says. "My school was one of the few where accounting was offered as a subject, so I could find out if I had a knack for it."

While she jokes that, at one point, she may have wanted to be an astronaut, she never really considered doing anything else. "I've always loved accounting," says Kemi. "As soon as I really started thinking about what I wanted to be, I found I had a passion for accounting and a passion for helping people with numbers."

Kemi studied accounting in university in Nigeria, and when her family moved to Alberta, she decided she wanted to pursue her accounting designation. "There's confidence in people who have the designation versus those who

don't. There's that recognition that you've gone through the rigour, and you have a good understanding of what's required," she says.

## NAVIGATING UPS AND DOWNS

Though she spent much of her career in public accounting, Alicia decided to start her own business during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was home with two small children, and while she wanted to stay in the workforce, she needed flexibility. So, she started reaching out to her network to see if there was interest from other women in similar positions.

"And there was," says Alicia. "I picked up a contract with two other women who were in the same situation as me, working with two little kids at home and needing flexibility in our lives.... We supported an organization with an acquisition of \$115 million over a six-week period. It was a wild project, and we liked it."

From there, Alicia founded MOD Accounting & Tax, a full-service virtual CPA firm that balances the flexibility she needs with her passion for supporting women, both as colleagues and as clients. "It's been an empowering experience to start my own business," says Alicia. "Supporting [entrepreneurs] and helping them understand their numbers and seeing that it's actually making an impact for the women, their families, and their communities...it really makes a difference. We're actually making a difference using our designation." ▸

SEEING THAT IT'S ACTUALLY MAKING AN IMPACT FOR THE WOMEN, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THEIR COMMUNITIES... IT REALLY MAKES A DIFFERENCE. WE'RE ACTUALLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE USING OUR DESIGNATION. ALICIA FOWLER CPA, CA



Fell in love  
with accounting



Travelled the  
country—and  
then the globe!



Obtained a Master  
of Professional  
Accounting



Became a  
mom—twice!



Started a firm,  
MOD Accounting  
and Tax PC



Became a  
CPA, CA







Fell in love with  
accounting



Moved to Alberta  
from Nigeria



Became a designated  
accountant



Gives back to  
community



Loves to travel  
for work—  
and pleasure



Tackles  
big projects  
with finesse



Kemi similarly points to her ability to give back to her community as a highlight of being a designated accountant. She has been a mentor formally within the profession and informally within her community. “When I mentor people in my community, some of them don’t even know anything about accounting,” she says. “It’s the combination of seeing the wow factor on their faces when you tell them something about accounting, and...[seeing them] realize how important it is.”

She is also passionate about going beyond the financials and offering free business advice to newcomers to Canada and those who want to become entrepreneurs. “I want to one day be part of this person’s success story,” she says. “I want to be like, ‘Remember when you first started, and now it’s flourishing, and everybody now knows the name of your business?’ It’s a good feeling to be able to do that. To be able to help people and say, ‘See, it’s not just debit and credit. We are more than numbers.’”

But like most other things in life, the journey can be a roller-coaster ride. Kemi and Alicia have both found a lot of empowerment and satisfaction in becoming and being a designated accountant, but neither path has been without hurdles.

Though Kemi’s love for accounting has never wavered, she does admit obtaining her designation had some difficulties. “The hardest part would have been when I had to take all of those classes!” says Kemi. “But it wasn’t really just the classes; it was the fact that I was new to the country. There was a lot going on, but it’s kind of a catch-22 because it was also an opportunity to meet other people, and I made a lot of friends.”

For Alicia, some of the roadblocks she’s faced are with the norms or stereotypes of the profession. “It’s a very conservative industry in general. It is changing, but it is historically a

very conservative industry, and that doesn’t fit for everyone,” she says. “It doesn’t always fit for moms, and it doesn’t always fit for clients we want to work with.”

She says it can be intimidating for people, and that can hinder a CPA’s ability to make the difference they’d like to. She does stress that the industry is changing—even if it’s slow—and she wants her business to be part of that. “I think how we’re doing it differently is we’re providing opportunities for clients to meet with us online and to meet on their terms and their time,” says Alicia. “We’re not stuffy, and we’re trying to bust barriers for [our clients], so they understand what it is they’re signing or understand the information they need to have.”

## PREPARING OTHERS FOR THE JOURNEY

When asked if they have any advice for students considering the CPA path, they both have the same answer: Just do it.

“It’s like in the Nike motto,” Kemi says with a laugh. “Don’t think about doing it later. Do it now.”

If you wait, you might miss out on opportunities, Kemi says. You also might get too comfortable and be less likely to return and get it, but that designation has so much value. “If there are two people who apply to the same position, and one has a designation and the other doesn’t, there’s a high likelihood the one with the designation will be called first,” she says. “You always want to have that added advantage.”

“There’s no downside to obtaining your CPA designation, in my opinion,” says Alicia. “You’re never going to not be able to use it.... I think the biggest skill you learn as a CPA is how to obtain information and make decisions based on facts and information available to you, and that’s a giant life win.” ☺

**IF THERE ARE TWO PEOPLE WHO APPLY TO THE SAME POSITION, AND ONE HAS A DESIGNATION AND THE OTHER DOESN'T, THERE'S A HIGH LIKELIHOOD THE ONE WITH THE DESIGNATION WILL BE CALLED FIRST. YOU ALWAYS WANT TO HAVE THAT ADDED ADVANTAGE.** KEMI AWONIYI IGE CPA, CGA



# CPAs on CPAs: Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative



**MAUREEN MONETA AND  
JOSHUA LETENDRE INTERVIEW  
EACH OTHER ON THEIR PATHS  
TO BECOMING CPAS, WHY  
ENGAGING INDIGENOUS  
LEARNERS IS SO IMPORTANT,  
AND MORE**

AS TOLD TO **SARAH MALUDZINSKI**  
 **ESTA BEE PHOTOGRAPHY**





**Maureen Moneta CPA, CA and Joshua Letendre CPA** are both members of the Métis Nation of Alberta, engaged CPAs, and leaders in the Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative created by the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Alberta (AFOA Alberta) and the CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB). Maureen Moneta is the Vice-chair of the CPA Alberta board and a subject matter expert contributing to the development of the Indigenous education initiative. Joshua is a member of the CPA Alberta Foundation board and an instructor in the Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative. The initiative tailors accounting curriculum with Indigenous context and experience and is taught by Indigenous instructors.

**Joshua:** Maureen, I know you've inspired and encouraged many young people to pursue higher education and their CPA designation. What made you want to become a CPA?

**Maureen:** I found primary education challenging. Accounting was the first course I took in high school that I got a 100% in. I loved the idea that if the equation balanced, you knew you had it right at the end. There was something about how logical it was that just made sense.

I knew I wanted to be in leadership, and I thought earning an accounting designation would give me the skills to understand business. Accounting is the language of business after all. What about you?

**Joshua:** I was always good with numbers. Like you, I liked that there is a right way and a wrong way, and you can get to the right answer. But my Indigenous advisor's guidance was the first big step for me to consider going further.

I wanted to be done with education after high school, but I was lucky to have an Indigenous advisor at my high school, and he said, "Well, why don't we not dismiss the idea of post-secondary completely, and let's just explore some options. Let's go for a tour and check things out."

For me, post-secondary was actually a very enjoyable time. I don't know if we can put accounting and fun together, but...

**Maureen:** What I find interesting about your story, Joshua, is that you had an Indigenous advisor, and that was a key part of your journey. ▸





Maureen Moneta CPA, CA



During my education and earlier in my career, I didn't feel comfortable talking about being Métis. Often when I spoke about being Métis, I would hear that I was still "ok because I didn't seem Indigenous." I didn't fit their expectations of the colonial stereotypes they believed about Indigenous peoples.

To say this was uncomfortable for me to navigate as a young aspiring professional is an understatement. One reason I'm so proud of the Indigenous education initiative created by AFOA Alberta and CPAWSB is that it changes the conversation so all Indigenous learners can feel there's a place for them to belong within the accounting profession.

**Joshua:** I know we both are passionate about this initiative. What made you want to be part of it?

[The Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative] changes the conversation so all Indigenous learners can feel there's a place for them to belong within the accounting profession. **MAUREEN MONETA CPA, CA**

**Maureen:** I was constantly having conversations with business leaders where many were saying the same thing: we need more Indigenous CPAs. I was being asked to recommend someone or help with recruitment too much. The truth is there are far too few Indigenous CPAs to meet the needs of the market. But why are there so few?

CPA Canada funded a study to better understand. Athabasca University led the research and created *Hearing Indigenous Voices: Mitigating the Challenges and Barriers to the Accounting Profession Faced by Indigenous People* with the support of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, who helped the profession understand the barriers that existed for Indigenous peoples.

The Indigenous education initiative was created around the premise of reducing and removing those barriers so Indigenous people could equitably seek an accounting education. The initiative

is led by Indigenous CPAs and created through a partnership between AFOA Alberta and CPAWSB and supported by CPA Canada, CPA B.C., CPA Alberta, CPA Saskatchewan, and CPA Manitoba.

**Joshua:** I think it's been a great opportunity for Indigenous students to gain education they may have wanted before but couldn't get. And now with this education, they are able to get to the next level.

One learner shared with me that, in her current accounting job, she's always been told to just pull reports. But after the first couple sessions of Introductory Financial Accounting, she said she gets it now. In meetings with her supervisors, she is now able to contribute to the analysis and discussions because she has the basic understanding of where it's all coming from, why we're doing it, and how it all comes together.

Another learner in the initiative shared that she was shopping at a grocery store, and she was looking at the prices of things and adding things up. And she said,

"When I shop now, I think about my personal income statement, my personal balance sheet."

It was through the ability to get this accounting education that she was able to understand her personal finances in a different way. I think that shows the impact of this accounting education. It translates much further than only "I'm now an accountant at work." It affects day-to-day lives.

**Maureen:** Those stories from your students are incredible. And it's fantastic that the Indigenous students in the initiative are creating their own learning community through their cohort group.

**Joshua:** That's another important part. When I graduated, I didn't know any other Indigenous students in business. Creating this cohort and community of like-minded people in similar roles, having that community you can lean on—that's going through similar things you are—that's also a huge advantage of this initiative. ▸



**Maureen:** This initiative truly incorporates so many important elements that will set the learners up for success. It was created by Indigenous leaders and is the definition of strong collaboration and the right work being done in the right way.

Subject matter experts from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities worked with writers on the redevelopment of the standard accounting cases. The same technical content remains, as it would in any of the traditional cases (that are historically based around a corporate business), but the storylines within the cases are transformed to be reflective of an Indigenous experience.

Indigenous learners can see themselves in these stories and feel their experience is mirrored back to them. These redeveloped cases are also a differentiator in the initiative.

**Joshua:** I love being able to provide examples in my classes—something real and tangible. These Indigenous storylines within the cases are so important in adding to that. It brings an experience we're familiar with. Indigenous people have always been entrepreneurial-minded, and to be able to see that and bring light to that is special.

**Maureen:** Even something as simple as assuming that, when you get to an important decision point in business, everyone would naturally call their tax advisor. That's not the natural next step for many, and that isn't the only good way to make decisions. I love the spirit behind these stories, these characters in the storylines may go seek wisdom from their community. They'll talk to Elders. They'll talk to knowledge-holders. Incorporating an Indigenous way of thinking will make business better.

**Joshua:** It's about working together, being open to considering different approaches and ways of thinking. We all have a similar goal in mind, and it's about working together towards that goal.

**Maureen:** In your experience with this initiative, Joshua, why do you think it's even more important educational institutions tailor learning to Indigenous students?

**Joshua:** While I'm an instructor in the initiative, as an Indigenous person, I've deepened my understanding about barriers—everybody has different barriers.

Being aware of different barriers for all students of all backgrounds, including Indigenous students, will help educational institutions expand their student base and make education more accessible and equitable.

Indigenous people have always been entrepreneurial-minded, and to be able to see that and bring light to that is special. **JOSHUA LETENDRE CPA**

**Maureen:** I wish initiatives like this existed sooner. I hope one day becoming a CPA is equitable for everyone, and the profession reflects the amazing diversity we have here in Canada.

**Joshua:** This initiative is making obtaining accounting education more equitable and accessible. The accounting standards are the accounting standards, and we're going to learn that one way or another. It's how we learn it that is shifting.

**Maureen:** Contributing to the the Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative created by AFOA Alberta and CPAWSB is such a privilege and pleasure. This initiative is demonstrating the true essence of reconciliation and inspiring both the accounting profession and business community to do better. I am very proud to be a CPA. 🇨🇦

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To learn more about the Indigenous Learners in Accounting Initiative created by AFOA Alberta and CPAWSB, visit [cpaweb.ca/engaging-indigenous-learners](https://cpaweb.ca/engaging-indigenous-learners), email [gettingstarted@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:gettingstarted@cpaalberta.ca), or call 1-800-232-9406.



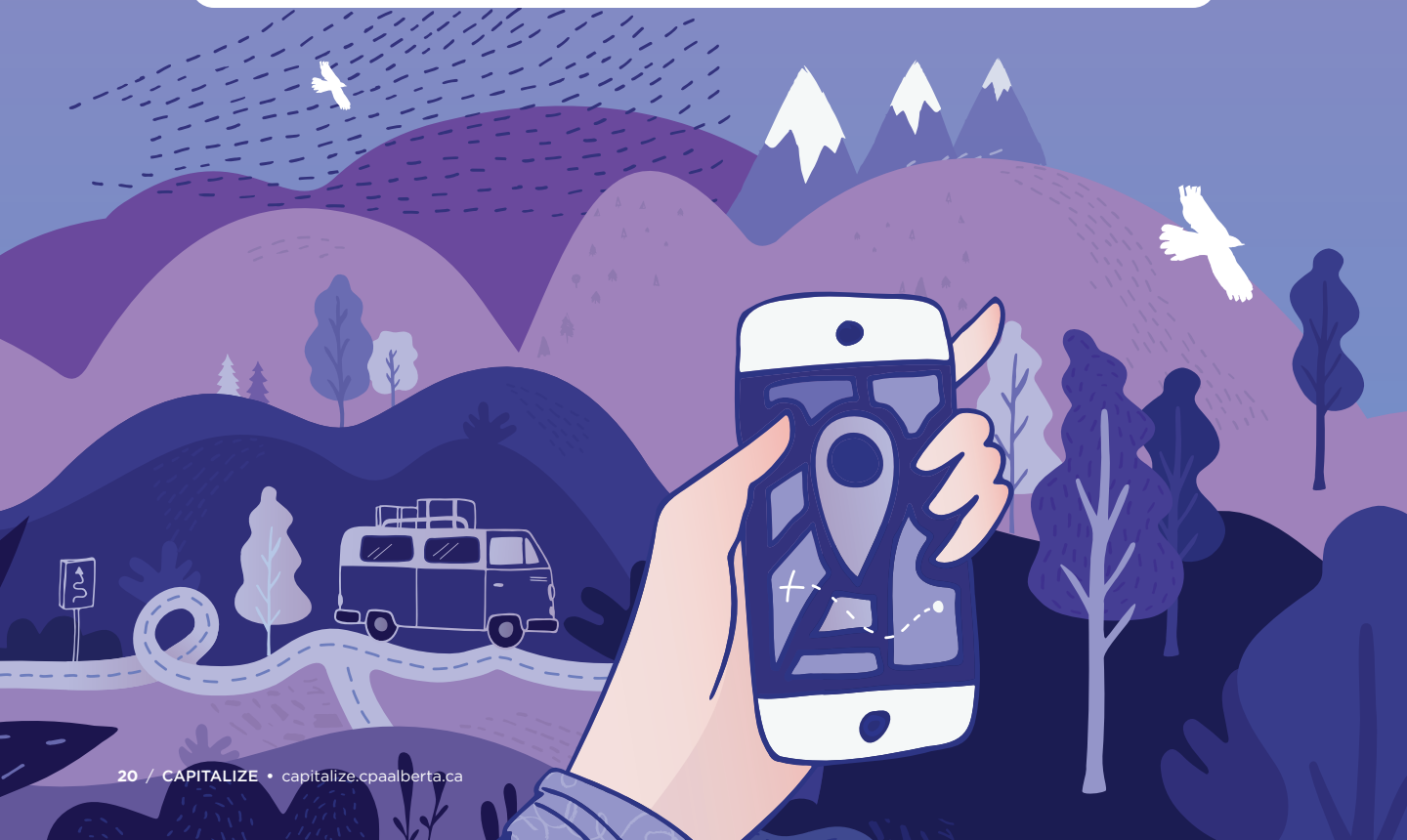


Joshua Letendre CPA

# THE ROUTE AHEAD ↑

The business world is rapidly evolving. Data governance, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other innovative sectors are already creating new areas of opportunity where Chartered Professional Accountants (CPAs) can excel.

The CPA profession is transforming to meet and exceed the expectations of this new working world. In 2022, CPA Alberta, CPA Saskatchewan, and CPA Manitoba contracted BDO Canada LLP to conduct a study on projected labour market needs over the next five years for CPAs. Here are some of the highlights.





Alberta will require approximately 1,000 new CPAs annually over the next three to five years.



Approximate number of CPAs needed in Alberta to replace those leaving the workforce each year for a variety of reasons, including retirement and relocation



Approximate number of new CPAs needed in Alberta to accommodate population growth (which could reach 5.2 million by 2030!)

100

Approximate number of CPAs needed from other demand factors, including:



Existing supply gaps



Economic growth



ESG-related demands



Technology

**Highest-demand sector**  
Public accounting practice

**Skills that will be required for CPAs in this evolving business world**

- Measuring beyond the financials
- Providing critical information for decision-enabling processes
- Analyzing data
- Adopting and enabling new technologies to improve efficiency

Source: Foresight: Reimagining the profession from CPA Canada

**Alberta economic regions with the greatest need for CPAs**

- Calgary ↑
- Edmonton ↑
- Lethbridge–Medicine Hat ↑

**Read the Five-year Labour Market Study here!**



**CAPITALIZE**

# campus stars

**THESE FIVE STUDENTS ARE LEADERS,  
HIGH ACHIEVERS, COMMUNITY BUILDERS,  
GENERAL MOVERS AND SHAKERS—  
AND THEY'RE ALREADY MAKING AN IMPACT**



Shuying Chen



page 24



Goldie Harder



page 25



Khizra Batool



page 26



Nina Petingloy



page 27



Chantall Luzong



page 28



Every year, the *Capitalize* Campus Stars program recognizes a number of incredible Alberta post-secondary students who are dreaming of one day becoming CPAs and are already leaving a legacy on their campuses and in their communities.

Like those who have come before them, these five students embody what it means to be a *Capitalize* Campus Star. They are the future of the CPA profession, and CPA Alberta is proud to introduce them as the 2024 class of *Capitalize* Campus Stars. ▶





**SHUYING CHEN**  
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Shuying Chen is no ordinary accounting student.

While she's in her final year at the University of Alberta and delving deep into the intricate world of compilations and tax codes, Shuying's story goes well beyond studying. She's the course manager for ACCTG 311 Intro to Accounting for Financial Performance course, a treasurer for the not-for-profit ChanPangKuen Scholarship Society, and a dedicated volunteer at a myriad of organizations in Edmonton.

As a course manager for ACCTG 311, Shuying doesn't just follow the syllabus; she helps shape it. Her passion for accounting shines as she ensures a seamless course layout while guiding Teaching Assistants and students through the intricate world of accounting. If you've ever aced an assignment or conquered a challenging concept in ACCTG 311, it's likely Shuying had a hand in it.

Beyond her academic and financial prowess, Shuying is deeply committed to giving back to the community. Whether she's volunteering at Edmonton's Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, or Little Warriors, Shuying is always ready to lend a helping hand. "I genuinely enjoy giving back and making a difference," she says.

One particularly memorable experience for Shuying was her time with Little Warriors. "We helped build playgrounds for young children, providing them with a safe and enjoyable space to interact with others," she says.

She's also ventured into the professional world through co-op experiences, gaining valuable insights into both industry and public practice accounting. Her advice to fellow accounting students? "Go out and try some new things. You never truly understand a field until you've worked in it."





## GOLDIE HARDER

SOUTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

SARAH MALUZZINSKI  HARDERLEE PHOTOGRAPHY

“I like the amount of knowledge you get with accounting. With both my parents being photographers, entrepreneurship is ingrained in me,” says Goldie Harder. “But I’m a little scared of the ‘nine out of 10 businesses fail within the first few years,’ so I want to increase my chances.”

In addition to her dreams of one day being an entrepreneur (currently, she makes sustainable fashion and is experimenting with kombucha brewing), Goldie is the Vice-president of Marketing for the SAIT Accounting Society, a student recruiter at Moodys Private Client, and a stellar student—though she wasn’t always so focused on school.

“I did elite gymnastics for 10 years, and I completely disregarded school,” says Goldie. “When I retired—I was really good at something, and then not good at a lot of

things, and I was a beginner again. I found the importance of learning how to learn... because then I could actually become good at something again.”

And Goldie’s translated that love of learning into studying accounting (with a particular interest in tax right now) and working toward her designation—and learning Spanish on Duolingo.

But it’s also all about balance! When asked for advice to fellow students, Goldie recommends they take time to do things they love outside of studying, and she emphasizes it will help with success in the long run. “Take a day per week or even an afternoon per week to actually do those things so you don’t burn out,” she says. “You’re useless if you’re tired, and you won’t end up succeeding in your foundational commitments.” ▸

## KHIZRA BATOOL

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

“It’s funny because my mom is an accountant, and after I saw her work and all of that, I was very set on not going into accounting. I was like, ‘I cannot do this stuff!’” says Khizra Batool. “So going into university, I was first in general business, unsure of which concentration I wanted to focus on.”

However, once Khizra took an introductory accounting course, “everything clicked” for her, and she immediately knew accounting was it. Khizra quickly realized she enjoyed the intricacies of accounting basics, like working on interrelated spreadsheets or income statements. She even describes the deep “sense of satisfaction” that comes from balancing a spreadsheet.

After graduation, Khizra has her sights set on a career beyond spreadsheets. “I know

that once you get the CPA designation, it opens so many possibilities, and you don’t have to stay in one industry,” she says.

In the future, Khizra wants to open an accounting firm and is excited to be a woman in a leadership position. “My favourite piece of advice I received from my mentor and the person who nominated me for the Campus Star award, Linda, is you have to make your own space at the table,” says Khizra. “If I’m not given a place, I try and put myself out there and advocate for myself.”

Khizra’s top advice for her fellow students is to “network as much as you can. Go to coffee chats and reach out to people; once you do it a couple times, it becomes a lot easier and will help you build your career,” she says.



SHARON RUYTER

HARDERLEE PHOTOGRAPHY



A photograph of Nina Petinglay, a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a black blazer and pants, standing in a library with bookshelves. She has her arms crossed and is smiling. The background shows rows of bookshelves and a bright, modern library interior.

## NINA PETINGLAY MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

Originally drawn to business and management, Nina Petinglay's university experience ignited her love of accounting. "I just went straight for accounting after my first intro to accounting class," she says. "Accounting just felt good."

But Nina's story doesn't stop at textbooks and lectures. Fueled by a thirst for practical accounting experience, she dove into an eight-month internship with Deloitte in her second year. Balancing the demands of academia with her professional commitment, Nina achieved something extraordinary: clinching the top spot at the inaugural 2023 Winter City Case Competition hosted by NAIT. "We practiced a lot during the weekends," she says. "My team was great, and we had a really good team dynamic."

And it's not all about accounting! Having come from the Philippines to study in Alberta, Nina recognizes the struggles faced by international students, so she volunteered as an International Students Ambassador to help foster a sense of belonging for other students. "As a new international student, I struggled with finding new connections. It was a new culture, a different country, and a new educational environment," says Nina. "Having gone through that, I wanted to give back and help others in their journey and create a sense of belonging."

Nina's pro tip for fellow students? "Create a schedule!" she says. "I maintain an Excel sheet with colour-coded due dates for assignments, along with how much it's worth of my overall grade. This helps me manage my responsibilities, especially when juggling multiple tasks."

Most importantly, she emphasizes, "make the most of your university experience and have fun; it's important to strike a balance between a social life and studying." ▸

## CHANTALL LUZONG RED DEER POLYTECHNIC

Although it was Chantall Luzong's knack for numbers and her instructor's encouragement that led her to jump ship from teaching and social media marketing to accounting, it's the people side of this career path that guides Chantall's journey. "It's a misconception that it's just about the numbers," she says. "Accounting goes beyond calculators and cash."

Chantall's interest in people—whether it's working with others, learning from other perspectives, or volunteering with Friends of the Red Deer Public Library—drives her ambition. "I'm actually a very introverted person," she admits, "but I want to develop my interpersonal skills."

And when Chantall sets a goal, she's all in.

Since immigrating from the Philippines, Chantall has immersed herself in every possible opportunity to meet new people and make connections. In addition to being the representative of her year for the Red Deer Polytechnic Visual Arts Society, she has also been elected as the new Secretary of the Red Deer Polytechnic Filipino Society.

Though she has yet to meet a Filipino CPA in Red Deer, Chantall isn't deterred; in fact, she is quite comfortable with being a trailblazer. "Part of [why I applied to become] a Campus Star was that there hasn't been a representative from Red Deer Polytechnic yet," she says. "And I thought to myself, 'Why shouldn't I be the first?'"

Chantall encourages all students considering a career path in accounting to overcome their fear of the unknown. "Numbers may be the foundation for accounting, but don't let that scare you away," she says. "There is so much more to it than that." ©



LABONNEAU DEY AMY CHENG PHOTOGRAPHY



# How to make friends and create an impression



Whether you're the life of the party or more likely to hang out with the host's pet, networking is an art form; two well-connected CPAs share tips and advice to help you master this craft so you can build your professional community ▶

BY LABONNEAU DEY

**T**hanks to the sheer exhaustion of living in a technology-driven, information-overloaded society, it can seem like self-care to hide from the world; however, networking, creating communities, and making lasting impressions are still the foundation for building a solid and promising career.

**Sneha Patel CPA**, a former campus recruiter at a Big Four accounting firm, and **Werner Harahap CPA, CGA**, former Controller at SeisWare International Inc. and Alberta Natural Products, share their insight and tips on how to build your network.

### DO THE RESEARCH

Whether building your network online or in person, both Sneha and Werner agree you should harness the power of the internet. “It always helps to have a solid idea of the nature of the networking event you’re planning to attend. Take the time to get a sense of the company or organization that is hosting the event; this will help give you an idea of what you might want to ask,” says Sneha.

The same can be said on an individual level as well. “Finding people who work at an organization you admire can be helpful too,” Werner adds.

“Their profiles and posts might offer valuable touchpoints that you can use to introduce yourself and start a conversation.”

As someone who regularly hosts and attends networking sessions, Sneha knows all the resources one can tap into to find networking events.

“I always try to send any events we’re hosting to the school’s career centre for them to email out and post on their job board,” she says. “LinkedIn is also a great resource—there are



always people posting about what their firms or companies are doing. Student clubs often organize virtual, in-person, and hybrid events, too.”

### FIND THINGS IN COMMON

Werner spends time perusing a person’s LinkedIn profile to see what commonalities they may share before reaching out—and he always includes a personal message. “I’m always upfront and honest about why I want to connect,” he says. “I’ve found that people want to help and expand their networks, too.”

It may seem daunting, but Werner, who recently crushed his goal of hitting 500 connections on LinkedIn, suggests starting small and in your comfort zone. “Where possible, leverage the network you already have and know,” he says. “Find people who work at companies you’re interested in [who] know people you know. It’s the whole ‘six degrees of separation thing’; it’s amazing how small this world truly is.”



“I found it really intimidating to have conversations with people when I was a student,” Sneha says. “But I learned that normal, everyday questions are great for breaking the ice, like asking someone what they did on the weekend or what they’re binge-watching right now.”

Sneha still employs these techniques: “That’s how I remember the people I meet—those icebreakers help us find common ground and add to creating a lasting impression.”

Keep in mind building your network doesn’t have to be limited to official networking events either. Having immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands as a teenager, Werner is very passionate about newcomers and the immigrant experience. “I love being a part of anything that involves the greater good. I love volunteering for non-profits and working towards leaving the world in a better place for the next generation,” he says.

Consider volunteering, playing casual sports, and attending events you’re passionate about to meet like-minded people and make more connections.

## FOLLOW UP

You’ve made your impression and dazzled others with your brilliance, but you can’t underestimate the importance of a brief follow-up message. “I’m always super appreciative when I receive a quick note of thanks,” Sneha says. “It’s a nice token of appreciation. Just a short, ‘Hey I really enjoyed our conversation. Looking forward to connecting more’ is plenty.”

Likewise, Werner doesn’t shy away from building on that first connection. “If you see them posting something online that you care about, tell them,” he says. “If the thought that you should reach out to someone crosses your mind, then do it. There’s a reason that person entered your mind, right?”

Every connection counts, even if it may not be apparent right away. “Whether you’re in high school or post-secondary, even if you just meet one person and build a relationship with them,” Sneha says. “You never know, down the road, who might know someone who is doing something that aligns with an interest or career path you might want to pursue.” 🗣️

## NETWORKING AS AN



## INTROVERT

“Stay true to yourself. If you need some cards with notes or conversation starters in your pocket, do it; you won’t be the only one.” — Werner

“Start small. Even if you just stop in at one event and start with a single conversation, it’s a great first step to building up your comfort level in a networking environment.” — Sneha



## EXTROVERT


“Make an effort to be the icebreaker. Taking that first step can be such a relief for someone else.” — Werner

“Don’t forget to listen, especially in group discussions. It’s great to be friendly and ask questions, but you don’t want to be that person who is taking every opportunity to talk.” — Sneha



# FOLLOW YOUR GUT

**How Lindsey Stephenson's intuition led to a passion-filled career**

BY SHARON RUYTER •  HARDERLEE PHOTOGRAPHY



**Lindsey Stephensen CPA, CGA**, has an uncanny knack for following his gut instinct. For some, that instinct might lead them to buy a lottery ticket or prevent them from some dangerous accident. In Lindsey's case, his gut instinct has led him through three different careers and some big lessons to go with those careers.

Rewind to the beginning when Lindsey obtained his bachelor's degree in environmental science from the University of Lethbridge. With his new degree in hand, he headed to the oil patch to work on the rigs doing environmental consulting. "After being on call 24/7, I was like, 'What am I doing with my life?' It wasn't what I thought it would be," Lindsey says.

Unsure of his next step, he thought about what his gut was telling him. "I really enjoyed working with Excel and numbers. I thought, 'I'll just go back [to school] for accounting,'" he says. "So I went back and upgraded and got a post-baccalaureate certificate in accounting and received my designation while working at a larger accounting firm."

Lindsey enjoyed accounting. So much so that he spent 15 years in various roles in public accounting and industry, and he ultimately landed at the Government of Alberta as a Senior Investment and Debt Accountant.


But then, Lindsey's gut instinct started to tell him a different story. "After a while, I started to feel like I'd lost my purpose, and accounting had lost its meaning for me," he says.

After the feelings of uncertainty came the tough questions. "Am I happy? What makes me come alive? What am I passionate about? Through that process, I learned I liked helping people, and that eventually led to the idea of psychology and, ultimately, to deciding to make a change," he says.

Now Lindsey is not only a Chartered Professional Accountant but also a Registered Provisional Psychologist. He spends his days providing individual counselling to adults with issues related to depression, anxiety, stress, and even life transitions and career changes (which he knows a thing or two about).

As someone who spent a lot of time in post-secondary education, Lindsey describes being a student as "intense and demanding." He advises students to remember it's not forever, "It's helpful to keep perspective of that," he says. He believes it's important to let the benefits you'll have after your designation keep you motivated and prioritize self-care. "Very practically, what that means is doing things that fill you up and that you find enjoyable," he explains. "It could be hobbies, exercising, spending time with friends or family, or even just going for a walk in the sun."

When he reflects on his unique career journey, Lindsey has no regrets. His experience as a working CPA is extremely relevant and helpful in his career as a psychologist. "As a CPA, I learned how to multitask, organize, prioritize, and even just practical things like communicating with clients and having a professional tone," he says.

But that's not to say Lindsey has left behind the world of spreadsheets and internal controls. "I'm an entrepreneur with my own counselling company. In terms of setting up my company, how to structure things, have the proper controls, cash flow, financial reporting, and taxes, it's been instrumental to have that business acumen which a lot of people who might go into his field don't necessarily have," he says. "The experience I've gained being in this profession has been invaluable." 



# 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 [cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Transfer-Credit-Guide](http://cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Transfer-Credit-Guide).

## 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 in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut who are pursuing their CPA.

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

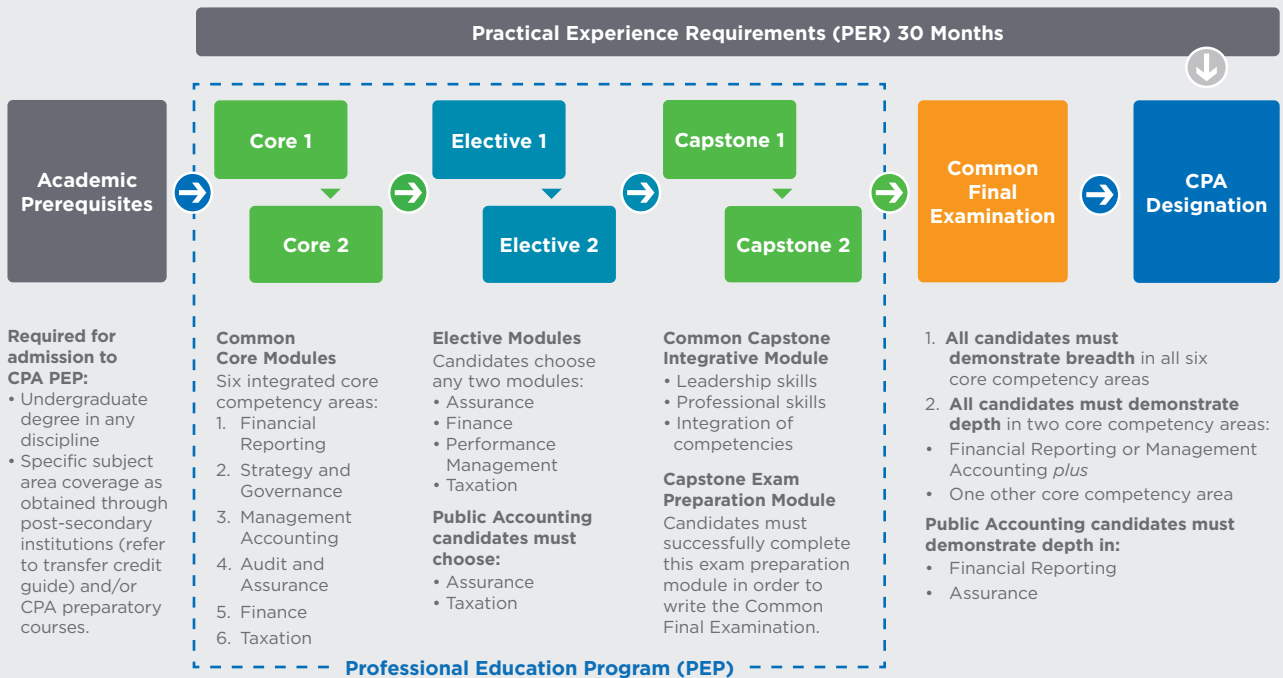
Six modules comprise CPA PEP. The program begins with two core modules that are common to all CPA candidates, followed by two elective modules (of which there are four options). Upon completion of these four modules, all candidates are required to complete the two “capstone” modules.

The 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 their areas of 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).



## CPA PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW



### 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: [cpawsb.ca/current-learners/cpa-pep/schedules](https://cpawsb.ca/current-learners/cpa-pep/schedules).

For more information about becoming a CPA, please visit [cpaalberta.ca](https://cpaalberta.ca); call CPA Alberta at 1-800-232-9406 (toll-free); or email [recruitment@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:recruitment@cpaalberta.ca).

To inquire about your eligibility for CPA PEP and admission support, please visit [cpawsb.ca](https://cpawsb.ca); call CPAWSB at 1-855-306-9390 (toll-free); or email [cpaapplication@cpawsb.ca](mailto:cpaapplication@cpawsb.ca). ▶

## Entrance requirements for the CPA Professional Education Program

### 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:

#### 1. CPA preparatory courses

CPA preparatory courses are a suite of 14 courses that provide all knowledge requirements for admission to CPA PEP. 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 studies 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 [recruitment@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:recruitment@cpaalberta.ca) to learn more about preparatory courses.

#### 2. 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 [cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Transfer-Credit-Guide](http://cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Transfer-Credit-Guide). Students will only take the courses they need for entrance into CPA PEP.

### 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.

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 [pert.cpa-services.org/student/TrialAssessment](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 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 [cpacanada.ca/practicalexperience](https://cpacanada.ca/practicalexperience) for more information. 

# PREPARE TO MAKE YOUR MARK.

Make your mark with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree or a Business Administration diploma with a major in Accounting. Learn from experienced accounting professionals and graduate ready to enter CPA's Advanced Certificate in Finance and Accounting program (ACAF) or pursue your CPA designation.



At SAIT, we're proud to be recognized as one of three Canadian schools to make the top 100 of CEOWORLD Magazine's Best Business Schools in the World for 2023.

**JOIN US. APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2024 ARE NOW OPEN.**

[SAIT.ca/Business](https://SAIT.ca/Business)

The SAIT logo, featuring a stylized 'S' and 'A' symbol followed by the letters "SAIT" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, all set against a red rectangular background.

**SAIT**



# FUND YOUR FUTURE

## CPA Education Foundation student awards

Psst...hey you!

Yeah you...the one reading this.

Wanna be a CPA? A maven of money? A builder of business? A superstar of strategy? But you're a little strapped for cash to pay your tuition, rent, or other living expenses?

Then keep reading.



**POST-SECONDARY AND CPA PEP  
AWARDS DEADLINE: JANUARY 31**

**HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS DEADLINE: MAY 1**



The CPA Education Foundation is passionate about helping students like you, and we know education is not cheap. That's why we fund more than 100 scholarships and awards you can apply for throughout your academic career—from high school to post-secondary all the way through to the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP).

You may not have any personal ties to the profession (yet), but that's OK. We've got you. Be sure to check out the Sparking Great Careers scholarship and internship opportunities. We'd love to introduce you to the benefits of becoming a CPA!

Unlock your potential, fund your future, and fuel your dreams. Because your future starts now.



## Did you know?

THE CPA EDUCATION FOUNDATION PROVIDED NEARLY

# \$180,000

IN FUNDING FOR STUDENT AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND BURSARIES IN THE 2022/23 YEAR

FOR THE PAST 40 YEARS, THE CPA EDUCATION FOUNDATION HAS PROVIDED MORE THAN

# \$22 million

IN SUPPORT TOWARDS BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

IN THE PAST YEAR ALONE, THE FOUNDATION HAS PROVIDED NEARLY \$180,000 FOR STUDENT AWARDS, BURSARIES, AND SCHOLARSHIPS AND CLOSE TO

# \$1.2 million

IN FUNDING FOR POST-SECONDARY RESEARCH TO STRENGTHEN THE FUTURE OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD VALUES IN 2023/24 RANGE FROM

# \$1,000 to \$10,000

The CPA Education Foundation is proud to spark the careers of Alberta's future community-builders, philanthropists, academics, and entrepreneurs. Here are some of this year's award recipients.



"The assistance provided by the CPA Education Foundation is truly monumental in a student's educational journey. Without it, the student may not have the opportunity or the means to attend post-secondary."

**Sophia Weston**, recipient of the 2023 Alex Tutschek FCPA, FCA Award for Indigenous Student Post-Secondary Achievement



"The diversity of career paths available to CPAs is one of the main reasons I have chosen this profession. I also believe that accounting is the foundation and language of any business, and CPAs are equipped with knowledge and skills that are powerful in many areas."

**Mai Ngan Nguyen**, recipient of the 2023 David Bentley FCPA, FCA and Janet Bentley Post-Secondary Excellence Award



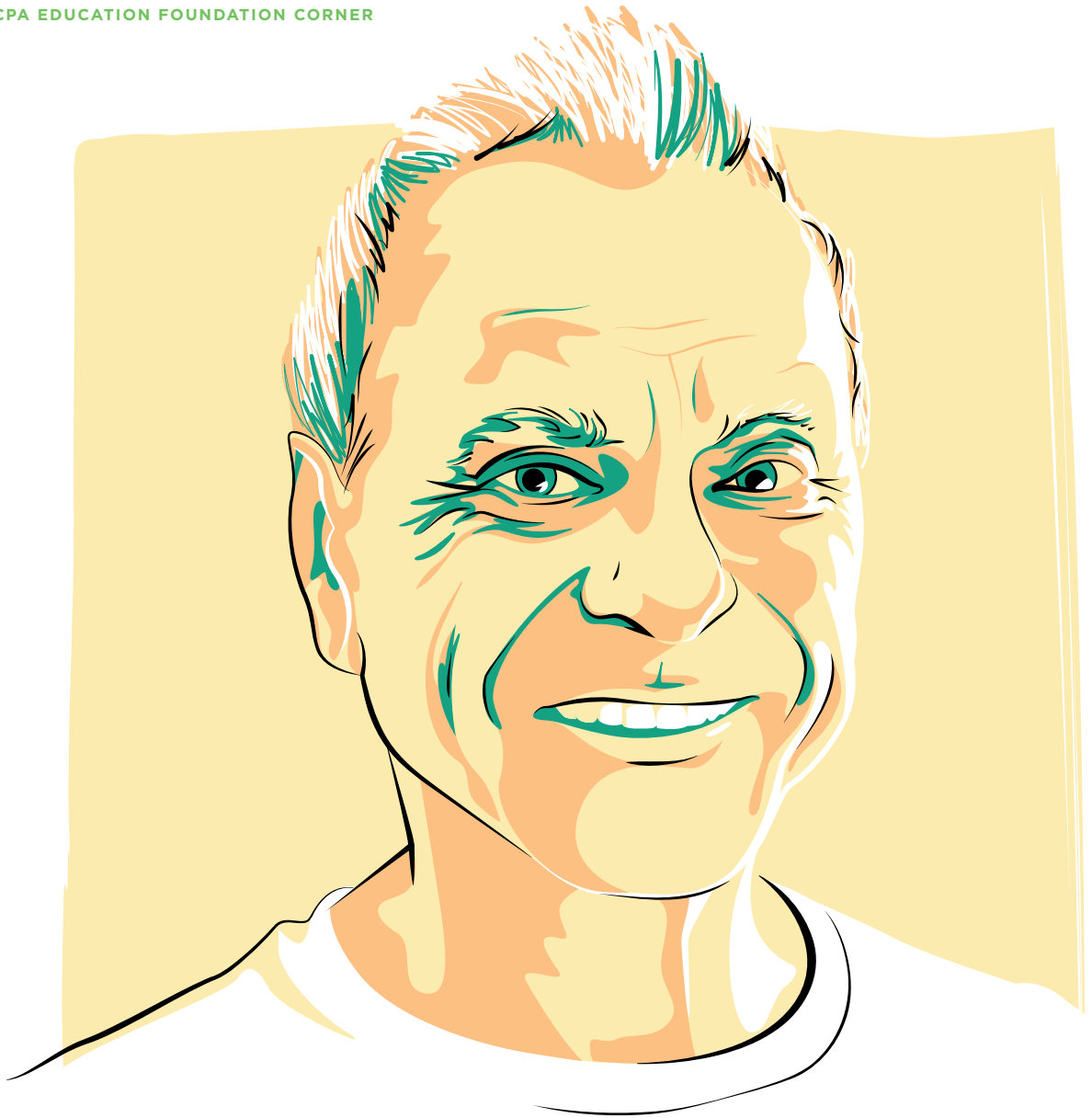
"Receiving this scholarship has truly helped me financially start my journey in university and has also motivated me to continue working hard to achieve my future goals in business."

**Mackenzie Leroux**, recipient of the 2023 Michael Burnyeat CPA, CA Sparking Great Careers High School Award



## Have questions?

Connect with us at [cpaef@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:cpaef@cpaalberta.ca)



# LIFE. CHANGING.

**The road to the future is often paved with significant financial barriers; sometimes, you just need a boost**

BY KEVIN SPILA

**Being a student is hard.** Change is hard. You think about this time of your life, and at first, you're excited for your independence—"I'm gonna make up my own mind, live in my own place, eat tacos every night (not just on Tuesdays), and game 24/7!"

Then reality sets in.

Those things cost money! Rent. Food. Internet. Utilities. Tuition. Books. Tacos...

Money is hard to come by when you're just starting out. The cost of living is high, and the weight of student loan debt makes it hard to focus on building a future.

Sometimes, you just need someone to give you a boost.

The CPA Education Foundation knows the road to the future is often paved with significant financial barriers and strives to remove these barriers for disadvantaged youth.

Our donors are like-minded. They want to give back to the profession and help future CPAs by giving them a chance at success.

For example, **Peter Kruczko CPA, CA**, wants to pay it forward and help someone in the same way he once was helped. Peter has been a designated accountant for 50 years, and he says that wouldn't have been possible without the help of one person: his mentor, Gordon Woodman FCA.

"He was very kind and very generous with his time," Peter recalls fondly. "He helped me a lot and gave me the opportunity to become a [designated accountant]."

**"If you like hard work, honesty, and helping people, this is the right profession for you."**


**PETER KRUCZKO CPA, CA**

If it wasn't for Gordon, there's no way I would have been in this profession, and I wanted to commemorate him somehow."

That's why he contacted the CPA Education Foundation nearly a decade ago to create a scholarship in memory of Gordon that provides a deserving post-secondary student with \$2,000 they can put towards their tuition or wherever they need it most. And now that he's in his 50th year as an accountant—and also celebrating his 80th birthday—he's adding to that legacy.

For the 2023/24 academic year, Peter has gifted the Foundation \$10,000 to offer a one-time scholarship: the Peter Kruczko CPA, CA Golden Jubilee Award in Memory of Gordon Woodman FCA.

"I know what it was like when I was a student, and I wanted to be able to help someone in a way that could possibly be life-changing," Peter says.

He encourages students to consider the CPA profession. "It's a beautiful profession," he says. "If you like hard work, honesty, and helping people, this is the right profession for you." 

The deadline for post-secondary students to apply for the one-time \$10,000 Peter Kruczko CPA, CA Golden Jubilee Award in Memory of Gordon Woodman FCA—and all other CPA Education Foundation post-secondary, CPA PEP and CFE awards—is January 31.



# MAPPING THE FOUNDATION'S JOURNEY

The Chartered Accountants' Education Foundation (CAEF) was established to advance education initiatives throughout the province.

CAEF hosts its first-ever Conference for Academics, an in-person conference tailored to accounting and business educators.

CAEF launches the Teaching Prize Awards to honour academics who go above and beyond in the classroom.

2010

2015

1982

START

1996

2012

CAEF honours the first Impact Award winner, Steve Glover FCPA, FCA.

As part of unification, CAEF becomes the CPA Education Foundation (CPAEF).

CPAEF launches the No Limits campaign to support Indigenous Peoples in Alberta interested in pursuing careers in business and accounting.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic shut down in-person business activities. CPAEF pivoted to host their first-ever virtual case competition and Conference for Accounting Educators.

The Hesje CPA Knowledge Centre was created thanks to a \$1-million donation from the late Brian Hesje FCPA, FCA.

2020

2018

2023

2016

2019

CPAEF launches the Stepping Up campaign to help promising Alberta high school students overcome barriers and achieve their goals of successful careers in business and accounting.

CPAEF celebrates its 40th anniversary. During this time, CPAEF has provided more than \$22 million in support toward business and accounting education across the province.



# It's never too early to start thinking about life insurance.

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# Road trip listens

We asked the contributors to this issue and your Campus Ambassadors for their road trip recommendations!

## PODCASTS

### ***The Jordan Harbinger Show***

Rylan Nivon, Concordia  
University Campus Ambassador

### ***Mastering Money from CPA Canada***

Rica Clark, SAIT Campus Ambassador

### ***Baking a Murder***

Khizra Batool, *Capitalize* Campus Star

### ***The Finance Cafe***

Alicia Fowler CPA, CA

### ***Straight From the CPA's Mouth***

Rachel Miller FCPA, FCA

## AUDIOBOOKS

### ***Internal Family Systems* by Richard Schwartz**

Lindsey Stephenson CPA, CGA

## PLAYLISTS

### ***Viral Hits by Spotify***

Vivian Mai, University of Lethbridge  
(Calgary) Campus Ambassador

## ALBUMS

### ***Champs Elysées* by Bob Sinclar**

Werner Harahap CPA, CGA

## SONGS

### **"My Type" by Saint Motel**

Chevy Halvorson, MacEwan  
University Campus Ambassador

### **"Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman**

Evan Eng, MacEwan University  
Campus Ambassador

### **"Lonely at the Top" by Asake**

Kemi Awoniyi Ige CPA, CGA

### **"Long Time Gone" by KR3TURE (feat. Zoe Boekbinder)**

Goldie Harder, *Capitalize* Campus Star

## ARTISTS

### **Glass Animals**

Emily Byrne, guest columnist

### **Drake & Beyonce**

Sneha Patel CPA

### **The Weeknd**

Nina Petinglay, *Capitalize* Campus Star

### **Taylor Swift**

Shuying Chen, *Capitalize* Campus Star

### **Louie Zong & Novo Amor**

Chantall Luzong, *Capitalize* Campus Star





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