

INTRODUCING ALBERTANS TO THE CPA PROFESSION

WINTER 2026

# capitalize



*CPAs:  
THERE'S MORE  
TO THE STORY*

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*Capitalize* is a semi-annual magazine that introduces students and others to the accounting profession in Alberta.

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

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Rachel Miller FCPA, FCA  
CEO, CPA Alberta

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

### Dear Alberta students:

Welcome back to a new term and happy 2026!

In this issue of *Capitalize*, we explore the untold story of the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA). CPAs are in places and doing work that the average person might not even know about. From sustainably guiding organizations into the future to playing a part in affordable housing and helping greenlight environmental projects, CPAs are playing an integral role.

CPAs are telling the stories behind the numbers, building relationships to work toward common goals, shaping the future of organizations, improving processes and work-flows. CPAs are unlocking opportunities—and you might not even realize it.

If you want to be one of these CPAs one day or have questions about the profession, don't hesitate to reach out to our student recruitment team at [recruitment@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:recruitment@cpaalberta.ca).

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Capitalize*, and I look forward to supporting your student experience and CPA journey.

Rachel Miller FCPA, FCA  
CEO, CPA Alberta

P.S. *Capitalize* is now an award-winning magazine! The team behind the pages took home a 2025 International Association of Business Communicators Capital Award for its creative approach to introducing Albertans to the CPA profession.

# QUESTIONS ABOUT BECOMING A CPA?

Scan to book an appointment with a member  
of the CPA Alberta Student Recruitment team:



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## ACKNOWLEDGING *the land* WE CALL ALBERTA

We acknowledge the land we call Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many Indigenous peoples, who have lived on and taken care of these lands since time immemorial. We are honoured and grateful to share this land.

The CPA Alberta office in Amiskwaciwâskahikan (the Cree word for the area known as Edmonton) is on the traditional lands of many First Nations, including the Nêhiyawak, Anishinaabe, Niitsitapi, Dene, and Nakota Sioux. It is also within the Métis Nation's North Saskatchewan River Territory and Treaty 6 Territory.

The CPA Alberta office in Moh'kinsstis (the Blackfoot word for the area known as Calgary) is on the traditional lands of many First Nations, including the

Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani), the Îyâxe Nakoda (Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney), and Tsuut'ina. It is also within the Métis Nation's Battle River Territory and Treaty 7 Territory.

In the spirit of reconciliation and respect, we acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for millennia and who have faced many barriers in the CPA profession. CPA Alberta is committed to building a profession where Indigenous peoples and their voices and experiences are heard, valued, respected, and celebrated.

### *Why do we acknowledge the land?*

Land acknowledgments are traditional protocol used to show gratitude and pay respect to the land and those who call it home.

When part of a thoughtful, intentional process that includes ongoing education and action, land acknowledgments can move beyond a performative gesture and become a starting point on the journey of truth and reconciliation. 



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#### Here's what previous interns have said about the experience:

- ★ I enjoyed getting to meet wonderful people who were kind and welcoming and willing to help me where they could!
- ★ My favourite part of participating in this internship was the hands-on experience I got while also gaining valuable knowledge in the field I want to go into.
- ★ My key takeaway? The definitive knowledge that the path to the accounting field is the path I want to follow.

Hi!

Follow the CPA Education Foundation on social media and stay up to date on scholarship info, events, podcast info, and more!



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

Like those who have come before them, these four 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 2026 class of *Capitalize* Campus Stars. ▷

# Diya Duggal

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

By **Courtney Mvula**

📷 Laughing Dog Photography

Despite coming from a family of medical doctors, **Diya Duggal** chose a different path: accounting. A high school accounting course solidified her decision. “I absolutely loved that course, and I was pretty sure that’s what I wanted to do,” says Diya.

Diya has always loved helping others and is finding ways to continue doing so while following her passion for accounting. She is the Vice-president of Finance for Women in Leadership, a teaching assistant for four courses on campus, a volunteer with the University of Alberta Accounting Club, and a CPA Campus Ambassador.

“I’ve always been a person who values empathy and enjoys helping people. Ever since my childhood, I’ve seen my parents always helping others, and I feel like it was ingrained in me,” says Diya. “I always feel good when I help others, and I’ve always believed that if I have more resources than others, why not share and help them become a better version of themselves?”

And Diya sees this desire to make a positive impact on others guiding her into tax, of all things! As a volunteer at a University of Alberta Accounting Club tax clinic, Diya discovered her passion for tax accounting. Working with clients and helping them navigate complex financial situations showed her how accounting can be a powerful way to support people and businesses.

“I’ve laughed with my parents and friends so many times about how I thought I would never go into tax, but after doing the tax clinic, I was so sure I wanted to work in that industry at least once in my life,” says Diya.



# Gurleen Mangat

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

By **Caroline Pulford**

📷 HarderLee Photography

**Gurleen Mangat**, a fourth-year Haskayne School of Business student, is known around campus for her energy, leadership, and love of community.

Her interest in accounting began thanks to a high school teacher, who made the subject come alive. “I used to think accounting was boring until I met Mr. Hall. He made me realize you have to be a fun person yourself. Then anything can be fun in life,” she says.

Mr. Hall also taught her accounting is about learning from and connecting with people, and that spirit of connection now defines her university life. Gurleen is active in the Accounting Students’ Association, Women in Business, and the Haskayne Tech Club, and she works as a teaching assistant and mentor.

This past summer, she completed a four-month internship at KPMG. “I loved it so much,” she says. “My seniors all had their CPA designation, and they were so intelligent.”

Gurleen hopes to one day blend her accounting career with philanthropy. “I feel like giving back to the community is very important,” she says. “It’s so fulfilling to see that you’re making an actual change in the world.”

She also hopes to empower young girls to believe in themselves and not let doubt or external expectations limit their potential. “You should always have the courage to be an exception to the rule, even when it goes against the norm,” she says.

Gurleen’s best advice? “Never stop learning. Every experience, good or bad, teaches you something valuable and helps you grow into a stronger, wiser version of yourself.” ▸



# Al Kim Lutao

SAIT

By **Dami Oladipo**  
📷 HarderLee Photography

**Al Kim Lutao** is on a mission to make a difference—not just in accounting, but in his community. “I was once there. I was wearing everyone’s shoes back then,” he says. “I don’t want people to experience the hardships and challenges that I once faced.”

Originally from the Philippines, Kim earned his accounting degree and worked there before moving to Dubai to continue his career as a general accountant. He later made another bold move to Canada to pursue his dream of becoming a CPA.

Kim quickly found his purpose through community involvement, especially on campus. As a Student Director with the SAIT Students’ Association, he represents students and advocates for better access to mental health, housing, and transit support. He also serves as the inaugural President of the SAIT Student Honour Society, inspiring top-performing students to pair academic excellence with community engagement.

Starting as a peer mentor, he quickly became a team lead for his fellow mentors, guiding both mentors and mentees in finding their footing. He also volunteers with the Office of Student Engagement and the International Centre, helping new and international students feel at home. “I’m just really out there as much as possible, lending my helping hand whenever I can,” he says.

His advice to other accounting students? “Do not be afraid of making mistakes, as long as you get the lessons out from your mistakes.”



# Marion Paul Mendoza

SAIT

By **Sarah Maludzinski**  
📷 HarderLee Photography

For **Marion Paul Mendoza**, a business student at SAIT, becoming a CPA is about more than career ambition—it’s about stability, opportunity, and family. “I really want to support my mom,” he says. “She’s working three jobs...and she has to do all this work just to keep us afloat as a single mother of two children. I really want to make things easier for her, and that means getting a really good job.”

Still early in his academic journey, Marion has also already become deeply involved on campus. He attends networking events, helps international students with their English through SAIT’s English Conversation Partners program, is an officer in the Kabayan Club, and recently stepped into a leadership role as Vice-president of SAIT’s newly formed Articulate Speakers’ Association.

This new club focuses on building public speaking and communications skills and increasing confidence, all of which Marion once struggled with. “I went from an introvert to an extrovert,” he says. “I decided to take leaps and to get out of my shell and put myself out there.”

He compares it to Miles Morales from *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. “At first, Miles was uncertain and overwhelmed as he tried to find his place, much like beginning post secondary,” he says. “But through mistakes, mentorship, and perseverance, he slowly learned to trust himself. And now he stands confidently as a capable and self-assured hero.”

Being named a *Capitalize* Campus Star inspires Marion to continue on this trajectory. “It serves as a testament of my growth and how much I’ve grown since starting post-secondary school,” he says. “And I want to prove to everyone that I’m capable of being a *Capitalize* Campus Star...of being the best person I can be.” 📍



# Unchartered direction

## Harriet Tinka empowers the next generation through purpose and passion

By Courtney Mvula

📷 Laughing Dog Photography

As the daughter of African immigrants, **Harriet Tinka CPA, CMA** felt pressured to join one of a few acceptable careers: medicine, law, or engineering. She chose medicine.

While studying for her entrance exams, Harriet was approached by a modelling scout with an unexpected opportunity that led to an international modelling career. Her interest in accounting was sparked by an unplanned conversation with an accountant at her modelling agency, of all places.

“One day, I asked her what she does, and she told me she was an accountant,” Harriet says. “She showed me some of the skill sets accountants have, and I was so impressed.”

After retiring as a model, Harriet earned her designation and began working in various accounting roles with the City of Edmonton. Over her 20-year career with the city, Harriet gained valuable experience

before being offered a unique opportunity while still with the city: to work as a campaign chair in collaboration with United Way, a role that deepened her passion for community work.

As a campaign chair, Harriet discovered there’s more to accounting than numbers on a page, much like working with people. “Accounting is great because it’s all about number crunching,” she says. “But even the numbers have a story.”

Harriet loved this side of the profession—making a difference in the community, especially with youth. Harriet was then approached by an agency to continue this work with young people, teaching them more than technical skills and helping them build confidence, learn how to stand out in interviews, and become well-rounded adults.

Harriet began to develop Empowered Me, an organization that helps youth build confidence and resilience through programs and educational workshops.

### From numbers to impact

As the full-time owner of Empowered Me for the past 13 years, Harriet says being a CPA has been integral to her success. “Accounting taught me precision,

Accounting is great because it’s all about number crunching. But even the numbers have a story.

— HARRIET TINKA CPA, CMA

patience, and integrity,” she says. “It’s important to see numbers and situations in a well-rounded way and to be ethical in everything you do. Being a CPA taught me that.”

The qualities Harriet developed through her accounting career also helped her become an effective coach and leader. “So many leaders are vision-driven but overlook the details,” she says. “As CPAs, we’re trained to look at complexity, assess risk, and ensure accountability.”

“Being a leader isn’t just about telling people where you’re going and what to do once you get there,” she continues. “It’s about explaining why you’re there, how you got there, and why it matters.”

Harriet also believes that to be an effective leader, it’s essential to take care of yourself. She follows the acronym MEDS—meditation, exercise, diet, and sleep—as a reminder to prioritize well-being to lead with clarity and resilience. She encourages others to also “take their MEDS,” reminding them that self-care is a foundation for success. “This practice helps me stay grounded and strong,” Harriet says. “It will take you far in your journey.”





# CPAS

**THERE'S  
MORE TO  
THE STORY**

BY SARAH MALUDZINSKI

 HARDERLEE PHOTOGRAPHY  
AND LAUGHING DOG PHOTOGRAPHY

*CPAs ARE CLARK KENT AND SUPERMAN—THEY  
HAVE A SUPERHERO-LEVEL IMPACT ON THE  
PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN OUR PROVINCE,  
BUT YOU MIGHT NOT EVEN KNOW IT >*



NOT EVERYONE HAS  
THE SKILLS TO TAKE  
THOSE NUMBERS,  
THOSE DATA SETS  
AND UNDERSTAND  
THE STORY.

ANEESE RAKKA CPA

"The most common question I always get is, 'Can you do my taxes?'" says **Aneese Rakka CPA** with a laugh. "A lot of people think of accountants as only tax people...but we're so much more than that."

**Adebanke Adewumi CPA**, who followed her mother's footsteps into the profession, didn't even really know what a designated accountant did until she dove in herself. "My mom is an accountant in Nigeria. Out of curiosity—just kind of 'OK, what does this woman actually do all day...?'—I decided to take an accounting class," she says, shaking her head. "And I was good at it!"

Indeed, CPAs are fundamental to most organizations, but unless you dig a bit deeper, you might not realize it.

From helping companies reduce their emissions and lower costs to guiding startups into the future and playing a part in affordable housing, there's a CPA behind the scenes. They're leveraging their technical skills beyond what may be expected—to translate the story they see in the numbers and build relationships with others, to strategically impact organizations and communities, to solve problems and leave things better than they found them.

#### **CPAs ARE TELLING STORIES AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

**Matia Antulov CPA**, Finance Manager at Emissions Reduction Alberta (ERA), says CPAs are the financial lens for an organization; they go beyond the numbers to explain the story in a way others can understand. "Being precise in your numbers is the baseline," she says.

"The numbers tell the story of where the company wants to go and where it's been," says Aneese, the Executive Director of Finance and Operations at Effica. "Your information is directing budget and forecasts and strategic decisions within the company."

Almost anyone can look at a few financial figures or fumble their way through a spreadsheet to get something, but not everyone has the skills to take those numbers and data sets and understand the story they are telling. And then, most importantly, share that with others in a way they can understand.

This requires CPAs to leverage a number of skills beyond their technical expertise—communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and relationship-building, just to name a few. ▸

“Sometimes I’m relating to people who are not accountants, and we all have to realize we do have a common goal in mind,” says Adebanke, Regional Accountant at Canada Lands Company. “Maybe the ideas on how to get to that goal might be different, but that’s [what makes communication so important].”

“People have a view that accountants are really just in the dark corner, not interacting with others,” says Matia. “But being able to explain your financial thoughts in a way other people will understand is integral.

“Generally, it’s a really big deal to be friendly with everybody and be able to navigate the different relationships in an office. You want to be able to provide feedback in a way that’s not insulting to others. You want to be able to delegate work and have the confidence that people are actually going to do what you’re asking them to do. That all comes from relationship-building.”

#### ***CPAs ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE***

As Aneese mentioned, one of the stories the numbers can tell is where a company has been and, more importantly, where it can go. Especially in today’s quickly changing business world with technology developing faster than we’ve ever seen before, it’s important for organizations to know the right steps to take into the future.

“We operate with strategic goals and really help companies align to where they want to go,” says Aneese. “A strong strategic vision is your northern star. If you know where you’re going, everything else kind of falls into place.”

Matia enjoys being an important checkbox in a process that helps deliver interesting, innovative projects that reduce emissions or increase energy efficiency, projects that might not have happened if they hadn’t received funding from the ERA. Part of her job is to help vet these projects to determine if they should receive funding.

“Again, taking that financial lens,” Matia says, “and looking through their financials, looking through their package to determine if they’re able to successfully complete the project—or, at least, if they have the financial ability to do so.”

Similarly, Adebanke is proud her work helps enable housing and affordable housing across the country. ▸



***IT'S A REALLY BIG DEAL TO BE FRIENDLY WITH EVERYBODY AND BE ABLE TO NAVIGATE THE DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS IN AN OFFICE.***

***MATIA ANTULOV CPA***



*SOMETIMES I'M RELATING TO PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ACCOUNTANTS, AND WE ALL HAVE TO REALIZE WE DO HAVE A COMMON GOAL IN MIND.*

ADEBANKE ADEWUMI CPA

Canada Lands, a federal Crown corporation, acquires, transforms, and reintegrates surplus federal lands into sought-after communities, helping to create housing. Canada Lands is also a recognized leader in managing iconic tourist attractions, including the CN Tower and Downsview Park in Toronto, the Montreal Science Centre, and the Old Port of Montreal.

"I would definitely say that, somehow along the line, a lot of what I do is helping with that," says Adebanke.

### **CPAs ARE IMPROVING EVERYTHING THEY TOUCH**

Part of having an impact is innovating and determining what is working and what isn't and how to fix the latter. "I love looking at our processes and making them better," Matia says.

She looks at solving problems as the tortoise might, rather than the hare. "If we just get one per cent better every time we do this, eventually we're going to get to that point where we've completely evolved and changed the process," she says. "So I think each time I look at something, 'This is an iteration.... How can we do it better and more efficiently next time?'

"It's not about 'We have to change the way we're doing it right now'; it's about 'If we had to do this again, do we want to do the same process or is there a better way to do it? And what is that better way?'"

Adebanke adds that, to make meaningful change, it's important to first be confident in the basics. "If you don't have a good understanding of the accounting concepts, I find it might just make the whole thing even more confusing," she says.

But it's all a balance—once you have those fundamentals down, it's integral to not be too tied to them. Once you know the rules, don't be afraid to

go beyond the basics. Adebanke says being open and continually learning are integral to not only increasing her skills as a CPA and a trusted professional, but also to better helping those that trust her.

### **CPAs ARE UNLOCKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY**

As trusted professionals, CPAs are in almost every industry, every organization, and every corner of this province.

"The options are endless," says Matia. "Adding a designation to your name gives you a lot of credibility and gives people a lot of trust that you can do hard things and take on whatever challenges they give you.... You can do whatever you want to do, and the designation sets you up to be noticed in a pile of resumes."

Adebanke encourages future CPAs to take every opportunity presented to them—and create their own opportunities when they aren't. She encourages getting involved in school activities like case competitions and co-op terms and being proactive about your own career trajectory. But, revisiting the idea of balance, she says not to be too sad if it doesn't work out the way you might've originally expected. "Life happens," she says.

And, sometimes, the unexpected opportunities end up being the most valuable. Aneese believes accounting is only the beginning with a CPA designation.

"You can end up anywhere in a business as long as you're willing to ask questions and understand the business and just really take a risk," he says. "The designation gives you a strong fundamental background, gets your foot in the door, and then it's up to you where you want to take your career." 🗣️

# Bringing your whole self to work (without overdoing it)

## Learn how to share your personality professionally

By **Smita Sharma CPA**

The first thing to remember? You weren't hired just because of a degree or a GPA. Sure, those matter, but often what really gets you in the door is who you are: your personality, your values, and your experience.

Bringing your authentic self to work isn't just good for you, it's good for your team and your clients. Sharing a bit about who you are can break the ice, build trust, and make collaboration feel natural. People connect with people, not job titles. When colleagues and clients know you as a person, they're more likely to collaborate with you, support you, and value your contributions.



### The power of personality

Work isn't about hiding who you are. It's about bringing the best parts of yourself to work in a meaningful way. Some ways to do this include sharing your hobbies, asking about someone's weekend (shows you care!), or letting your boss know if something outside of work is affecting you. That last one usually feels scarier in your head than it actually is!

Think about group projects in school. They're easier when you know your teammates beyond the assignment—who's good at presenting, who loves research, who brings snacks to the study session. The same is true at work. When people understand each other as individuals, the team performs better. And work becomes more enjoyable!

### Why showing up as yourself matters

Being authentic at work doesn't mean sharing everything or letting your personal life take centre stage; it means showing up with honesty, integrity, and self-awareness. Professionalism is about reading the room, adapting your style to different situations, and staying respectful even when you disagree.

That might mean keeping your humour light in client meetings, taking ownership when things don't go as planned, or speaking up when your perspective can help the team. You don't need to hide your personality to be professional, but channel it in ways that build trust and show reliability. When you do that, people see the real you and respect your professionalism.

**Pro tip:** *The little things—a quick chat about food, pets, or last night's hockey game—can make the big things, like asking for help or feedback, way easier.*

### Building stronger connections

Authenticity doesn't just create comfort, it builds confidence. A quick chat about your dog, your weekend soccer game, or even your latest Netflix binge might feel small, but it lays the groundwork for deeper trust. With clients, that can mean smoother conversations and stronger professional relationships. With coworkers, it can mean a team that feels less like a group of strangers and more like a community.

We are who we are for a reason. Don't hide it at work; embrace it. Your values, quirks, and interests are what make you stand out. And they're often the reason you were hired or the reason you'll get hired for your next opportunity. ©



**Smita Sharma CPA** is the Manager, Practice Review, at CPA Alberta. She has more than 12 years of experience in the profession and believes in showing up as her true self—digging into work as easily as sharing stories about her Doodle, Phoebe. Outside work, Smita enjoys travelling, spending time with friends and family, and participating in agility competitions with Phoebe.

**GRADUATE**  
**WITH**  
**MORE**  
**THAN A**  
**DEGREE**

Co-ops take your learning out of the classroom and into the real world, giving you a chance to test-drive your future career

BY **SHERYAR QAISER**



Picture this: You're in your third year. Some classmates are polishing up resumés to try to get their first job in the field after graduation, but you've already finished an eight-month co-op term, building real-world accounting skills, and will soon graduate with a full-time job offer waiting for you.

That's not fantasy. It's the reality for many students who choose to try out co-operative education, otherwise known as a co-op.

To explain how a co-op really works, five experts weigh in: **Conan Daly**, Employer Relations Specialist, and **Bryce Dodd**, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Specialist, from the University of Calgary; **Melanie Tymofichuk**, Work Integrated Learning Programs Lead from the University of Alberta; and **Susan Roulston**, MyExperience Transcript (MET) Advisor, and **Stacey Gaudette-Sharp**, Assistant Dean, from the University of Lethbridge.

### What is a co-op?

At its simplest, a co-op is a way of combining your academic studies with meaningful, paid work experience in your field of study. Instead of waiting until graduation to get your "first real job," you gain that experience along the way and, often, in more than one role.

"Students go on an approved paid work term with our support and work full time," Conan explains. "We help with any issues, employer-or student-based. Ultimately, the student gets a co-op notation on their degree. That recognition on your transcript shows employers you went beyond the classroom to build real-world skills."

Stacey describes a co-op as a full cycle of learning. "Go into the real world, test yourself, and reflect on how you're progressing and the skills you're developing," she says. "And then getting paid to do all this amazing learning is just the cherry on top."

Susan's definition is straight and simple: "It's really a way to just test-drive your degree. Try it before you buy it."

### How is a co-op structured?

Most co-op terms run for four to eight months. Some last longer, giving you more time to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and figure out what kind of work excites you and means the most to you. Students work full time in roles related to their field and then return to school for the next

academic term. Because of these alternating work and study terms, it takes students who opt for a co-op longer to complete their degree. However, the added real world-experience is well worth it.

Many complete several work placements before graduating, gaining a year or more of meaningful experience along the way. "Students alternate between work and school terms, often accumulating 12 to 16 months of experience," explains Melanie. "Some take on two or three different roles, so they get to try multiple career paths before committing. You might spend one term in tax, another in industry, and another in financial advisory—each showing you not only what you can do, but what you enjoy."

When you graduate, you'll have more than a degree; you'll have real stories to tell, professional connections who know your work, and a resumé that already stands out.

### How do I find a co-op placement?

In some ways, co-ops work like any other job: employers post opportunities on career portals and job search platforms, and students apply. However, when you choose the co-op route, you're not in it alone. Your university's career services team is in your corner, providing training and direct support, including resumé and cover letter workshops, mock interviews, and one-on-one coordination to guide you through every step of the process.

Conan and Bryce emphasize that every role goes through a quality check. Career services teams ensure postings are legitimate, safe, and relevant to your studies. As a result, you're not competing for random part-time jobs—you're applying for meaningful, career-building positions that align with your academic goals and prepare you for your future profession.

"We also spend a lot of time building partnerships with employers," Susan says. "We invite them to networking events, so students can connect before they even apply. That way, when it's time to submit applications, they already have some face time with potential employers."

### When should I start thinking about a co-op?

Stacey clears this one up quickly. "We really want [students] to start early, early, early," she says. "Explore co-op in your first year, apply in your second term, and then build multiple work terms into your program."



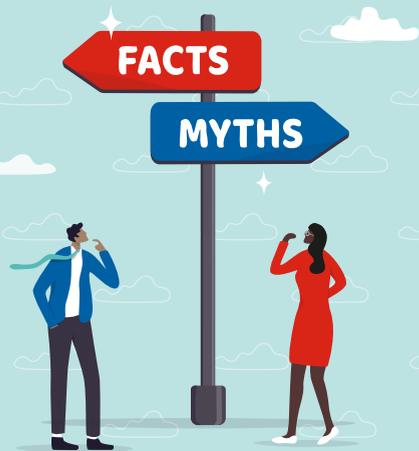
In other words, don't wait until the end of your studies. If you start early, you could graduate with more than a year of hands-on experience—and that's a big advantage when employers are hiring.

### What fields tend to be available through co-ops?

Accounting and finance are major players. Some public practice firms use co-ops as a pipeline for future hires, but co-op opportunities also exist in government, non-profits, tech, and more.

"We see fantastic relationships with accounting firms and Chartered Professional Human Resources, but we also work across faculties," says Stacey. "Almost every student at the University of Lethbridge can access co-op, not just business or science."

Melanie adds, "Even within accounting, there are so many different areas: audit, tax, industry, financial advisory. A student might do one term in each and graduate with a well-rounded skill set. That experience can even change the courses they take back at school." ▸



### Myths and misconceptions about co-op

**Myth:** A co-op is unpaid like a practicum.

**Fact:** A co-op is always paid, professional experience.

**Myth:** A co-op is only for engineering or science students.

**Fact:** A co-op isn't limited to labs or hard hats. "It's for all students," says Stacey.

**Myth:** You can only do a co-op in your fourth year.

**Fact:** Waiting until your fourth year may actually mean you miss most of the opportunities. Start thinking about it in your first year!

**Myth:** The career office will assign me a co-op job.

**Fact:** A co-op is competitive, just like the real world. "You still apply, interview, and earn it," says Melanie.

**Myth:** A co-op is just like any other summer job.

**Fact:** Most summer jobs give you money and unrelated experience; a co-op gives you money, related experience, a network, and often, a job offer before you graduate.

**Myth:** Employers only look at grades.

**Fact:** Employers want more than grades; they're looking for curiosity, professionalism, and "work-ready" skills.

### What are the biggest benefits of a co-op?

Apart from getting paid to work, some of the biggest benefits of doing a co-op include:

- Real-world experience: You see how accounting works in practice, not just in theory
- Networking: You build relationships with professionals who may become future colleagues or mentors
- Clarity: You figure out what you like and what you don't

Stacey has seen this transformation first-hand. "At the end of a four- or eight-month term, students have changed so dramatically," she says. "They're more confident, more skilled, and have a clearer sense of direction."

Conan and Bryce also stress that the benefits go beyond skills on paper. A co-op is about building momentum. "Students go on a work term with our support, and they stay full time," Conan says. "By the time they graduate, they already have a resumé that stands out plus a notation on their degree that employers notice."

"It's not just about getting experience," Bryce adds. "Employers who see a student succeed on a co-op term are far more likely to bring them back as a full-time hire."

### How can I stand out when applying for a co-op?

Employers aren't just looking for perfect grades. They want motivated, adaptable students who show initiative. That drive can come from anywhere—a part-time job, volunteering, involvement in clubs and competitions, and elsewhere.

"A retail or serving job gives you transferable skills like teamwork and customer service," says Melanie.



"Involvement in student clubs or case competitions shows leadership and drive."

"Employers tell me, 'I can train technical skills, but I can't train work-ready skills,'" says Stacey.

"Coming to meetings prepared, communicating clearly, problem-solving in teams—those make you stand out."

Conan and Bryce add that standing out often starts well before the interview. A strong resumé, polished cover letter, and professionalism in every interaction matter. "We vet all the jobs, but students also need to show they're ready," says Conan. "That means being proactive, responding on time, and showing employers you take the opportunity seriously."

### I'm on the fence—is it really worth it?

It's normal to feel unsure! Maybe you're worried about the application process, or the workload, or questioning if it's worth delaying graduation—since students who take a co-op typically graduate later than those who don't due to the work and study terms. But the people who work with co-op students and employers every day say the same thing: the benefits far outweigh the effort.

"Honestly, what do you have to lose?" asks Susan. "You have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

"I actually did co-op in my undergrad," says Melanie, offering a personal perspective. "It was such a valuable experience that it led me to come back and work in this field."

If you're curious about a co-op, drop by your school's career office or send them an email. They love helping students find their path. Advisers like Conan, Bryce, Melanie, Stacey, and Susan are there to guide you, from discussing your career plans to connecting you with employers.

Why wait to start your career? Future you will thank you. 🎯



**Did you know?**  
A co-op can potentially qualify towards the eight months of Foundational Work Experience required in the CPA Program!



### Top 10 reasons to do a co-op

- 1 Gain real-world experience
- 2 Develop career skills
- 3 "Audition" your future employer
- 4 "Audition" FOR your future employer
- 5 Earn a higher salary when you join the workforce\*
- 6 Start your career with a job offer\*
- 7 Grow your network
- 8 Earn while learning
- 9 Receive support from your post-secondary institution while working
- 10 Demonstrate how you'll go beyond your degree

\*While not guaranteed, students who do a co-op usually start with a higher salary and a job offer since they've already proven themselves in the "real world."



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SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

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“As a single mom who has faced and overcome many challenges, this recognition feels like a powerful validation of the hard work, dedication, and perseverance I’ve poured into my educational journey.”

**Ocean Grenier**, Recipient of the 2025 Alex Tutschek FCPA, FCA Award for Indigenous Student Post-Secondary Achievement and CPA Education Foundation Forensic Accounting Scholarship

HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS  
APPLICATION DEADLINE: **May 1, 2026**

POST-SECONDARY AND CPA PEP  
AWARDS APPLICATION DEADLINE: **January 31, 2027**



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Get ready for the AccountAbility Quest, a virtual competition that invites Alberta high school students to explore introductory accounting concepts, take on fun challenges, and compete for amazing prizes!



# THE AccountAbility QUEST

May  
2

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details



# Introducing the CPA Professional Program

The CPA profession is updating its certification requirements, including the education program, exams, and practical experience components for candidates looking to enter the program in 2027

## Program overview

The CPA Professional Program blends essential technical excellence in accounting and a strong grounding in ethics with real-world experience and future-focused skills.



\*Those pursuing careers in public accounting must pass the Licensure version of CPA Core and pass the Licensure version of PFE 1.

**Please note:** These details may be subject to change and additional details will continue to be provided through 2026.

## What's changed?

	Current program	New program
Admission requirements	Degree w/ 120+ credit hours + knowledge + minimum GPA	Degree w/ 120+ credit hours + knowledge + minimum GPA
Modules	Six: Core 1, Core 2, Elective 1, Elective 2, Capstone 1, Capstone 2	Four: Foundational Development, CPA Core, CPA Leadership, CPA Professional Readiness
Certification exam	Three-day Common Final Examination at end of program	Three days of summative examinations equivalent to the CFE spread out through the program.
Practical experience	Minimum 30 months of qualifying practical experience, which can be completed at any time within the program time limit. Time off—such as for vacation, holidays, or leaves of absence—counts toward your experience.	Minimum 24 months of qualifying practical experience, which must be completed before the CPA Professional Readiness module. Time off does not count toward your experience, making the requirement substantially equivalent to the current program.

## Admission requirements

To be accepted into the CPA Professional Program in Alberta, you must:

- 1 Have a minimum GPA (65%)
- 2 Have a post-secondary degree with at least 120 credit hours
- 3 Demonstrate knowledge of accounting and business competencies (45 credit hours in specific subject matter OR passing the Knowledge Assessment exam)
- 4 Be eligible to study in Alberta
- 5 Demonstrate good character and work, as defined by CPA Alberta



## Key dates

CPA Professional Program	Learners can start reporting experience	First Knowledge Assessment	First offering of new modules	First CPA Professional Exams		
2027	JANUARY	MARCH	MAY	JUNE	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
Current Program	Final Core 1 offering		Final Core 2 offering	Final Core 1 exam	Final Core 2 exam	Final Elective offering

© Note: There is only one CFE in 2027 in September



## Looking for more information?

The CPA Western School of Business (CPAWSB) will provide updates on the new program as they are available. If you have questions about what these updates may mean for your CPA journey, please reach out to CPAWSB at [cpaprogram@cpaweb.ca](mailto:cpaprogram@cpaweb.ca) or the student recruitment team at CPA Alberta at [recruitment@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:recruitment@cpaalberta.ca).

Please visit [cpaweb.ca](http://cpaweb.ca) for more information:



## 2028

### MARCH

Final Elective exams

### MAY

Final Capstone 1 offering

### JULY

Final Capstone 1 presentations  
Final Capstone 2 offering

### SEPTEMBER

Final CFE

Transition Deadline

## DECEMBER

# FROM FLOAT PLANES TO FINANCE

How one CPA found possibility and purpose

By Caroline Pulford  
HarderLee Photography

Many kids dream of flying. **Chris Deeth CPA** lived that dream early in his career, working as a float plane pilot on the West Coast and in the Yukon. Flying in remote corners of the country was exhilarating, but it wasn't enough. Chris realized he wanted more than adventure—he wanted variety and stability.

Inspiration came from close to home. With two uncles thriving as CPAs—Uncle Steve in public practice and Uncle Dave in industry—Chris got an early look at how flexible the CPA profession could be. It offers a solid foundation and the freedom to explore different career paths. “Seeing Uncle Steve’s client-facing role in public practice compared to Uncle Dave’s leadership in business showed me the sheer number of possibilities the CPA designation unlocked,” Chris says. “It seemed to give that solid footing to then springboard into accounting or consulting.”

He decided to leap into that completely different world. “I was barely 30 when I went back to school and got my Bachelor of Commerce,” he says. “There was a lot of anxiety in taking that route because the CPA designation is arduous. I had some friends ask, ‘Well, why don’t you just try something related but easier?’” he says. “But I didn’t want easier. I wanted to know that I was good enough to actually go all the way.”

The transition wasn’t easy. “It was terrifying going into something so completely different,” Chris says. “There was definitely a learning curve in going back to square one, from being the pilot in command of an aircraft to somebody who’s learning and really doesn’t know a whole lot about anything.”

He describes day one of his accounting career as one of the most intimidating things he’s ever done. “It’s really tough to fake it,” he explains. “You’ve just got to roll with it and be prepared to eat a little humble pie and know that you’re learning every day you’re there.”

That humility and drive paid off. “After I got my designation, I was like, ‘Oh, wow, this is real. This actually happened, and I’ve got the paperwork to prove it,’” he says.

Today, Chris is the Vice-president of Finance and Technology at Calgary’s Prostate Cancer Centre, where his work goes far beyond spreadsheets. “Success is not just numbers and margins,” he explains. “It’s outcomes. What I do as a CPA is directly impacting our patients and their families. That fiscal responsibility to the organization translates to a moral responsibility.”

His technical CPA skills help him keep the organization strong, but the human side of his role gives his work purpose. Every dollar he accounts for helps fund life-saving programs, support families, and sustain an organization that thousands rely on. Surprisingly, the skills he honed in the cockpit—precision, focus under pressure, and the ability to navigate uncertainty—serve him just as well in the boardroom.



“Flying small four- or six-seater airplanes, you’re in and out of some pretty tight spots,” he says.

The experience taught him the importance of procedure and calm decision-making under pressure. “Pilots live and die by checklists,” he says. “Once you’ve made a decision, you’ve got to stick with it...and not panic. It’s just the steps you’ve got to take.”

Now, the stakes are different, but the mindset is the same. “Those were life-threatening situations,” he says. “Whereas now [I’m] making strategic decisions that aren’t going to cost [my] life but obviously impact the health of a number of patients.”

He grins. “Yeah, it’s like I say, I got into accounting for the thrills.”

Looking back, Chris says becoming a CPA was one of the best decisions he’s made. “Most paths are fairly narrow at the beginning,” he says. “It’s once you’re five or 10 years in that you really start seeing that breadth of opportunity. I know CPAs who are CEOs. I hope to be there one day.”

For Chris, discovering those possibilities is what makes a CPA career almost as exciting as being thousands of feet in the air. “Your story is what you put into it,” he says. “The more you put in, the more you’re going to get out. It’s deciding where you want your career to go, building the foundation, and then following that path. Debits and credits are such a small part of my day-to-day. It’s about seeing the big picture and being able to impact real change.”



# THE CPA CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

**The current 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.

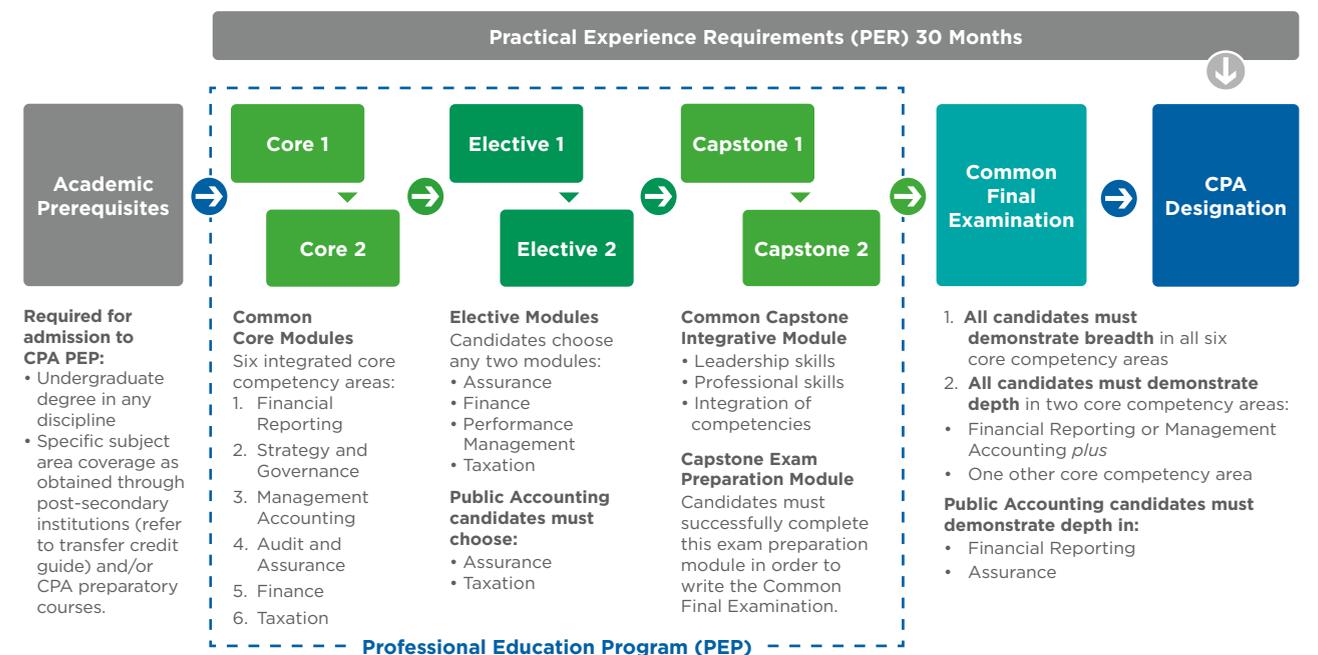
## Modules

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.

## CPA PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW



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

For more information about becoming a CPA, please visit [cpaalberta.ca](http://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](http://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 1-800-232-9406 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). An Academic Prerequisite Guide is available online at [cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Academic-Prerequisites-Guide](http://cpaalberta.ca/Become-a-CPA/Academic-Prerequisites-Guide).

Preparatory courses will be offered until Dec. 31, 2027. Information on how to obtain the necessary prerequisite knowledge after this date will be available later in 2026.

**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](http://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](http://cpacanada.ca/practicalexperience) for more information. ©

# Creating a legacy



*Barbara Downie CPA, CA with her sons*

**The CPA Education Foundation introduces new scholarships supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, community champions, and families**

BY KEVIN SPILA

A young professional couple wanting to support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Parents of a child with disabilities navigating systemic barriers.

The grown son of a single parent who worked hard to support her family.

What do these all have in common? They want to help those working to improve life for others, for themselves, and for their families.

“We live incredibly fortunate lives,” says **Jeff Herzog CPA, MAcc**, who established the 2SLGBTQIA+ Leadership Award for post-secondary students with his partner, **Jordan Schulz**, in 2025.

Reflecting on his own undergraduate journey—which wasn’t that long ago—Jeff remembers facing the common pressures of student life:

tight finances, challenging coursework, and social demands. “However, for many 2SLGBTQIA+ students, there are additional burdens to carry. We know we can’t remove all of these stressors, but we can help ease the financial pressure through this scholarship,” he says.

“As we’ve progressed in our careers, we’ve found that, while we have less time to give, we still want to make a difference. Scholarships and awards have proven to be a meaningful and effective way to support our community, particularly students who do have the time, energy, and passion to lead change.”

That sentiment holds true for **Jennifer Neal CPA, CMA** and **Stephen Neal CPA, CGA** also believe in the importance of giving back and uplifting others.

As parents of a son with disabilities, they understand the challenges involved in overcoming ›



Jordan Schulz (left) and Jeff Herzog CPA, MAcc

systemic barriers and ensuring people with disabilities have access to equal opportunities. Their goal in offering the Jennifer Neal CPA, CMA and Steve Neal CPA, CGA, FCCA, MPAcc Community Champion Award is to help fund those post-secondary students who support individuals with disabilities, whether through volunteerism or a desired career path.

"I have been fortunate to receive guidance and opportunities, and I believe in paying that forward," Jennifer says. "My motivation has always come from purpose and setting an example for my children and my team. Everyone deserves the opportunity to grow, succeed, and belong."

Whether that opportunity comes in the form of a scholarship or recognition from a mentor, the belief that everyone deserves a chance is at the heart of the Downie Family Support Award. Inspired by the late **Barbara Downie CPA, CA**, this award provides support for mature students and/or single parents enrolled in a post-secondary business degree program in Alberta.

As a single parent raising four young boys in the 1960s, Barb was barely scraping by when a partner with the firm she was working at asked if she would like to pursue her chartered accountant designation. At the time, there were very few female designated accountants in the province.

Realizing the difference this could make for her family, she accepted the challenge and, after five years of juggling school with her busy job and family commitments, Barb received her designation. She went on to have a successful career in the profession, and in 2023, she received her 50-year CPA pin at 91 years old.

It's unlikely the firm partner ever knew the full impact of the opportunity he provided. The experience not only changed her life professionally and financially, but it also had a significant impact on the lives of her children and grandchildren.

"Her pursuit of her accountant designation, dedication to family, and drive were key catalysts to our own future success," says **Jim Downie FCPA, FCMA**, Barb's now-grown son.

Jim, along with his son, **Nick Downie CPA, CMA**, established the Downie Family Support Award to pay forward the support Barb and her family received and help others working to improve life for themselves and their families.

The CPA Education Foundation is proud to support the legacy of these inspiring CPAs, who share a common goal of empowering and uplifting students in their pursuit of the CPA designation.

Learn more about these awards and other scholarship opportunities at [cpaalberta.ca/scholarships](http://cpaalberta.ca/scholarships).

**CPAIPW supports families with new CPA Education Foundation scholarship**

Understanding the responsibility that comes with supporting family members or dependents is at the heart of the Family First Award funded by CPA Insurance Plans West (CPAIPW). The Family First Award was created to support PEP candidates who are supporting dependents while undertaking the rigorous study and workload required to complete the CPA Professional Education Program.

Follow the CPA Education Foundation on social media!



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## Catching up with Benjamin Cooper-Janvier, a past CPA Campus Ambassador



Name: **Benjamin Cooper-Janvier CPA, CBV**  
 University: **University of Calgary**  
 Years since being an ambassador: **5**

**Where has your career taken you since your time as a CPA Alberta campus ambassador?**

After starting in audit with major energy firms, I transitioned into transaction diligence for private equity. Now, as a Senior Manager at MNP, I focus on financial advisory, doing fractional CFO-style support on the accounting side and transaction advisory on the M&A side. I also recently completed my CBV designation, which has been a big part of my ongoing professional growth. Beyond my role, I serve on the board of The Circle on Philanthropy and help lead the Indigenous Leadership Circle. It's all about continuous learning, giving back, and supporting the next generation.

**Looking back, how did your experience as a CPA Campus**

**Ambassador influence your career or personal growth?**

Serving as a CPA Campus Ambassador helped me grow a lot personally. It gave me a chance to build my public speaking skills and confidence by representing something bigger than myself. I also got to support a lot of students and build a strong network, which was really rewarding and taught me how to mentor others. Overall, it was a valuable experience that definitely helped shape how I connect with people in my career.

**If you could go back and give your student-self one piece of advice, what would it be?**

I'd tell myself to trust the process, enjoy the journey, and continue to focus on building those connections. The relationships you form and the opportunities you say yes to will pay off in the long run, and it's all about

the people you meet along the way. And of course, keep prioritizing your physical health; it's a big part of staying balanced and energized.

**Is there a piece of wisdom or a mantra you live by in your career or personal life?**

Relationships are at the core of everything. The quality of your relationships often dictates not just the success of your career but also your personal happiness. I've found that being genuinely focused on helping others and adding value to their lives is never a zero-sum game. The more you approach situations with empathy and a mindset of service, the more those relationships will flourish and create mutual opportunities down the line. In the end, it's those human connections and the drive to do good work that really define how I live and work.

