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## Members in Education, October 2000

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)

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# Members in Education

October 2000

AICPA

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## Knowledge Integration—the Definitive Skill for an Emerging Profession

Both providers and purchasers of business advice have indicated strong support for a new, global professional designation that would focus on understanding the linkages between once separate areas of knowledge. This new professional would harness technology to capture relevant information from multiple sources and realize value through the strategic integration of knowledge.

Candidates are expected to come from a wide range of professional disciplines, including accounting, management consulting, information technology, business law, finance, financial planning, marketing, economics, risk management, human resources, actuarial services and engineering. Those who hold existing professional credentials would maintain them.

Currently, eight leading professional institutes from the following countries: the United States (the AICPA), Canada, Australia, England and Wales, Ireland, New Zealand,

Scotland and South Africa, are collaborating on achieving respective membership support to bring this designation to market as early as Aug. 2002—with the granting of the first designation. Other countries, including Germany, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Japan, France and Italy are also likely to join the initiative.

### New Designation Adds Value to Existing Credentials

Credentials have been developed primarily for single discipline professions and the standards and assurances they embody have been of great value to clients, employers and society. At the same time, because of their focus on specific disciplines, however broad based, such credentials often are seen as primarily technical. Many people who hold these credentials, particularly the CPA, can add other kinds of value and in fact are doing so. However, the marketplace perception of such

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## From the Editor's Desk...

**Two months ago, Steve Albrecht and Bob Sack presented their unsettling research report, "Accounting Education: Charting the Course through a Perilous Future." Currently the Institute, along with numerous international partners, is creating a proposed new profession and designation.**

**Although some are inclined to throw their hands up in despair, the time has never been riper for proactive academic response. The market has emphatically voiced its demand for a new skill set and educators who are willing to embrace new opportunities are in the best position to "steer" students along a path to success instead of "peril."**

**During this volatile time, stay informed. The AICPA Accounting Educators Conference in Atlanta this Nov. is an excellent way to catch up on all of these initiatives and hear about ways to implement change.**

—Elizabeth Koch, *Editor*

*continued from page G1—Knowledge Integration*

credentials is extremely difficult to expand and the need for a new and distinct professional designation has emerged.

### Relationship to AICPA Core Competency Framework

Given the comprehensive nature of the proposed designation, no single discipline will be required of all designation holders. Rather, expertise relating to a number of core disciplines will be valued. Such competencies will be developed through academic study, extensive work experience and life-long learning. Hallmark competencies for the proposed designation, to be further defined, are integrative in nature and include conceptual skills, inductive thinking, model building, knowledge integration, creativity, decision analysis, visioning, knowledge management and strategic thinking.

Bob Elliott, Chair of the AICPA, acknowledged the importance of the ongoing Institute project to develop a competency framework to help educators prepare students for entry into the profession. "The competencies defined by the Institute's Core Competency Framework are strongly aligned with the envisioned competencies for the proposed designation. The Framework competencies represent a broad base of skills that can easily be expanded to be consistent with entry-level skill requirements for the proposed designation. Academic institutions seeking to position themselves as providers of candidates for the new designation or value-adding accountants are encouraged to utilize the Framework as a starting point for curriculum development."

### Varied Career Paths

The plan is to create a recognized and highly valued designation that can be attained by those who qualify at various points in their careers. In broad terms, these paths can be clustered within two distinct scenarios:

- Following the completion of an acceptable higher education program and the

attainment of requisite work experience and professional qualification in an approved discipline, i.e., CPA, business law etc...

- Following the completion of an acceptable higher education program and the attainment of broad-based business experience and learning, with the possibility of pursuing a professional qualification after achieving the proposed designation.

The largest group of initial applicants will be existing professionals pursuing the global designation as a way of validating the breadth of their organizational knowledge and their ability to integrate knowledge to add strategic value for their clients or employers.

### Implications for Educators and Students

The proposed designation has clear value for academic institutions that award general business and MBA degrees in that it pro-

vides for professional growth and recognition of their graduates. For academic institutions and departments that award specialized degrees, it offers a development path for graduates that makes specialization during the academic years less limiting and therefore more attractive. For example, availability of the proposed designation could offer exciting opportunities for students and may help allay student concerns that have recently caused declines in professional program enrollments in several countries.

Beyond its value for the student constituency, the proposed designation can provide opportunities for institutions and faculty. Some of the research, courses, course material, lectures, expert dialogues and other information and learning models needed will likely be developed by academic institutions.

Stay tuned for updates on this initiative as it rolls out in the global community.



## Last Chance to Register for 2000 AICPA Accounting Educators Conference

**Date: Nov. 3–4, 2000**

**Place: Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta**

**Recommended CPE: 13 hours**

The focus of this year's Conference is "Empowering Accounting Educators." With an exceptional host of speakers and topics, this is truly the conference to attend to hear all the significant academic and professional developments impacting education in one place at one time. Featured speakers include: Bob Elliott on the new proposed professional designation, Steve Albrecht with startling information from the report, *Accounting: Charting the Course Through a Perilous Future*, Billie Cunningham and Susan Wolcott on the upcoming implementation features of the *AICPA Core Competency Framework*, Jan Williams covering the CPA Exam, A. Faye Borthick on the importance of technology enabled learning experiences and Tracey Sutherland with the latest AAA faculty development initiatives.

There has been a whirlwind of changes and information presented regarding the future of the profession, necessary competencies for success and the state of accounting education. Attending this conference will help you sort it all out and "empower" you as an educator.

Time is running out. Don't miss this opportunity. Register today! Call 888/777-7077 and mention product code G50030.

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## Implementation Advice Regarding Upcoming Resources in the AICPA Core Competency Framework

In Aug. 1999, the AICPA released its recommendations on competencies that individuals need for successful entry into the profession. These are defined in behavioral terms for measurement purposes and are online for educators, students and the world to see. For the past year and a half, the definitions and plans for developing implementation tools were exposed at numerous meetings including the AAA regional and national meetings, AICPA Accounting Educators Conference, Colloquium on Change in Accounting Education, the FSA Annual meeting as well as many state societies educator conferences.

Armed with very positive and helpful feedback, the AICPA and its development task forces are now focusing energies on providing resources to help educators implement the Framework. The Best Practices Task Force is identifying various learning strategies which target development of specific competencies particularly well, while the Curriculum Evaluation Task Force is developing tools to help educators compare the skills and competencies addressed in their current curriculum with those contained in the Framework.

These implementation tools (particularly the evaluation tools) are scheduled to be made available in Aug. 2001 because of the need to gather expert data, develop software and pilot test. These tools facilitate curriculum review and reform; however, many schools want to initiate reform now and can still do so using the AICPA competency definitions as a guide. Here is some advice for educators.

1. Determine which competencies are appropriate to emphasize in their curricula, which are already being addressed, and

which should be added to the curricula. The Framework is intended to be flexible to meet the needs of varying school environments and missions. Educators can tailor curricula to achieve their schools' desired competencies.

2. Develop student competencies jointly with course content. Addressing the skills and competencies identified in the Framework can sometimes appear overwhelming to faculty members. While most educators agree that the competency approach is superior to teaching content only, an appropriate amount of content is necessary in each course. Faculty can help students develop numerous competencies, as well as content, with appropriately designed course assignments.

3. Utilize different teaching strategies to specifically address desired competencies. Clearly, students learn best in different ways, and individual faculty members have their own unique teaching strengths. The Best Practices Task Force is in the process of identifying national experts in a variety of teaching strategies, and requesting these experts to identify the competencies that can best be addressed using "their" strategy. These strategies include: modified lecture, questioning and discussion, writing in class, problem-based learning, teamwork, cooperative learning, debate, drama, visual and computer based instruction, online learning, service learning and internships.

4. Utilize available assessment techniques to evaluate competency development. The Curriculum Evaluation Task Force has exposed sample output reports at the recent AAA annual meeting that are also available online. These reports demonstrate the types of information users can expect to organize and retrieve upon going through the Framework evaluation process.

Be sure to re-visit the newly updated AICPA Core Competency Framework Web site ([www.aicpa.org/edu/corecomp.htm](http://www.aicpa.org/edu/corecomp.htm)) to get the latest information available on the collection of learning strategies and the development of a comprehensive curriculum evaluation tool.

## Call for 2001 AICPA Professor/Practitioner Cases

The AICPA is now accepting proposals for cases under the 2001 Professor/Practitioner Case Development Program. The program encourages accounting educators and practitioners to collaborate on the development of case materials based on actual incidents and situations, and to increase the availability of real-world-based cases for classroom use.

Guidelines for cases:

- Cases should be based on real-world incidents or situations.
- Cases should be for classroom use in the teaching primarily of financial accounting, managerial accounting, assurance services, or information systems at the principles or intermediate levels.

- Cases should address the competencies identified in the *AICPA Core Competency Framework for Entry into the Accounting Profession* ([www.aicpa.org/edu/corecomp.htm](http://www.aicpa.org/edu/corecomp.htm)).
- Cases should be designed for use in one- to three-hour class periods.
- Cases should be well developed and ready for use, and preferably already classroom tested.
- Submitted cases should not have been previously published, accepted for publication, or currently under review for publication.

For more information:



[www.aicpa.org/members/div/career/edu/ppcdp.htm](http://www.aicpa.org/members/div/career/edu/ppcdp.htm)



[educat@aicpa.org](mailto:educat@aicpa.org)



Leticia Romeo, 212/596-6221

## 2000 Winning Case Presentations

This year, six of the 10 winning cases under the 2000 AICPA Professor/Practitioner Case Development Program were selected to be presented at the annual Accounting Educators Conference on Nov. 3-4, 2000, in Atlanta (see page G2 for details). Case topics for presentation include information technology risk assessment of enterprise resource planning systems, business performance measurement as an assurance service, ABC and ABM for process improvement and budgeting decisions, IPO of an e-commerce company, strategic business decision making and risk analysis.

## New AICPA Student Recruiting Materials

The AICPA will launch its new student recruiting campaign in Fall 2000. The campaign is highlighted by a newly released video that features five young, successful CPAs in exciting career paths ranging from an FBI Special Agent to the Controller of the New York Jets. Combining animation with real-life profiles, this enlightening video uses a career day discussion as a backdrop for highlighting the positive aspects of the CPA profession while attempting to dispel the myths and stereotypes.



The video will be distributed in the CPA "iPACK," or information package, which will also include brochures, a poster, and a presenter's guide.



The initial distribution of the CPA iPACK will include state CPA societies, accounting department chairs, Beta Alpha Psi Advisors, AICPA On-Campus Champions, and college and high school career centers. Members can also obtain the video and related print materials by contacting the AICPA member satisfaction team at the number and e-mail address listed below.

Also in Fall 2000, the AICPA will distribute 5,000 copies of the "360° Degrees of Possibilities" School-to-Work High School Curriculum Kit. A pilot program last year, the Kit is a multi-media, multi-disciplinary school-to-work curriculum program featuring lesson plans, student activities and answer keys that focus on educating students about the importance of accounting in the business world and everyday life activities.


The Kit contains five academic units that link the secondary education areas of Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Business Education and Accounting to "real world" scenarios and activities of a CPA. In addition, the Kit includes Career Guidance materials and the CD-ROM, Room Zoom: The CPA SourceDisc.

For more information:

 Joe Bittner, 212/596-6282  [jbittner@aicpa.org](mailto:jbittner@aicpa.org)

 Jodi L. Ryan, 212/596-6105  [jryan@aicpa.org](mailto:jryan@aicpa.org)

To order:

 888/777-7077  [memsat@aicpa.org](mailto:memsat@aicpa.org)

## Free Software Materials and Technical Support from Great Plains Software


The technology and e-business revolution is not only changing the way the world does business, it is changing the competencies needed in the workplace. Recognizing colleges and universities are the best sources of new talent, Great Plains has developed a program that offers their leading digital technology and gives students invaluable hands-on experience working with Great Plains applica-

tions. These include *Dynamics* (offers financials, sales, purchasing, project, human resources, payroll, e-business and front office solutions for small- to medium-sized businesses) and *eEnterprise* (provides global, enterprise wide business management functionality for financial, e-business, project accounting, distribution, manufacturing, payroll, human resources, sales/marketing, customer service and enterprise reporting).

The Great Plains Education Alliance Network provides free of charge, tools needed to establish an accounting and digital business curriculum. There is no charge for this program. The only requirement is that educators actively use these teaching tools in at least one class per year. Apply for enrollment online at [www.greatplains.com/ean](http://www.greatplains.com/ean). Your application will be reviewed promptly and you will be contacted to create an implementation timeline. This will include submitting a proposed syllabus or curriculum overview, and a signed copy of the Educational Software Agreement.


Educators benefit from this program by having the very best and latest digital business technologies in the classroom. Students benefit by using leading products that furnish them with a valuable edge as they pursue their careers. In fact, students are finding internship opportunities with Great Plains business partners across the country. These opportunities allow students to connect real world experiences with what they learn in the classroom. For more information about the Great Plains Education Alliance Network, contact:

 [eanprog@greatplains.com](mailto:eanprog@greatplains.com)

 Kristin Anderson, 701/281-7602 or 800/456-0025 (select 1, then 3).

## Online CPE for a Great Low Price

With *AICPA InfoBytes*, now there is a comprehensive online library that provides easy access to training, reference and CPE needed—all at an incredibly low price. For just \$95 per year (\$295 for non-AICPA members), you gain unlimited access to over 1,100 hours of diverse professional training—online and on demand—wherever and whenever you need it. Choose from over 1,100 hours divided into easy-to-use one and two hour segments. This NASBA approved interactive self-study—covering Accounting and Auditing, Consulting Services, Management and Taxation—qualifies for one-for-one credit. Easy, unlimited access—24/7—means you can return to a specific portion of a course or search through other courses as often as you like. Conveniently search the entire library by field of study, title or keyword. Plus, organize your learning with a professional tracker to keep a file on CPE credits received, book marked pages, segments visited and more. Preview *AICPA InfoBytes* by visiting:

 [infobytes.aicpaservices.org](http://infobytes.aicpaservices.org)

