I was inspired to become a CPA: Thanks to my high school accounting class. I had always enjoyed my math classes, but then something special clicked in my accounting class. Accounting integrated my interest in math with an understanding of financial and business principles. After my high school classes, I knew going into college I wanted to major in accounting, and I have been happy to have chosen this career path.

People don’t know this about me, but: I really enjoy painting. I’ve recently started to work with watercolors, and I have had fun learning how to paint with these.

When I have free time, I prefer to: Bike on the trails around the Des Moines metro. I purchased my bike after I learned I passed my first CPA exam, and it has become my favorite thing to do during the summer months. A goal of mine is to ride in RAGBRAI!

Favorite vacation spot: Anywhere with hiking. So far, I have enjoyed Sedona and Flagstaff, Arizona, and many places in Colorado.

My heroes are: My parents. I am grateful for everything they’ve done for me. They have provided me with an excellent example of hard work, resilience and service to others. They are both retired lieutenant colonels from the Air Force Reserve. One of the sayings my parents always repeated to me, especially when things were difficult or not the way I expected them to be, was, “Flexibility is the key to airpower.” I might not have fully understood this phrase in my childhood, but I can certainly relate to it more as I have grown older.

What is your favorite thing about your job? The favorite thing about my job is the people I work with. There are so many intelligent, driven, caring individuals at RSM who help me grow and learn every day as a professional.

How has being a member of ISCPA helped you personally or professionally? As a fairly new member to the ISCPA, I have already experienced many of the benefits the Society has to offer. I enjoyed networking with other CPAs at last year’s Annual Meeting. I also had the ability to take a CPE course covering fiduciary income tax returns hosted by the Society last fall. I hope to have more opportunities to network with other CPAs at future events and to partake in future continuing education offerings.

What is your biggest professional achievement to date? My biggest professional achievement to date was receiving the Elijah Watt Sells Award from the AICPA and the Capstone Award from the Iowa Society of CPAs last summer. I was very much honored to be recognized for these achievements.

What message do you have for high school and college kids about a career as a CPA? There are so many career paths that can be taken as a CPA, and the options are endless! I want to encourage all high school and college students to consider pursuing the CPA designation. The hard work and effort will be worth it!