



Beyond the Numbers

BY TROY WATKINS

Dave McManus '87

CPA, Co-president, Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co.

Why choose a college known for its liberal arts education when you want to study accounting? For **Dave McManus '87**, it was Assumption's liberal arts that made it the right choice. "The well-rounded liberal arts background provides the tools needed to relate to people," he said. "We are business advisors and find that communication and the ability to relate to people is important in our profession. Assumption provides that educational experience.

"The professors, in particular Bill Sullivan, were instrumental in helping me decide that this was the right profession," said McManus. "He taught life, inside and outside the classroom, and was a great mentor to many of us."

Upon his graduation, McManus joined the CPA firm of Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co. (AAF) in Westborough as a staff accountant. Through the years he was promoted and assumed progressive levels of responsibility. After 25 years, he's a shareholder and co-president of AAF, one of the largest CPA firms in New England. McManus provides audit, tax and business consulting services to both commercial enterprises and nonprofit organizations. He's also the

firm's designated partner of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Employee Benefit Plan Audit Quality Center and director of AAF's Employee Benefit Division.

Formed in 1973, AAF boasted 35 employees and three partners when McManus joined the firm in 1987. Today, it has 14 partners and more than 100 professional staff, with offices in Westborough, Worcester, Wellesley and Cambridge, and plans to expand. A significant portion of AAF's clients are nonprofits, such as the Pine Street Inn, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Alternatives Unlimited and The Bridge of Central MA. The firm also has a larger number of privately held businesses in a range of industries.

The demanding industry of public accounting requires AAF and its staff to keep current with the profession's standards. "With the constant federal and state regulation changes and the new technological advancements, attention to detail is key to a successful career at AAF," McManus said. "It's important that we offer the highest level of services to every client. To accomplish this, our staff must have state-of-the-art technology and receive the proper training and supervision to serve our clients effectively and efficiently. This aligns with our firm's ultimate mission – to promote mutually beneficial client and staff relationships



PHOTO: DAN VAILLANCOURT

Dave McManus '87 (center) and fellow Assumption alumni/AAF employees

through the delivery of high quality financial services that contribute to the community.”

More than 90 percent of Assumption’s accounting majors accept jobs before graduation. With such a consistent level of achievement, it’s not surprising that AAF often turns to Assumption students and alumni. McManus explained, “We look to Assumption to fill internship and full-time positions, because Assumption consistently produces top-quality professionals who are ready to work hard in the work force. We also have great relationships with the professors who know our culture, our business, and can help prepare their students for a successful career at AAF.” Currently, 14 alumni are employed at AAF, representing about 12 percent of its workforce. “We are proud of our relationship with Assumption,” said McManus.

He is enthusiastic about his profession and is devoted to his family – including wife Jane (Desnoyers) '87 and children Rachel, Daniel and David. In addition, he still finds time to be active in his profession and community. “It’s important to me to take the time to be active,” he said. A member of the AICPA and the Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants, McManus is also a trustee and current treasurer of The Ecotarium in Worcester. A former Greyhounds football player, he also serves as treasurer of the Shrewsbury American Youth Football and Cheer Organization, one of the largest youth football programs in the northeast. “All of our partners are involved with various boards of non-profit organizations, and we take our commitment to the community to heart.”

With visionary leadership that includes the three original partners of the firm, a strong commitment to provide a personal touch to each client and a dedication to the community, it’s easy to see why McManus and AAF continue to grow and succeed. ❖

Alumni at AAF

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| * Nicole Ardine '11 | Matthew McGinnis '06 |
| * Katie Brooks, CPA '06 | Nichole McIntyre '10 |
| Emily Carleen '04 | David McManus '87 |
| * Lauren Duplin '09 | * Michael Pruell '06 |
| Jill Foley '11 | Jeremy Rice '11 |
| Caitlin Harvey '10 | John Slyman '08 |
| Kevin Kittredge '05 | * Davide Villani '02 |

Joining AAF as staff accountants after graduating from Assumption in May

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Patrick Keeley | Matthew Robinson |
| John Landsvik | * Erin Tegan |
| Patrick McIntyre | * Tiffany Wopschall |

* former AAF intern