

MEMBER PROFILE

RON STOESZ, FCPA, FCMA

CPA MANITOBA LIFETIME
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT



CPA

CHARTERED
PROFESSIONAL
ACCOUNTANTS
MANITOBA



The 2017 recipient of the CPA Manitoba Lifetime Achievement Award, Ron Stoesz, FCPA, FCMA, is now retired and smiles as he reflects on his 40-year career.

“I’ve had a lot of great jobs but the most rewarding job I ever had was Chief Executive Officer at CMA Manitoba. I had the privilege of helping to create careers for

individuals,” he explains. “We really made a difference during my time there.”

Stoesz smiles even brighter as he remembers one moment in particular.

“I was attending a CMA convocation ceremony and one of the graduates who I had recruited into the program came up to me with his wife and two children. They were all so thankful. He had just graduated and his career had taken off in part because of his accounting designation. I was able to make a difference in their lives,” he recalls before adding, “There were others too.”

Stoesz’s story starts from humble beginnings. He grew up in Winnipeg and attended Windsor Park High School. After graduating from Red River College in 1973 he began his career.

“I was a bill collector for a finance company,” he

chuckles. “I had experience collecting overdue accounts and repossessing cars, furniture and all kinds of things. That experience got me a job as a collector with the Unemployment Insurance Commission. One day I noticed a posting for a financial officer position. I figured, why not? I applied and ended up being offered the position on the condition I take an accounting designation.”

“ Looking back, I see it this way: the career was great, but the volunteer work for CMA was my passion. It was like another career where I really had an impact. I loved it. ”

That was his launching point. Stoesz went on to complete his designation and worked for the government—something he would do for the next 34 years in various roles.

During the ‘80s and ‘90s much improvement was being made in the area of financial systems. Government departments were building in-house programs and spreadsheet and databases were becoming the

applications of choice for accountants.

In the late '90s, the RCMP had overspent their budget and knowing that an overhaul was needed, they implemented a number of changes. One such change was the hiring of four senior financial officers from across Canada to strengthen their financial processes.

"I was one of them. I started off as the Director of Financial Management and Accounting Operations for Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut," he explains.

“ Government has a reputation for not getting a lot of things done, but during my time there I had quite the opposite experience. ”

Stoesz led a talented team that developed new financial processes and applications for the RCMP. The process took years, they used cutting-edge thinking and programming, and many of the processes are still in place today.

Stoesz's innovative work was not the only thing he was becoming known for. It was around this time that his fondness for clichés was established.

"It's true, I live by a lot of clichés," he says with a laugh. "I have probably said the same things a hundred times a month, to the point where my staff thought I was crazy."

It wasn't without good reason, however. His strategy of repetition would prove highly effective.

"When I became a Director at the RCMP, I broke down the work into what was really important: planning, budgeting, reporting, forecasting, advice and guidance, and measuring performance. I'd say those things over and over to everyone, all the time."

It helped build Stoesz's reputation as someone who gets things accomplished.

"Government has a reputation for not getting a lot of things done, but during my time there I had quite the opposite experience. On the great teams I worked with, we were always successful in reaching our goals."

In addition to his career, giving back was a priority for Stoesz.

"Volunteering and contributing to the accounting profession was one of my biggest passions. It started back in 1988 when I was asked to participate on a board. I still had young children and time was tight, but once I got

started I absolutely loved it."

And get started he did. He tirelessly volunteered his time helping various accounting boards and committees reach their goals and mandates in education, event planning and member services. Stoesz was the provincial President for CMA Manitoba in the mid-1990s before joining the CMA Canada board and eventually served as national Chair in 2006 and 2007.

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So when he was asked to lead CMA Manitoba as its Chief Executive Officer, he leaped at the chance. There was plenty of work to be done.

"We had some very fascinating and talented board members who asked great questions and pushed us to deliver results. We would adapt, innovate and champion new ideas as a close-knit team that accomplished a great deal."

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Along with helping lead the profession through the merger, Stoesz and his team grew membership substantially, improved member satisfaction and created new partnerships with post-secondary institutions and the business community.

Stoesz's career has included reconstruction of Canadian governmental department financials, looking after all financial assets for the RCMP and donating countless hours to the accounting profession. So, how does someone like that react when he finds out that he is receiving a CPA Manitoba Lifetime Achievement Award?

"I was totally taken aback when I got the call informing me of the honor. I'm so humbled and thankful. There are so many people who are deserving and I have had the pleasure of working with many of them. Throughout my career the people I've worked with have really been the reason for any success I've had," Stoesz explains, still smiling before adding, "And that's not a cliché."

The CPA Manitoba Lifetime Achievement Award is bestowed to a CPA who has brought honor to the profession by distinction in service to the profession, career or community.