

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Learners Embark on World's First Indigenous-focused Education Pilot Program for Indigenous Peoples

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Edmonton, AB – The Chartered Professional Accountants Western School of Business (CPAWSB), Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Alberta (AFOA Alberta), and CPA Canada announce a global-first accounting education pilot for Indigenous learners. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, this pilot addresses systemic barriers and incorporates Indigenous content, context, culture, and support structure to increase Indigenous representation in accounting.

Indigenous learners encounter significant obstacles within post-secondary and professional education due to societal biases, colonial legacy, and other barriers. Recognizing these pervasive issues, the pilot program is dedicated to redefining the conventional approach to accounting education.

"As an Indigenous scholar and business educator, working with Indigenous people, I understand the number, nature and complexity of the challenges that our community faces, that are almost incomprehensible to those outside of our communities," said Robert Andrews, Executive Director, AFOA Alberta. *"This program is designed to address those challenges and provide a pathway for success for our Indigenous peoples that respects our Indigenous culture, traditions and experiences. This program is informed by research, supported by CPA Canada, and the lived experience of our community members."*

In conjunction with subject matter experts from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, CPA Canada incorporated content relevant to their communities and reflective of their world views and experiences in the learning materials. This collaborative process enriches the curriculum with a breadth of Indigenous culture, content, and context. The recognition and affirmation of Indigenous peoples within the learning materials and approach, combined with Indigenous support structure, is novel and a first in accounting education.

"The inclusion of Indigenous perspectives ensures culturally relevant education and creates an environment where diverse perspectives, in other words, our ways of seeing the world, are shared," said Jennifer Reed, Director, Education Services, CPA Canada. *"By understanding and engaging with diverse perspectives, CPA students and candidates will be better prepared to serve and protect the public."*

The pilot phase introduces two specialized courses: Introductory Financial Accounting (IFA) and the CPA Professional Education Program Core 1 Module. These courses cover key accounting principles, financial reporting, taxation, assurance, and business strategy, in an approach that is sensitive to and reflective of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous instructors teach the courses.

Course materials, co-developed by CPA Canada, AFOA Alberta and Indigenous advisors, will be made available to post-secondary institutions across Canada at no cost, in accordance with the deeply held value of sharing prevalent in Indigenous communities and the CPA profession's commitment to reconciliation.

To ensure learner success, CPAWSB and AFOA Alberta will provide ongoing support to Indigenous learners, including career mentorship, course tutoring and support, networking opportunities, and access to additional resources. Indigenous individuals will lead these measures designed to create a strong support system.

"This ground-breaking program is truly transformational," said Maureen Moneta, Métis Nation of Alberta member and CPA Alberta board member. "The increased presence of Indigenous people within the CPA profession will result in a stronger CPA profession for every member and an enhanced protection of the public."

As the program advances, we seek partnerships with community leaders, businesses, organizations, and Indigenous CPAs to support this and similar future initiatives.

To learn more about this transformative opportunity and to join us in shaping a more inclusive future for accounting, please reach out to our media contact below. For more information about this pilot, visit [Engaging Indigenous Learners](#) on the [CPAWSB website](#).

About AFOA Alberta

AFOA Alberta is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing Indigenous management and leadership in Alberta. Through training, certification, and advocacy, AFOA Alberta supports Indigenous professionals in their pursuit of excellence in management and finance, empowering them to create positive change within their communities. afoaab.com

About CPAWSB

The Chartered Professional Accountants Western School of Business (CPAWSB) is a leading provider of professional education for the CPA designation in Western Canada. With a commitment to

excellence in accounting and business education, CPAWSB plays a crucial role in developing qualified and ethical accounting professionals. cpawsb.ca

About CPA Canada

Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) works collaboratively with the provincial, territorial and Bermudian CPA bodies, as it represents the Canadian accounting profession, both nationally and internationally. This collaboration allows the Canadian profession to champion best practices that benefit business and society, as well as prepare its members for an ever-evolving operating environment featuring unprecedented change. Representing more than 220,000 members, CPA Canada is one of the largest national accounting bodies worldwide. cpacanada.ca

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