

# meet members



## Joel Anderson

**Job:** Economic policy advisor, Office of Governor Kim Reynolds, Des Moines

**Hometown:** Clive

**Alma mater:** University of Northern Iowa

**Professional/community activities:** ISCPA, ITA, ABI, UNI SigEp Alumni Board, Ankeny Community Theater

**Favorite quote:** “If you aren’t helping the customer, you better be helping someone who is.” This was the quote on my dad’s email tag line. He was an IT executive for a grocery chain and never interacted with the customers of the store, but he knew that his job was to make sure the store clerks, meat manager or whomever was interacting with the customer didn’t have to worry about IT issues.

### How has being a member of ISCPA helped you?

Being a member has constantly kept me up to date with tax issues. Additionally, so many wonderful tax professionals have been available when I need feedback or to bounce around ideas. The networking aspect has been beneficial beyond belief. Finally, the camaraderie is why I look forward to the annual CPA Day at the Hill event in January. I like catching up and seeing fellow members.

**What are some of the biggest changes you’ve seen in the profession?** Not necessarily a change, but the pandemic has highlighted that CPAs truly are trusted advisors. We get contacted when there is uncertainty and not just for accounting needs. Individuals and businesses turned to their trusted CPAs for advice on PPP loans, other aid and more throughout this crisis. Because of this relationship, many businesses will stay afloat.

**I am passionate about:** Baking and cooking! I love America’s Test Kitchen on PBS. I have been a subscriber to their magazine and website for about four years now and love discovering new recipes to try. Food has always been my way of trying to

learn something new about a place or a culture. Whenever my wife and I travel, we try not to go to the tourist hotspot or a chain restaurant, but seek something that is uniquely that place.

Food tells you how people interact with their society. Take a porterhouse steak, it is a gigantic piece of meat that is fun to grill up and eat on the Fourth of July. We can only do that because our culture favors knives and forks as our eating utensils; but go to an Asian country that favors chopsticks and a porterhouse would have no need to be created.

Or looking at ingredients in baking dishes. Every culture has their own unique breads and cakes, but wheat flour and chocolate are not common throughout the world, so every culture has their own sweetener and starch to do their baking. I find it fascinating to understand why a different culture uses one ingredient over the other, and now that Des Moines has a rich selection of supermarkets, I can start to try and cook with these ingredients.

**Favorite vacation spot (so far):** Warsaw or Krakow, Poland. The history and how Poland has come back after the fall of the Soviet Union. It was amazing to see this very old city experiencing new investment after years of communism.

**Place I’d love to live:** Des Moines! When I was first looking for jobs after college, I was asked a great question. Would you like to spend your vacations in Iowa? If I chose to live and work somewhere else, I’d be vacationing in Iowa to visit family.

**What I wanted to be when I grew up:** A lawyer.

**Last book I read:** Showdown at Gucci Gulch by Jeffrey Binbaum. Fascinating book about the last really historic tax reform in 1986.

**First job as a kid:** Hy-Vee bagger.

**I never leave home without:** Now two phones! There was a learning curve with juggling the two, but at least I know I can turn one off when I’m done for the day.

**I was inspired to become a CPA because:** I could be an advisor

without having to go to law school.

**Favorite cake to make right now:** A hummingbird cake, which is a cross between a carrot cake and banana bread, and then I top it off with coconut Italian buttercream frosting.

Joel and his wife Anne live in Des Moines with their daughter, Felicity (2), and pets Max and Molly.