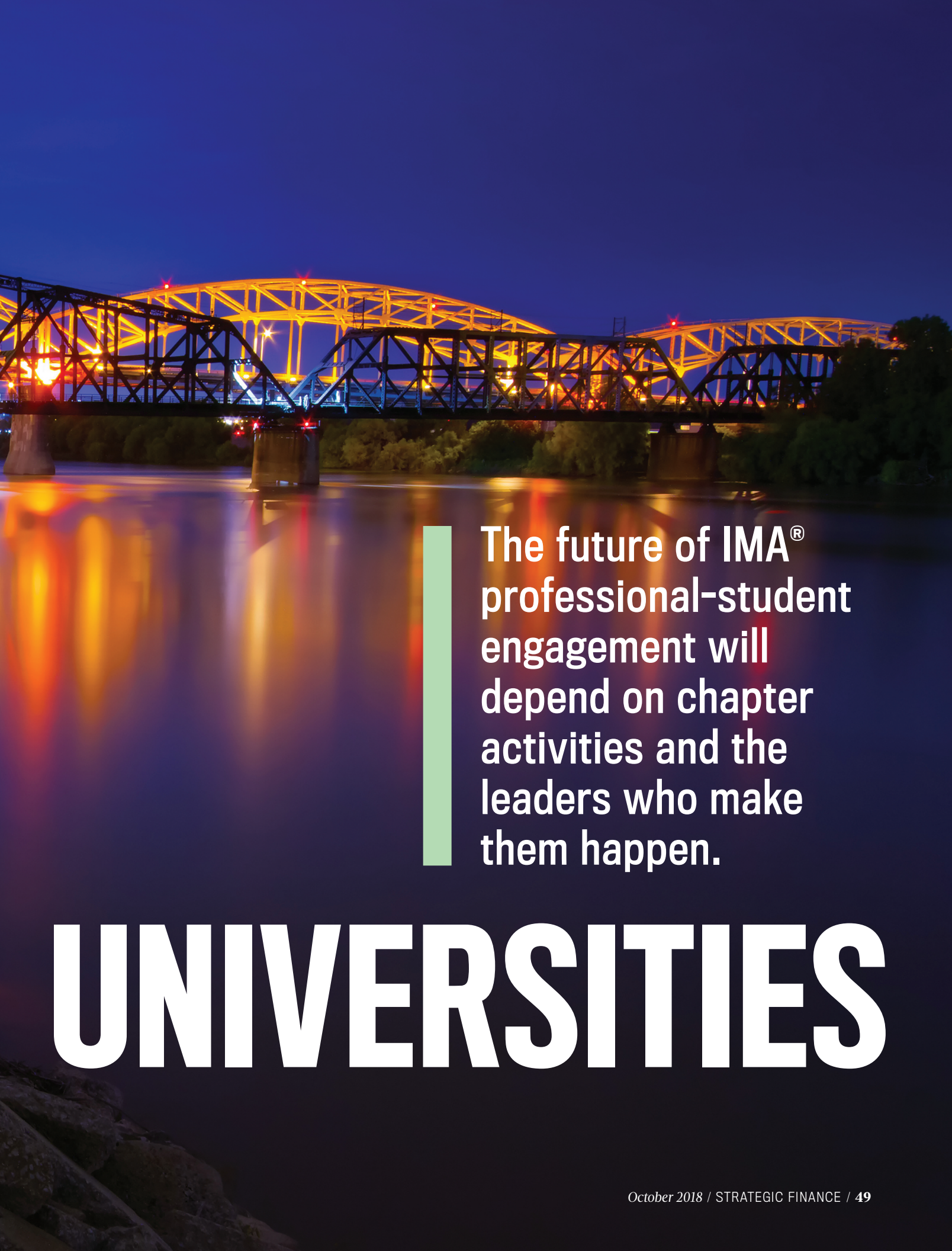




BUILDING BRIDGES WITH

BY KIMBERLY SWANSON CHURCH,
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ROBERT SWISHER, CMA, CPA



The future of IMA[®]
professional-student
engagement will
depend on chapter
activities and the
leaders who make
them happen.

UNIVERSITIES

Five years ago when an email message arrived from Kim Church at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) asking for an informational visit from an IMA® (Institute of Management Accountants) representative, IMA's Kansas City (KC) Chapter had limited interaction with students and no student members or affiliated active student chapters. Now the chapter footprint includes student chapters and members, Campus Influencers, and faculty advocates and advisors. More importantly, former student chapter members now serve on the KC Chapter's board and are employed by chapter members who encourage their professional membership and pursuit of the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) certification.

Prior to receiving the email, the KC Chapter had benefited from an active membership that participated in annual workshops and training, monthly continuing professional education (CPE) events, and networking opportunities in the community. But professional members of the KC Chapter had had limited interaction with local students beyond providing IMA resources to area faculty and serving in the role of guest speaker. Generally, the speaker introduced stu-

dents from regional colleges and universities to management accounting careers and the benefits of joining IMA, but the interaction between the professional and student typically ended when the professional left the classroom.

Steve Platt (then the KC Chapter president) and Bob Swisher (a former chapter president) responded to the email by agreeing to serve as guest speakers in Church's management accounting class at UMKC. Platt and Swisher presented as guest speakers, and the class period proceeded just as dozens of classroom visits had before. Once the class was over and the students had left, Church began to ask about professional-student initiatives that she had observed in prior affiliations with the Joplin Tri-State (Mo.) and Dallas Fort Worth Area (Texas) Chapters. This resulted in brainstorming several opportunities to foster the professional-student relationship and expand the activities of the chapter. It became apparent that developing a strong relationship with faculty would provide a conduit to students for future interaction; therefore, Church was asked to join the KC Chapter board.

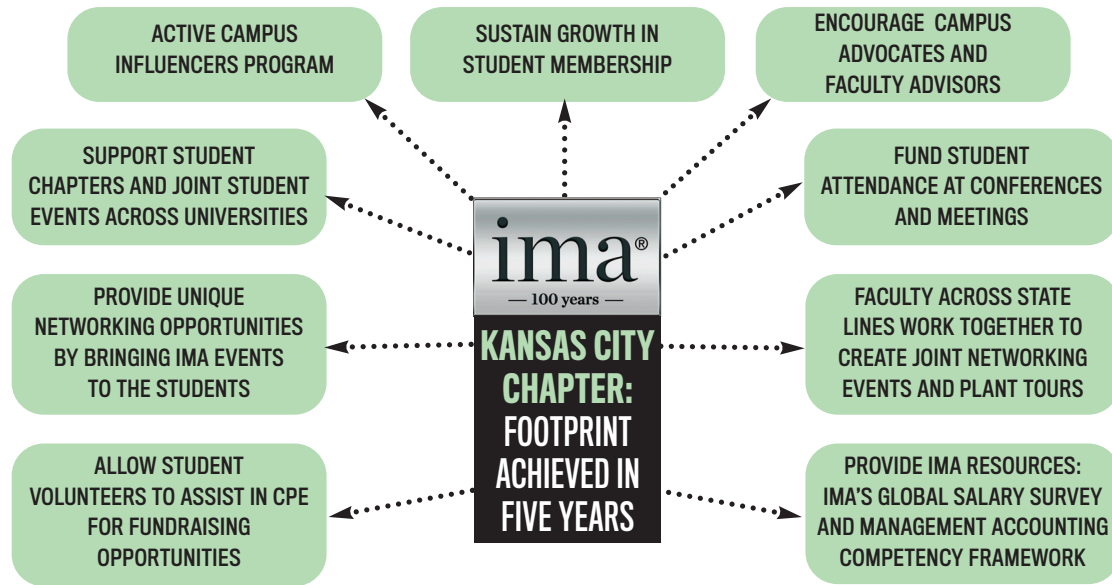
As the chapter's first academic board member, Church worked with Platt, Swisher, and Ralph Rogers (current Heartland Regional Council president) to develop a strong academic network beginning with Church's academic contacts. They reached out to area management accounting faculty, shared information about IMA, offered content experts as guest speakers, and encouraged faculty membership and involvement in the chapter. Long before student chapters were started, a monthly communication was established with the faculty network to disseminate meeting schedules and to plan tours, discount codes for student membership, links to IMA current events of interest to students, and scholarship and accounting honor society applications and deadlines.

Program Growth

As the professional-student relationships with area colleges and universities began to mature, the KC Chapter encouraged the faculty members to join the Campus Advocate program, and professional members were encouraged to become Campus Influencers, a broad volunteer network whose mission is to increase student awareness of IMA and management accounting opportunities. (Learn more at "Influencing the Next Generation" in the August 2018 issue of *Strategic Finance*, <http://bit.ly/2N8Vpgv>.) The faculty cohort within the KC Chapter began to work together to offer and share networking events and expert speakers and to plan tours as a way of ensuring a larger turnout for events and a way for students to network and meet their future colleagues. When possible, the events were scheduled in a more centralized location, such as Topeka, Kan., where Washburn University sponsored a tour of the Michelin plant and the Mars candy factory.

10 WAYS TO CONNECT WITH STUDENTS

- Be a content expert or guest speaker.
- Offer internships.
- Become a Campus Influencer.
- Partner with faculty on a real-world case for class.
- Participate in career fairs.
- Serve as a mentor.
- Participate in mock interviews and résumé workshops.
- Serve as a judge for student projects and presentations.
- Allow students to shadow or interview you about your career.
- Host or participate in student professional development events (e.g., etiquette dinners and meet-and-greet receptions).



In addition, student members were encouraged to attend and represent the KC Chapter at both national and regional student leadership conferences, attend local and regional meetings, and engage with the IMA online community. This led the KC Chapter to begin discussions encouraging faculty members to pursue official student chapters on their respective campuses so that students could begin to benefit from having a formal status with IMA. The professional members' commitment to support and encourage student chapters became evident with the inception of a fundraising event to provide seed money for their first affiliated student chapter in the area. The KC Chapter partnered with students at UMKC to host a full-day CPE seminar on campus. The students provided planning support, registration, and on-site volunteers for the event, and, in exchange, the professional chapter provided a speaker and an on-campus networking event with roughly 50 local practitioners and shared the proceeds so the students could start their student chapter. This inaugural event has since been modeled at other universities with other full-day CPE events.

UMKC has resurrected a student chapter that had been dormant for more than a decade, and both Washburn University and Park University have since started student chapters.

While the University of Central Missouri, Missouri Valley College, and the University of Kansas don't currently have student chapters, they have active faculty who advocate for their students and routinely partner with IMA. The remaining colleges and universities in the Kansas City footprint are a part of the communication network, and the goal is to recruit faculty advocates and future members. The alliance of professionals, faculty, and students working together provides a system of resources that benefits all parties.

Student chapter status has resulted in additional funding and networking opportunities. IMA, the Heartland Council, and the KC Chapter have multiple sources of funding to support student chapter activities and conference travel. Each of the student chapters in the footprint has hosted Heartland regional student and professional events and has hosted external speakers for campus events, such as the Park University Chapter's presentation by the CFO of the Kansas City Royals the year the team won the World Series and the UMKC Chapter's presentations by cybersecurity and blockchain experts. UMKC students also represented the student chapter for Hurricane Harvey volunteer relief in 2017 prior to the IMA Student Leadership Conference in Houston, Texas, and Park University's student chapter offers Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), a tax preparation program for persons with disabilities, limited English speakers, and people who generally make less than \$54,000.

Currently, the KC Chapter continues to support the students and faculty at all schools in the footprint by:

- Ensuring a reduced or waived student/faculty rate for professional events that provide networking opportunities, which can translate into future professional members of the chapter.
- Providing funding resources for student and faculty travel to local, regional, and national conferences.
- Matching funds provided by IMA Global or the Heartland Council to encourage active participation.

**Kimberly Swanson Church will be a speaker
at this year's IMA Student Leadership
Conference (SLC) to be held at the Hilton
St. Louis at the Ballpark in St. Louis, Mo.,**

November 1-3, 2018.

المنارة للاستشارات

IMA RESOURCES

STUDENT RESOURCES	IMA WEBSITE LOCATION
Students	www.imanet.org/students
Careers in Management Accounting	www.imanet.org/students/management-accounting-careers
CareerDriver®	www.imanet.org/career-resources/careerdriver
Scholarship Programs	www.imanet.org/students/scholarships-and-awards
IMA Accounting Honor Society	www.imanet.org/iahs
Student Chapters	www.imanet.org/students/student-chapter-leadership
Leadership Academy	www.imanet.org/career-resources/leadership-academy
Student Leadership Conference	www.imastudentconference.org
FACULTY RESOURCES	IMA WEBSITE LOCATION
Membership Benefits	www.imanet.org/membership/benefits
IMA Management Accounting Competency Framework	www.imanet.org/career-resources/management-accounting-competencies
CMA Scholarship Program	www.imanet.org/cma-certification/cma-scholarship
Campus Advocate Program	www.imanet.org/educators/campus-advocate-program
Awards Programs	www.imanet.org/educators/educator-awards-and-programs
IMA Higher Education Endorsement Program	www.imanet.org/educators/higher-education-endorsement-program
PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES	IMA WEBSITE LOCATION
Campus Influencers Program	http://sfmagazine.com/post-entry/august-2018-influencing-the-next-generation
Local Chapter Near You	www.imanet.org/membership/networking/regional-councils-and-chapters

Professional members routinely collaborate with students on campus on case studies, serve as judges for projects, attend kickoff events, and serve as topic experts at student meetings.

Networking Know-How

The KC Chapter piloted a networking event at UMKC where the monthly meeting was brought into Church's management accounting class as part of the professional development activities for the course. The professional chapter provided an informal networking event before class, followed by a cybersecurity expert as a speaker for the class. Students were able to observe the interaction between the professional guests and speaker and were encouraged to participate in the discussion. After the speaker concluded, students were provided information on the benefits of joining IMA and a student in the class was introduced as a regional IMA scholarship winner. After the class, students

were encouraged to share contact information with potential employers. A second networking event with a blockchain expert was held in Church's class the following semester when the monthly meeting was hosted in the class, and this time invitations were extended to the local faculty network to share in the professional interaction. Several recent graduates from these classes have since received CMA scholarships to offset the expenses of CMA study materials and exam costs.

One advantage for professional members is getting to meet and interact with students directly, giving them a greater understanding of the next generation of management accountants and an opportunity to find and hire better candidates for their entry-level positions. The professional members can observe the work ethic and skills of students and begin to mentor and engage students long before graduation. Church's graduate assistants have enhanced their professional skill sets (e.g., technology and communication) by working firsthand with the professional chapter on promotional activities as part of the engagement between practitioners, faculty, students, and other universities.

DEVELOP UNIVERSITY RELATIONSHIPS

1. Identify management accounting faculty in your footprint to create a communication cohort.
2. Correspond with individual faculty to learn what IMA can do for them or their students.
3. Share semester meeting schedules with a faculty cohort to allow them to plan and disseminate with students to encourage networking.
4. Waive fees or offer faculty and student discounts to chapter events.
5. Distribute management accounting current events and IMA resources to faculty cohort for use in class.
6. Partner with a local university to create a CPE fundraiser to provide seed money for a student chapter.
7. Provide financial support for faculty and student attendance at IMA-sponsored events.
8. Create a local scholarship.
9. Hold an IMA chapter meeting on campus to engage faculty and students.

Life after Graduation

The benefits for students continue after graduation because they have pursued employment opportunities with the professionals. The first UMKC student chapter president has graduated, obtained employment with a KC Chapter board member, is studying for the CMA exam, and is now the newest member of the KC Chapter board. A better outcome couldn't have been asked for from the professional-student engagement started five years ago. Future goals for the chapter include recruiting more students to take the CMA exam and supporting and achieving the first IMA Higher Education Endorsement Program in the footprint.

Don't wait for a faculty member to email your chapter wanting help. Reach out first. Start by gathering information on things relevant to building faculty and student relationships, such as current events in management accounting, student memberships, scholarships, IMA Accounting Honor Society, awards, leadership conferences, student chapters, the endorsement program, and the Campus Advocate and Campus Influencers programs on the IMA website, www.imanet.org. Establishing a strong relationship with faculty provides a conduit to students—potential future professional members—as one strategy to ensure the future of your chapter. **SF**

Kimberly Swanson Church, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of accounting information systems at UMKC. Kim serves on the advisory board for IMA's Kansas City Chapter, is the current faculty advisor for the UMKC student chapter, and is a Campus Advocate. She is a 2018 recipient of the Jim Bulloch Award for Innovations in Management Accounting Education. You can reach her at churchk@umkc.edu.

Gail Hoover King, Ed.D., is an accounting professor and current co-chair for the American Accounting Association Conference on Teaching and Learning in Accounting. A longtime member of IMA, she is a 2018 recipient of the Jim Bulloch Award for Innovations in Management Accounting Education. You can reach her at drhooverking@gmail.com.

Pamela J. Schmidt, Ph.D., is an associate professor at Washburn University in Topeka, Kan. Pam is a member of IMA's Kansas City Chapter, a Campus Advocate, and a data analytics expert speaker for regional IMA CPE training. You can reach her at pamela.schmidt@washburn.edu.

Bob Swisher, CMA, CPA, provides tax, small business accounting, and consulting services in Overland Park, Kan. He is currently the vice president for continuing education for IMA's Kansas City Chapter. Bob is also the president-elect of IMA's Heartland Regional Council. You can reach him at bobswisher@swishercpa.com.

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