



Career Options, an Information Session on Professional Accounting Designations in Canada

By: Minerva H. Garcia

"I just landed a few weeks ago, and I have been looking for an accounting job. I am a CPA from the Philippines. Most employers require a Canadian designation or Canadian experience." I have said these lines before and heard it repeated several times by others.

"I wanted to pursue a Canadian designation but do not know which one - CGA, CMA, or a US CPA or do I really need a designation at

all?"

Most Filipino accountants who came to be members of our association have come across the same question. The Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants (AFCA) has annually held a career options seminar, an information session about the major accounting designations in Canada, to answer this question.

This year, the information session

was held at the Ryerson University on July 9, 2010 and was attended by over thirty participants, the majority of which were newcomers. Helen Silva, an AFCA director, chaired the event with the help of Juliet Perez, who is the chair of the Professional Accounting Bodies Relations. Ezra Suyom, AFCA Assistant Secretary, looked after the refreshments. Most of the executive officers were there to lend a hand - Jun Perez, Vida Cruz, Al Tupe, Bing Eola, Myra Famero, Melanie Sarmiento, Roger Pana, and Roan Joy De Vera.

Representatives from the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario (CMA), Certified General Accountants of Ontario (CGA) and US Certified Public Accountants Review School were present. Guest speakers were Mira Sirotic, CMA, and Bryan Jacobs, CMA; Carmen Jacques, CGA; and Sybil Dewhurst of CPA Excel for US CPA reviews.



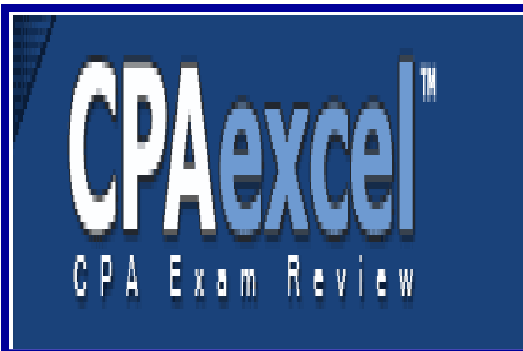
Inspired members during the Information Session

Continued on page 11

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Certified Management Accountants

In this issue:

Career Option an Information Session	1
President's Report / Editorial	2,3
Distinguish Awardee / Successful AFCA Members	4, 5
Photos	6, 7,
What is happening in AFCA / Membership Corner	8-9
Toastmaster Club / Corporate Sponsors Updates / More recent happenings at AFCA	10-11 12



Minerva Hilado Garcia

President's Report

Six months after...

The day when we, the new set of officers and directors, met in December 2009, was the day we came to know each other beyond just our

names and educational backgrounds. It provided us with the opportunity to identify each one's gifts and talents and explore how we could utilize these in working together for the good of the Association.

JANUARY – This was the month we identified our plans and objectives. We realized then that it is not easy to get everyone to meet together with a perfect attendance. Up until now we have not achieved that, even during our induction night. This was the month we hammered out our goals on reaching out to the new and old members and to carry on with the programs that made AFCA what it is today. It was also when we identified AFCA's financial challenge, such as to build a stable base in order to be able to pursue our projects.

FEBRUARY– This was the time for our tax seminar, with almost all attendees signing up as volunteers for our tax clinics. A further in-depth training followed, which made the volunteers confident to serve 17 tax centers in the Greater Toronto Area and suburbs starting at the last weekend of February. The tax seminar and training were led by Ted Dayno, Al Tupe, Vida Cruz, and Jun Perez. Sadly, this was also the month the Association lost a long-time member, Elpidio Baluca.

MARCH – This was the month when the Association celebrated its induction ball on March 13, 2010. Everyone came to the banquet hall dressed up and the officers were able to show the general membership and guests an executive group that works together and still have the time to have fun and dance. It was the night when I felt so proud to be the leader of a happy and united team.

March was also the month that saw each weekend busy with the, officers and members devoting their time for a noble purpose - tax clinics for the benefit of the community. Friendships were formed and new relationships with community centers were established.

APRIL – This was a busy month for the Association officers and volunteers with further

discussions on the tax clinic operations, giving directions, facing challenges and in the end, we had a group that was satisfied with the results and sorry that the project had ended. The experience was that of giving and receiving, and provided a learning opportunity, as well, to most. The tax clinic program was ably chaired by Anjanet Chan with the assistance of volunteers who acted as officers of the day for each tax centers.

MAY – This was the month when the tax clinic volunteers' efforts were recognized. There was a great get together, which provided a venue for reviewing the lessons learned and areas to improve upon for the future.

The Karaoke fundraising was a tremendous success. It was a fun night of singing and dancing with delicious food for the Association officers, members and guests. And most importantly, the evening provided additional funds for the Association treasury, thanks to Jess Carlos, Imelda Bautista, Bing Eola, Roan Joy de Vera and all the officers.

The Association participated in the caregiver's event at the Tejada Centre at Our Lady of Assumption Church. There were many accounting graduates there that showed interest in the Association. Myra Famero and Imelda Bautista were on hand to represent the Association there.

The Association provided tabulators led by Myra Famero and Jun Perez for other organizations, i.e. the PIDC and Kalayaan.

JUNE – The Association's tennis tournament was back after two years under Allen Bacarro's able leadership. He motivated the participants. There was serious discussion of restarting the Scholarship Fund program; a very noble cause that we feel should be continued. Members we have not seen for some time were there to join the tournament with us. Paul Ersando, Ned Sto Domingo, and Nap Capulong stepped up to hold a golf tournament in the near future.

We attended the HFT Hope Centre's barbecue with Anjanet Chan and company. We were also at the Kalayaan picnic with Al Tupe, Buddy Ibe and Cleofe Cornelio and joined the parade.

We joined Filipino community associations, the Kababayan Community Center and the Caregivers Ministry of Our Lady of Assumption Church at the Newcomers' Orientation day. With us were our Founding President Winston Lim and wife Princess. We met and provided

information about the Association to newly landed Filipino Accountants, many of whom signed up for membership. It was a very informative event for all.

Before the month end, we held an HST Information Session to get ready for its implementation on July 1, 2010. This was a well-attended seminar even with the heavy rain, thanks to the initiative of Vida Cruz.

We also held an NCPACA attendance fundraising, by way of a friendly poker tournament headed by a past president, Julito Longkines.

What a busy half year this had been, indeed. Those are the only visible events. Behind the scenes, we also had officers updating our websites (Jaric Justo), working on newsletters (Imelda Bautista), following up the yahoo group listings (Rene Cabrera), working with our corporate sponsors (Juliet Perez), arranging meetings (Rodel Acoba), collecting receivables and membership fees (Mercy Gonzales) and planning the events for the next half of the year, focusing this time on Professional Development, starting with the Career Information session on July 9, 2010 (Helen Silva). All the other officers, Ezra Suyom, Luisa Abu, Melanie Sarmiento, Dan Dimaano, and Agnes Acoba gave their tremendous support in all these activities.

Are attending caregiver's events, barbecues, picnics, karaoke, tennis tournaments, and poker games really worth it? At first glance, they don't seem to be in line with our Association's objectives, but let us look back at our objectives for this year:

2010 SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

At the end of the year, we should be able to contact new members and identify their expectations of AFCA.

At the end of the year, we should be able to contact most of inactive members and identify what would make them come back and maintain membership.

At the end of the year, we should be able to evaluate our activities and their relevance to the members.

We have a lot of members in our list but we do not see most of them anymore. We only see the new members, but why is this?

Continued on page 5

ASSOCIATION OF FILIPINO CANADIAN ACCOUNTANTS

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Roger Calabio (1983-1985)
Winston Lim (1978-1982)



Imelda G. Bautista

From the Editor...

“Continuing Professional Education”

Email: publicrelations@afcatoronto.org

Although most AFCA members have academic credentials and strong professional work experiences from the Philippines, the recent economic downturn, particularly, in North America has become a challenge for those wanting to enter the professional job market in Canada. Continuing professional education with a focus on updating those credentials with current Canadian Standards of Competence and Professionalism has become more vital. One would also be well-advised to strengthen these with government or private professional accreditation to become globally competent and well qualified for to any job opportunity.

For the past 32 years, AFCA has continually assisted, encouraged and supported members by providing related and supplementary courses and seminars to enhance each one's professional skills.

The recently conducted HST Training was very informative in the sense that it provided the membership with essential and basic information on the HST prior to implementation effective July 1, 2010.

The Career Information Session on Accounting Designations provided an insight into the various choices available to enhance one's accounting career in Canada.

As most people know, waiting for things to happen to you does not bring fulfillment in your career. Taking control and making things happen for yourself does.



AFCA is affiliated with the
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MA VICENTA EOLA



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WINSTON LIM

Resty del Rosario, CGA Ontario's Distinguished Service Awardee

What does it take to become one?



AFCA Past President (1991) Resty del Rosario was the recipient of CGA Ontario's Distinguished Service award ceremonies last September 2009 at the Marriott Hotel, Toronto.

His achievements were as follows: CGA ; CPA (Phil), CGA Peel Chapter Director, Committee Chair – Education and Student Affairs (2001-2002); President- Culture Philippines of Ontario (2006-2007); Kalayaan Filipino Cultural Organization (Kalayaan) President (1998), Kalayaan Treasurer(1995); AFCA President (1991), Volunteer Fundraiser for United Way; Director- Peel Multicultural Community Association (1999-2000). Other achievements that made him deserving for the award were: AFCA Leadership Excellence Award (1999), and CGA Peel Chapter Distinguished Service Award (2007). He was the President of Kalayaan when the very successful Philippine Centennial celebration was held at Sky Dome in 1998, where over \$120,000 was raised, which was eventually used to purchase the building unit for the Kalayaan Community Cultural Center in 2005.

Resty del Rosario, just like most of us, immigrated to Canada in 1978 with high hopes of a better opportunity. In spite of his work experiences at SGV & Co before immigrating to Canada, he started as bookkeeper in a Property management company. In the hope of finding a job fitted to his qualification, the family

moved to Alberta in 1980 but later came back to Toronto. Luckily, he was offered a job in a CA firm and while working there, he enrolled in the CGA program. Later that year, he joined Canada Revenue Agency and eventually worked his way up to his current position as a Large File Case Manager.

In his career, Resty worked hard to get where he is. Being a CGA helped him reach his goals and realize his dreams. His best quality is his humility. He may not be assertive or all out in expressing his opinions, but he puts his foot down when the situation arises. He believes in fairness, and listens to the idea of others, that makes him work well in a team, be it as a leader or a member.

Resty is very proud of his family. He is happily married for 33 years to Luz Del Rosario who is also an active leader of the community. Luz is a Trustee with the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board and is currently a candidate for Councillor in Ward 11 of the City of Mississauga. The couple is blessed with two children, Jonathan, a Mechanical Engineer who now works as Project Manager with Procter and Gamble, and Justine, a 3rd year student at the University of Waterloo taking Science and Business. Resty and Luz try to raise their children with a respect for Filipino values.

Resty is an inspiration to all of us, a pride for AFCA and the Filipino community. He encourages us to follow our dream, keep trying, and never be discouraged. What we might be aiming for may not happen overnight, but it will eventually, if we just keep our focus.

Successful AFCA Members tell us their stories...



OPTIMISM, PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

By:
Joel Lim

When I first came to Canada 17 years ago, I noticed that the first thing that employers looked for is either a Canadian experience or designation. So, when I started with my first job at the entry level, I was already thinking about positioning myself for the future. As I progressed in my career, I studied part time in order to get my CGA designation because I had realized and decided that this stands to be a good investment by making myself more marketable career-wise. As the saying goes: "No pain, no gain".

Slowly but surely, I applied my formula for success, which I called OPP (*Optimism, Patience and Perseverance*). Although it took me a while to finish my CGA studies and I encountered some bumps along the way, I did not give up my dream but continued to remain committed to my goals by believing in myself-that I can do it.

Continued on page 9



CMA DESIGNATION MY RETIREMENT PLAN

By:
Nestor Perez

Had our hardworking Public Relations Officer asked me a few years back why I pursued the CMA designation, my answer would have been simply this: "this is part of my retirement plan."

To put that in perspective, let me back-track a little bit to provide some background. When we arrived in Canada, my wife and I realized that having a recognized Canadian accounting designation (or at very least, being in a program leading to a designation) is a significant leverage when applying for accounting-related jobs. However, early on in my career in Canada, I was somehow side-tracked when I got a consulting job that required some out of country trips. When the consulting contract was over, I ended up working with Mr. Winston Lim, who then had an accounting and tax practice (which led to my membership in AFCA). After a few years, I was fortunate to get a job with KPMG as an IT auditor in the

Continued on page 10



I GAINED LEVERAGE BEING A US CPA

By:
Mercy Gonzales

Before coming to Canada, my career as a CPA in the Philippines was close to having reached its peak. Here, I was back to square one work-wise. At the start, I took my time, thinking and planning as to what I should do next. After witnessing and listening to inspirational tales of some of our Filipino Canadian Accountants at AFCA, I decided to go for the US CPA designation. I found it a long road to take. It was not easy. There were times I found it to be exhausting. I learned some people were not able to make it despite very hard work. This did not stop me. I was working full time, never took vacation except one day off each time as I could not afford to take a full vacation. It took me two years for the review and the exam to finally make it. The feeling was so sweet and overwhelming when I passed the last exam. I gained some leverage at my job out of being a US CPA.

Continued on page 10

how they struggle and continue to become one...



**I CAN BE
WHATEVER I
WANT TO BE**

By
Ramon Guanzon

When I came to Canada I knew then what exactly I was going to do. I had been offered to work as an auditor for a reputable firm in the GTA, the same firm I worked for as a tax consultant and an auditor in the Philippines. Before this great adventure, I had never previously worked abroad outside the country. The environment I got into was different- gone were the familiar dusts and smoke belching from jeepneys that I was accustomed to, gone were the families and friends I had grown up with, gone were the business contacts I was so familiar with, and most of all I missed my familiarity with the Philippine Tax Code of 1997

So, I foresaw it was going to be cold - the problem was - I had never felt how cold it was going to be both environmentally and socially. I was very focused at work and busy then- I felt I was literally alone and I didn't have friends to warm me up here during my first 3 months. The work and the opportunity were great for me but the experiences were at times very challenging and difficult. One good example was driving lost for more than 2 hours in the snowy winter and nearly getting into an accident, which gave me quite a shock. I barely had 1 week in Canada then and ohh yeah - I had to drive to get to my client. After a while, however, I made good friends in the local community, which improved life tremendously. After my first 18 months of work, I decided it was time for another move and asked myself if I was going to stay for good. The tough part was painting a picture of where and what I wanted to be. I had flown to New York just to get interviewed for a job and to look into opportunities in the Big Apple.

Continued on page 9



**IN PURSUIT
OF A
DREAM**

By
Maria Antonio

When I came to Canada in 1996, my first objective was to find out what designations Canada recognizes in the professional field of Accounting. I found out through some research that there were three designations that foreign-trained Accountants could pursue. I did not have access to a computer then and my first resource was the yellow pages directory and I called everyone of the designating bodies for brochures on their course programs. When I got them in the mail, my first choice was the CA designation. However, the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) required that the candidate be currently employed in a CA office, so I sent out my resumes to at least 40 CA offices in Toronto. Unfortunately, I did not get any response from this exercise so I went to my next choice, the CGA program. I got started in the program that year as all I needed was my credentials from the Philippines, funds for the registration and course fees and plenty of time to get the weekly homework done and sent out. I managed to write one first level course and pass it. Eventually, however, I ran out of steam and enthusiasm for the program as funds started to run low and time was really tight as I had three young kids to take care of at the time, and a full-time job that I needed to support my family. I had to temporarily give up the dream.

It was during the Exam for my first CGA course that I met a member of AFCA who introduced me to Frank Aquino, who encouraged me to become a member of AFCA. Although I signed up as a member in 1998, my active participation in AFCA events started only in 2008, two years ago and ten years after I became a

Continued on page 9....



**IT PAYS
TO BE
PERSEVERING**

By
Sonny Martinez

As a newly arrived Filipino accountant in Canada, I did not know what the CA, CGA, CMA, CIA and other accounting designations meant. What made it worse was I did not know what my prospects and options were in regard to practicing my accounting profession - lacking both the "Canadian designation" and "Canadian experience" in this new place I called my second home. Reading a Filipino newspaper one day, I came across an advertisement about an orientation session being conducted by the Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants (AFCA) regarding the different accounting designations in Canada. I called Ted Dayno, who was AFCA's President at that time and registered for the session.

That was in or about April 2008, if I am not mistaken. With a very encouraging academic evaluation by the CGA, I enrolled in that program in the winter of 2008. The road back to academia after more than 20 years since university days was difficult - I was approaching my mid-40s, with three growing kids, balancing family life, work and finances while adjusting to the new environment with limited resources..The studies are most demanding with lots of reading to do, assignments, quizzes and final exams to pass. There is also a need to learn new studying technologies. I admit I was not comfortable at first with online studying because of the lack of direct interaction between students and the instructor. There were times I felt guilty of spending time at the library to study instead of devoting time to my kids during weekends and after work.

However, I take comfort with the thought that my kids too will benefit once I am done with

Continued on page 9

Six months after....

Continue from page 2

Perhaps, it is that the members from 25, 15, 10, 5 years ago no longer need our programs, what we offer are no longer relevant to their lifestyles. Those well-established members who are leaders of other community organizations need us to support them. Those members who are in the caregiver program need a boost to their confidence. Some members need an active lifestyle to balance their hectic schedule.

Whatever interests our members have, we will try to join them, support them, be with them, promote harmonious and cordial relationship among members, and hopefully hear from those who were part of AFCA long before us.

In the next half year, we plan to have more professional development programs along with all the other activities we usually have.

With a team of dedicated officers, committee leaders and motivated members, we hope to achieve the goals we set. We can only do these, if all of our members would come and

join us and make AFCA a vibrant and active organization.

I am personally blessed and truly appreciate all the help and great ideas from each one of you. The fact that each one of you is willing to share your time, gifts and talents to make our objectives a reality is remarkable. I could not ask for more. I can only say thank you for the great support.



PHOTO GALLERY - 2010 ACTIVITIES



Most visible volunteer and Team leader awardees



Tax Clinic Volunteers during the Appreciation Day



Certificate of Appreciation from CCESO



The Officers are having fun during the Karaoke night



Intermission number from the Fund Raising Chair



AFCA Got Talent Contenders



Search for Little Miss PIDC Tabulators



Search for Ms. PIDC Tabulators

PHOTO GALLERY - 2010 ACTIVITIES



Pledge of Sportsmanship



Tennis Tournament Group A



Tennis Tournament Group B



AFCA members who are HST ready



Participants seriously listening to HST updates



AFCA joins the New Comers Orientation at OLA



Representing AFCA at Kalayaan

What is happening in AFCA recently...

AFCA GOT TALENT...!!!

By: Vida Cruz

Pilipinas Got talent was premiered by ABS-CBN last February 20, 2010, and on May 15, 2010, The Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants (AFCA), inspired by this reality TV show, had its first **"AFCA Got Talent-Karaoke Night"** fund raising event at the Meridian Residence North York.

The event was initiated by Jess M. Carlos, AFCA fund raising chairperson, assisted by Imee Bautista, AFCA PRO officer, Roan de Vera, AFCA Asst. Treasurer and Bing Eola, member of AFCA Board of Directors. Sponsors during the event were Buddy Ibe, NCPACA President, Vic Ching, NCPACA EVP, Dr. Solomon De Guzman, Dr. Nestor Bobila, Atty Marilou Nejal and Marlo Mallari. The event started with a fervent prayer by Vida F. Cruz, AFCA VP Internal followed by a welcome message from AFCA President, Minerva Garcia.

A sumptuous buffet dinner was served to everyone while the technical and equipment expert Anjanet Chan prepared for the show and the song booklets were distributed to each table. Everyone cheered when the master of ceremony, Vida Cruz, announced the opening of the *AFCA Got Talent* show. Just as the TV channel 2 show had three judges, the *AFCA Got Talent* had also three judges, namely: FMG (Fernando Mi Gora), Junn Perez, Ai-Ai delas Malas (Minerva Garcia) and Kris Kiriring (Atty. Marilou Nejal). Each table selected their contestants and a total of 9 contestants vied for the title that night. After each participant rendered his or her song, the 3 judges gave out their individual comments. No buzzers were heard that night as all contestants finished their songs. The winners were selected based on the judges' comments and audience clapping. Charibel Gasmena won the first place followed by Faye Arrelano and Derek (Norma Ablay's partner). Prizes donated by Vida Cruz, Al Tupe and Minerva Garcia were given to the winners, and the major prize of a chance to perform in the AFCA's induction night was announced to the winners.

Continued on page 12



IN APPRECIATION TO THE TAX CLINIC VOLUNTEERS

By: Imee

After almost two months of volunteer work our Tax Clinic activities came to an end. May 1, 2010 at Gateway Boardroom, 3100 Steeles Ave. East, Markham, Ontario, was set aside as a day of appreciation for our volunteers who unselfishly gave their time and effort to extend a helping hand in service of the community. The party was a simple get together with Mercy Gonzales as the Emcee for the affair. After an invocation by Jaric Justo, President Minerva Garcia gave a very inspiring message. The AFCA Wonder Girls entertained the attendees with some dance numbers. Tax Clinic Chairperson Anjanet Chan was joined by Mr. Jun Perez, VP External take, in presenting the following awards and acknowledgements to the following volunteers: Rogelio Pana, the most Disciplined Team Leader - all His members wore AFCA t-shirts during the tax clinics. Most organized Team Leader was Roan joy De Vera - she met up with her team mate for further training and properly organized her Tax Center assignment. She also took a second award for being the most visible Team leader, she was observed to be in 8 out of the 13 tax centers, 3 of the volunteers who were also quite visible at the tax centres were Imelda Ramirez who participated at 11 locations, Alvin Acosta at 9 locations, and Marietta Buentipo at 8 locations. The coolest team leader was Jess Garvez, who, despite all the problems encountered at his location was in full control and managed to smile despite everything and thank everyone for their hard work. A thanks of appreciation is also due to Jess Carlos who was just a phone call away to organize and take charge of the appreciation day venue, when needed.

AFCA FIRST POKER TOURNAMENT

By: Imee

Despite the heavy rain on June 27, 2010, participants for the first AFCA Poker Tournament fundraising turned up to compete. The following are the winners: Champion and first prize winner - Ted Dayno, AFCA Past President; Second prize – Valentine Domingo, brother-in-law of AFCA Past President Julito Longkines; Third prize – Ramon Guanzone, a Chartered Accountant and associate of Julito Longkines at his office, Kraft Berger LLP Chartered Accountants.

Other participants were: Julito Longkines, AFCA past President Marlo Mallari, AFCA Fund Raising Chair Jess Carlos and former Chair of Auxiliary Minda Longkines.

Continued on page 12

AFCA TEAM TENNIS TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT SCHOLARS

By: Allen Bacarro

With the close of the year end books of account and the tax season, members of the AFCA headed for a change of pace at the tennis courts on June 6, 2010. The site was the covered courts of L'Amoreaux Tennis Centre in Scarborough. In the 7th AFCA Team Tennis tournament, there was a heavy turnout completing the roster of 32 players who were divided into 4 teams of 8 players each, with two female *tenistas* in each team. From 9 AM to 1 PM, the players sweated it out to produce forehand and backhand winners, volleys, lobs and passing shots. Indeed, they were all winners by their efforts alone! And the best of them received the Champion Trophy, as follows: Ned Sto.



The Tennis tournament Champion Team

Domingo (Team Captain), Willy Aganon, Al Tupe, Paul Ersando, Miraflor Maurin, Icon Meriel, Raymond Holgonza and Momie Mandae Broniek. Estella Quino was awarded the sportsmanship trophy.

A tennis clinic was also conducted and attended by 10 aspiring players who were coached by Allen Bacarro and Ned Sto. Domingo. Continued on page 12

Membership Updates

Continued from page 9

new members have signed up. Half of these new members were inducted in the spring, and it is expected that more members will be inducted in AFCA's fall dance scheduled in October. The majority of the new members are from the area of Toronto, followed by members from Mississauga, North York and Scarborough.

Our area coordinators: Melanie Sarmiento (Toronto), Cleofe Cornelio (Mississauga), Ezra Suyom (Scarborough), Marietta Buentipo (North York), Joy Ortuoste (Markham), Ralph Reyes (Thornhill) and Helen Silva (Brampton) are reaching out to all members to update our database information



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES CORNER

By: Maria Vida Cruz

Lyrics from a famous song “Where do we go from here” is a relevant question addressed to all of us members of AFCA. As we focus on careers in this issue of our spreadsheet, I want to congratulate all the AFCA members who have achieved success in their fields of endeavor. You are now admired and considered as role models to everyone in the membership, particularly those actively pursuing advancements in their careers. AFCA’s commitment is the development of its members to attain competence and professionalism here and abroad. In its 32nd year of existence, AFCA has indeed produced members with exceptional achievements in service to the community and exemplary contributions to society. We are indeed proud to have these members worthy of special recognition. Their achievements make AFCA a prestigious association of Filipino-Canadians.

When we took our oath as the new set of officers of this association, our pledge involved a deep commitment to oversee the career growth and development of our members. We set up various seminars and workshops in pursuit of those goals. Our participation in different community activities and other volunteer work bring great exposure of AFCA to the general community. Tax clinics open doors to all AFCA volunteers who become familiar with tax issues and regulations, volunteer tabulators to various community activities have projected AFCA’s policy of integrity in a fun way, the HST seminar has made us ready for this government initiative and the career options seminar clarified to members the distinctions between professional accounting designations in Canada. The recent tennis tournament and “AFCA got talent” karaoke night provided a physical and social aspect of the organization to the members. AFCA’s website has been updated and now even more user-friendly. These are just few of the activities and developments that have been achieved during the first half year of our term. We dream and aim high for AFCA! Our professional development team is laying out plans for more training events for the membership. These training sessions focus on making members more competitive in the accounting and financial job markets. We are all excited with our plans. We have a long road to travel towards the fulfillment of our mission. Let us all join hands towards a fulfilling career growth with AFCA.

Membership Updates

On a rough count, we have almost 700 members from the inception of AFCA (the database is still being updated). From the start of our term, 60
Continued on page 8

Optimism, Patience and Perseverance

Continued from page 4

After I got my CGA designation in 2001, I found myself not only rewarded financially but also with respect to my career. Doors opened for excellent opportunities for more senior roles at the organizations I worked for, because of the strong skill set I learned from the CGA program of professional studies. I believe that it has prepared me to make a real difference out there. It has given me the necessary knowledge and techniques in handling the challenges I face in my career. Also, it adds weight and assurance to my qualifications knowing that the CGA designation equates to trust, reliability and excellence, and for that I am proud to be a Certified General Accountant.

I can be whatever I want to be

Continued from page 5

I had even considered changing my profession. It was decision time for me once again. I needed to make a decision as to what I wanted to be eventually - this was hard. It's never easy to go back to school and re-educate yourself to re-build your career, taking into account the need to survive in an ever shifting and very competitive Canadian business environment.

I realized that re-integrating oneself in this environment can be difficult. I heard that first you need experience. Failing that, would be able to find a company which does not require Canadian experience (this can be difficult, unless you want to get into a Coop arrangement)? Secondly, would the company recognize your Philippine professional designation - this does not appear to be the case. After considering these and other factors, I made up my mind that "I am staying in Canada and I will be a C.A." I know then that this was what I wanted to do. They say it's not easy, but to me, what can be harder than driving lost for 2 hours in my first winter? Now that I had a road map of where I was going in the profession, I won the support of my family. My active membership with the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) at least gave me a short-cut to take up only a business law course to complete the requisite 51 hours of academic credits. The rest of the C.A. qualifying process was all up to me, which required a combination of personal determination and diligence in study. My decision to stay in Canada then drew ire from my former peers about not going back, and I was vilified just like Lebron now. I believe that you can try doing what you want to do, until you find out what you are meant to do. And I was meant to stay here for my family. And finally, I became a Chartered Accountant in 2008. And now I can be whatever I want to be.

In Pursuit of a Dream

Continued from page 5

It was then that I got elected as one of the officers in Frank Aquino’s term and the succeeding term of Egay Gonzales. It was during Frank’s term that I had my first opportunity to be at the Career Options seminar where all the accounting and accounting-related designating bodies were represented. At this event my dream had again been re-ignited as I had the opportunity to actually compare and choose what would best suit my experience and my budget in the pursuit of a Canadian designation. Fast forward from when the dream began fourteen years ago, I have registered into the CMA program in the fall of 2009 and have since completed the Accelerated Program. This is the first phase which prepares candidates for the Entrance Exam which would qualify candidates, once they pass the exam, to get into the main phase of the designation program, the Strategic Leadership Program. I wrote the Entrance Exam on June 15th and I am currently awaiting the result which is expected in the early part of August. I am keeping my fingers crossed that the result will be positive and will allow me to get started in the two year program leading to the CMA designation. Thank you, AFCA, for inspiring me to go after the dream again.

It pays to be persevering....

Continued from page 5

my CGA studies. I will enrol this fall for my last subject and my hopes are high that I will pass it. I wish to say my CGA studies helped me, first of all, find a better job. I actually found my last two jobs from the CGA career website, a free service offered to CGA students and members. Secondly, I was able to meet a lot of people and it has expanded my social and professional networks. Thirdly, the CGA program of studies has materially updated my knowledge. There are lots of changes affecting our profession, such as new accounting and audit pronouncements, including IFRS, information technology, tax and Canadian business law. Lastly and most importantly, my CGA studies enhanced my confidence at work and in dealing with people because of the thought that I have an updated accounting knowledge necessary to stay competitive in the Canadian market. Despite all the hardships, I want to say it pays to be persevering in getting an accounting designation in Canada - not only because of better job opportunities but also in terms of personal growth as a professional and member of the community. I am encouraging everybody to consider it.

AFCA TOASTMASTERS CLUB CORNER



THE POWER OF SPEAKING

By:
Marianne Romano-
Lim

I attended a forum on "Diversity" in Ajax a while back. One of the topics discusses was the major challenges new immigrants face in Canada. While most of the discussions centered on finding a job, my answer was "integration" - integration into the Canadian workforce, integration into the Canadian society.

Despite our high level of education, newcomers continue to experience a high level of unemployment. I've read that the single biggest challenge with employing newcomers is occupational and cultural language skills - the communication edge.

"No Canadian experience," "no Canadian education," - our applications are usually turned down for those reasons, but cheer up, we can sharpen our power of speaking and this can bring us to heights.

Confidence

Building confidence takes time, overcoming fear takes time. It does not happen overnight or upon finishing a communication course. Confidence needs to be built and speaking needs to be mastered.

Let's say... you are 100% scared of speaking in front of a group. The first time you stood in front and spoke, you gained 5% confidence and thus, you are now only 95% scared. You will then need only 20 more speaking times to totally gain that confidence, but with that 20 x, you will also have mastered the skill in speaking.

When attending a job interview, interviewers watch your self confidence, your eye contact, and your body language.

For us who are community leaders, there is the environment where one gains confidence by leading a group, speaking to his/her group. One environment I know that can help us master our speaking skills is a Toastmasters Club (TM club).

In a Toastmasters club, you will be speaking in front of a group of people - Filipinos and non-Filipinos, so you will be forced to speak in English. In a TM club, our grammar is being watched, corrected and improved. Our oral use of English language is being watched and corrected. Filler words such as: "ah" "uhm",

"you know," are being watched so we can minimize or even eliminate them and speak more effectively.

In a TM club, we learn to organize our thoughts, and present it in a way that will leave an impact on our listeners. Mastering this skill helps a lot for job interview questions.

Speaking is like Dancing, you need to keep dancing so as not to forget the steps and become good at it. Speaking is also like any sport, "practice makes perfect." If you do not get to speak often, you will lose the ability. In a **TM club**, each member speaks at each meeting. Some clubs meet weekly, some bi-weekly, but every member will have the opportunity to improve speaking skills by actually speaking and learn more speaking skills by listening to other speakers.

Strong verbal communication skills are essential. In our search for career success, technical skills and soft skills go hand in hand. So while doing your professional development, do not forget personal development, particularly in this regard.

When an employer has to choose between 2 people with equivalent technical skills, the person who exudes confidence, the person who speaks well, the person who can work most effectively with others, will be the one who survives.

That is the power of speaking!

And remember..... Toastmasters can help!

With Toastmasters, one learns how to:

- Speak with confidence
- Build Confidence
- Think on your Feet
- Acquire Physical Presence

AFCA Toastmasters is an ongoing AFCA project. For information about the AFCA Toastmasters club and attend an introductory session, take note of the following:

Meets every 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 6:30-8 p.m.

At Room B-6, Filipino Center of Toronto (FCT)

For more information, please contact:

Marlo Mallari, (President:)
marlomallari@hotmail.com

AFCA Toastmasters Club

invites you to

The Club's karaoke fund raising event

August 14, 2010, Saturday,

5:00 pm-11:30PM

15 Greenview Ave., Suite 2608

North York, On

M2m 4M7

(Yonge and Finch Ave. Intersection)

Ticket Cost \$10.00

Contact

Jess Carlos 416-804-3611
Marlo Mallari 416-728-8479

CMA Designation...

Continued from page 4

Information Risk Management group, because of my prior IT audit experience with the Computer Audit Group of SGV in Manila and on the recommendation of Ms. Erlinda Olalia-Carin, who was then a principal at KPMG. During my stint at KPMG, I decided to pursue the Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) designation as this was directly related to my work. After obtaining the CISA designation, pursuing an accounting designation was placed in the back-burner, until it occurred to me that being an IT auditor for the rest of my life was not exactly what I wanted to do. That's when I started thinking about what I wanted to do in my retirement years. Considering my options, the plan to get into the accounting and consulting business came to mind. I then realized that having a recognized accounting designation is a must to be able to compete in the field. Thus, I set my sight in pursuing the CMA designation as I felt this to be the designation that closely identified with the consulting business. I have to admit though, that AFCA's information sessions on the various Canadian accounting designations (several of which I attended and helped organized), provided me with the appropriate information that helped me in a significant way to decide which designation to go for.

Little did I know that having a CMA designation would have a significant impact in the direction that my career would take, way before retirement. When I applied for an audit job in the Federal Government, I realized that having an accounting designation is a requirement and I would not have been hired at the AU5 level without it, despite my number of years of audit experience. I also realized that having a recognized professional accounting designation, be it CMA, CGA or CA, generates the perception that you are capable of delivering any accounting-related function. Without discounting the value of specialized auditing designations such as CISA and CIA, from my experience, I came to realize that confining oneself to these gives the impression that your expertise is limited only to auditing.

In summary, I would say that having a professional Canadian accounting designation is the key that opens doors to better opportunities in the accounting field. It also provides more options for those who are considering a change in the field of specialization and will come in handy in marketing yourself now and in retirement years.

**"The secret of success in life is
for a man to be ready for his
opportunity when it comes."**

Benjamin Disraeli

CORPORATE SPONSORS NEWS UPDATE

CGA Ontario Celebrates the Right to License CGAs as Public Accountants

Toronto, ON (June 23, 2010) – The Certified General Accountants of Ontario (CGA Ontario), the self-governing body that grants the exclusive right to the CGA designation, has been granted the authority to license certified general accountants (CGAs) to practise public accounting. The Certified General Accountants of Ontario and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario are the only two accounting bodies in Ontario authorized to license their members to practise public accounting.

Those seeking the services of an independent accountant will now have more choice and better access to those services.

“Certified general accountants can now be licensed as public accountants — which includes the right to issue audit reports in Ontario — a function CGAs in the rest of Canada already perform,” says Doug Brooks, FCGA, chief executive officer for the Certified General Accountants of Ontario. “Our authorization to issue these licences speaks to the professional expertise and skill that CGAs bring to their work in all sectors of the economy and to the rigour of the professional requirements that they must meet.”

The Association is proud of its contribution to reforms in the regulation of public accounting, resulting in licences being awarded based on qualification, not designation, and better access and more choice for those who use public accounting services.

“CGAs offer a broad range of services to clients and employers in all areas of professional practice,” said Frank Mensink, FCGA, chair of the board of directors, CGA Ontario. “The fact that CGAs are entitled to fully practise in whatever segment of the profession that they choose is a significant point in history, one that will benefit the province of Ontario.”

CGA Ontario continues to build on its strengths and to explore new opportunities for CGAs, while working with the other accounting bodies on public policy and standard setting, both nationally and internationally.

About the Certified General Accountants of Ontario:

Certified General Accountants of Ontario is the self-governing body that grants the exclusive right to the CGA designation, and controls the rigorous professional standards of accreditation and professionalism in accounting for its 20,000 CGAs and 8,000 students who are working towards their CGA designation in Ontario, in protection of the public interest.

Becoming a CMA

It was wonderful to see so many people at AFCA “Information Session on Accounting Designations” on Friday July 9th. For those of you who saw our presentation, we hope you understand that CMAs are more than just accountants, we are innovative business professionals!

With our solid foundation in **accounting, management and strategy**, CMAs are developed to be broad-based business and accounting professional who bring a holistic perspective to organizations in all industry segments. CMAs create value throughout all areas within an organization and are the ultimate strategic financial management professionals – combining solid accounting expertise with critical management skills to provide leadership, innovation and an integrating perspective to organizational decision - making. Thus, the CMA designation is a powerful tool that can help you gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace and become a more valuable contributor to any organization in any industry...including your own entrepreneurial ventures!

As a general overview, there are 3 main steps to become a CMA:

1. Quality for the CMA Professional Program. First, complete a **FREE Transcript Evaluation**. Second, along with a minimum **Bachelor’s Degree**, complete **16 CMA Required Topics** (either at a recognized post-secondary institution or through our part-time CMA Accelerated Program).
2. Prepare for and pass the **National CMA Entrance Exam**.
3. Successfully complete the **National Strategic Leadership Program** (including the National CMA Case Exam and the National CMA Board Report project) and accumulate 24 months of **related CMA Practical Experience**. (NOTE: This is a part-time professional program.)

To see where you stand in the path to become a CMA, visit www.cmaontario.org/transcript.

Complete our cover Sheet and send it in with a copy of your transcripts for a free evaluation.

If you have any questions about the CMA Accreditation \process, please contact Bryan Jacobs, CMA, our Director of Workforce Recruitment, at 905-709-3652 or email bjacobs@cmaontario.org.

For those of you who missed our presentation, visit www.becomeacma.com to find an upcoming info Session near you. Or, you can watch it on-line at www.cmaontario.org/createpossibilities.

Create Value. Create Your Future. Create Possibilities! Become a CMA.

Career Option...

Continued from page 1

Each of the speakers were given thirty minutes to do a presentation where they discussed in detail what it takes to become a CMA, CGA, or US CPA. They touched on the scope of the courses to be taken, the evaluation of documents and how to start the whole process.

They also discussed the approximate cost to be incurred by the prospective registrant.

After the presentations, an open forum followed with most participants eager to get answers for their concerns as newcomers in Canada. The speakers were willing and helpful with their answers to the questions, providing attendees with an embarkation point to each of their careers in Canada.

To quote AFCA executive vice president Al

Tupe, “Do I wish to have a local designation? Yes, I do. With the designation, you will not only have the prestige of being called a CGA, CMA, or a US CPA, but will also have had the benefit of refreshing oneself of the various subjects forgotten over the years. Furthermore, there is the added knowledge to acquire about modern technology tools now available. Despite my good exposure in the accounting field, a designation would give me more confidence to go into public practice.”

The event proved to be very informative and an effective guide to any Filipino accountant wishing to pursue a Canadian accounting designation, as attested by those who are now going through their chosen professional programs.

I gained leverage...

Continued from page 4

It was announced out loud in the place where I worked when I got my US CPA. Modesty aside, I knew I was doing well at my work but succeeding in my US CPA made me feel proud of myself as I gained more self-confidence and respect from colleagues. More challenging responsibilities were given to me. It was also rewarding remuneration-wise, more than I expected. The most important thing is I felt I totally fit in and I believe more opportunities will come my way when and if I seek it armed with my US CPA designation.

There was no improper accounting of money. All money was appropriately accounted for. (Quote by - Craig Ross)

More of AFCA happening...

A SEMINAR ON THE HST - ARE YOU HST READY?

By: Vida Cruz

Under the federal Holidays Act, Canada Day is observed on July 01. This year Canada day, July 01, 2010 was appropriately marked as "HST Day".

To prepare for this transition, the Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants invited guest speakers from the Canada Revenue Agency Outreach team and its counterpart at the Ontario Ministry of Revenue HST to present the HST regulations changes. On June 26, 2010, the HST information session was held at 3100 Steeles Avenue East board room. In spite of the short preparation and heavy rains, the attendance rate had peaked almost 85% of the expected registrants.

The session started with an opening prayer by AFCA member Marilyn Albarracin, Minerva Garcia, AFCA president, delivered a warm welcome to the guest speakers, members and non-member guests. She acknowledged the effort exerted by the Professional Development team headed by Vida F. Cruz, AFCA VP-Internal, as well as the presence of the founding president, Winston Lim, and past AFCA and



HST Ready ladies

current NCPACA president, Buddy Ibe. The first part of the information session was conducted by Andrew McKay, has worked for the CRA for 2 years, mainly in the business enquiries section. Mr. McKay was assigned to the HST implementation outreach team, conducting presentations to the public both in person and online regarding the transition rules for the HST. Handouts were distributed to all participants and a slide show presentation covered the following topics: Introduction to HST, Point of Sale Rebates, Transition Rules and HST collection and reporting. The first part of the session took two hours and the Q & A portion followed. Snacks and refreshments were

brought in by AFCA PRO by Imee Bautista. Linda Waterman, Field Services Officer for Ontario's Ministry of Revenue, conducted the 2nd part of the session. Ms. Waterman has been with the Ministry of Revenue for 29 years and specifically working with taxpayers and other agents in the delivery of RST information to new and existing businesses. Topics covered in her presentation were the RST wind down, Changes in Ontario under the HST regime and Understanding the impact of HST on business. She also explained the provincial government's tax plan for jobs and growth.

Evaluation forms were distributed to all participants by the speakers, with a very favorable overall rating. As past auxiliary chair Princess Lim, who was also present that day, commented, "This is a very good initiative of AFCA, and we should have more of this!" The information session ended at 4:00 p.m. with everyone apparently satisfied with the day's learning experience.

The following pages are general information on HST provided by the speakers. To learn more about the benefits of HST, visit www.ontario.ca/tax_change, or visit the CRA website at www.cra.ca/harmonization or call 1-800-959-5525.

AFCA TEAM TENNIS TOURNAMENT...

Continued from page 8

At the start, balls were flying all over the practice courts and became more directed as the lessons progressed. At the rate they were learning, someone predicted that AFCA would have more participants in the next tournament!

With a 4-hour physical tournament, hydration and energy replenishment was vital to each player's performance. AFCA officers provided light breakfast, drinks and a hearty lunch after the tournament. PRO Imee Bautista brought home-cooked Filipino delicacies.

Determining the skills levels, seeding the players and scheduling the games for the 4 courts used for the tournament was quite a challenge. That monumental task was taken by one of the organizers, Nap Capulong, who opted not to play to ensure that the games proceed smoothly.

The AFCA Officers and their families were there to oversee the success of the tournament.

EVP Al Tupe gave the opening remarks, Treasurer Mercy Gonzales collected the fees that would go to the scholarship funds, and throughout the entire tournament, VP Internal Vida Cruz, EVP Al Tupe and President Minerva Garcia were there. President Garcia gave the closing remarks and thanked the players, organizers and officers for contributing to a scholarly cause.

The great success of the project was made possible by AFCA members and their businesses who sponsored the trophies and medals, and they were, as follows:

- Championship Trophies - Past President Ted Dayno (Forex Remittance and Cargo)
- 1st Runner-up Trophies - Past President Marlo Mallari (Prepaid Legal Services)
- 3rd Runner-up Medals - Paul Ersando (Home Life Real Estate Agent)
- 4th Runner-up Medals - Nap Capulong
- Dish of Food - Arnel Vicente (WFG Insurance Agent)

AFCA GOT TALENT...

Continued from page 8

It was a relaxing night full of laughter and camaraderie. Everyone in the room was in the mood to sing and show off his or her singing talent... The microphones and booklets were so much in demand. An intermission duet song number was performed by Jess Carlos and Charibel Gasmena.

AFCA past President Marlo Mallari led the line dancing and the ball room dances followed with the AFCA wonder girls and the FilCan Sports ladies headed by Rowena Roque. A very unforgettable night where we have learned to sing and dance too and this is only with AFCA...!

AFCA President's CUP Golf Tournament

August 21, 2010, Saturday - 12:00 PM

Rolling Hills Golf Course

12808 Warden Avenue

Stouffville, Ontario L4A 7X5 Canada

(Warden and Stouffville intersection)

Fee: \$ 60.00

For further details please contact:

Paul Ersando	416-272-0280
Nap Capulong	647-286-8970
Ned Sto Domingo	416-369-2763
Myrna De Leon	647-998-1747

AFCA FIRST POKER TOURNAMENT

Continued from page 8

Forty five percent of the registration fees went to AFCA and AFCA Toastmasters Club and the rest to the winners.

The tournament was held at the residence of Ramon Guanzon, who happened to be celebrating his 37th birthday.

